

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# April 16, 2019

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Elsa Schwartz, Chair, presiding, Barbara Bennett, Mike Bianchi, Ed Halloran, Gwendolyn Hannam, Matt Kukuk, Linda Rhodes (WebEx), Kelly Zupich, Tim Lawrence, WSU Extension, (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Randy Berthold, Lori Clark, Jodi Crimmins, Mark Stamey, Janet St. Clair, Kes Tautvydas

**VISITORS:** Hannah Liss (resident), Bill Howard (Beachcombers), Paul Onerheim (Beachcombers), Ron Beier (Sound Water Stewards)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Schwartz called the meeting to order at 3:06pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Bennett moved to approve the agenda. Zupich seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Halloran moved to approve the March 5, 2019 minutes. Kukuk seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

### EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: PLASTIC FREE SALISH SEA

Karin Roemers-Kleven, Chair of San Juan County MRC presented on the Plastic Free Salish Sea (PFSS) Program. The San Juan MRC has partnered with local solid waste districts to initiate this campaign to minimize single-use plastics. Projects included a voluntary campaign to encourage restaurants to offer an alternative to plastic straws, such as corn or paper straws, and/or straws only on request. They are also hosting a Garbology workshop to invite the community to learn about ways to reduce and reuse waste.

Questions and discussion included:

- How was the response from businesses regarding the straw campaign? They were always welcomed with respect. Only one business didn't have the margins to make the change.
- Is there research on the cost of changing to corn or paper straws? They are more costly than plastic straws, but if business owners only offer corn/paper straws on request, there is an overall savings.
- We need to consider overall carbon footprint in these programs to ensure we aren't encouraging use of an alternative product that actually has a larger carbon footprint.
- MRC involvement has included a subcommittee to work with project partners and members helping to develop the Garbology workshop.
- If IC MRC is interested in PFSS, there should be one or more members passionate about moving the idea forward. Voluntary programs work best as they allow people to make their own decisions about how to participate.
- A presentation from WSU Extension's Waste Wise program would be a helpful follow-up to understand that current programs in Island County, and areas for collaboration.

### BUSINESS ITEMS

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## Project Planning

**Work plan (Toledo):** Toledo provided updated information on the one outstanding item on the work plan: a restoration feasibility study at Hoypus Point or Possession Point. The MRC has \$10,000 available for this item. The Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) may be able to allocate some matching funds through their NFWF grant, potentially around \$8,000. The MRC's funds could cover a high-level feasibility study for both sites. The matching funds could then bring one of those sites to a preliminary design. The MRC supported the inclusion of a feasibility study for both sites in the work plan.

➤ **ACTION: Zupich moved to approve the 2019-2020 work plan. Bennett seconded. The motion passed.**

**Opportunity Fund (Schwartz):** The deadline for the Opportunity Fund will be extended to June 1<sup>st</sup>. The MRC discussed potential project ideas:

- Outreach/PR opportunity through Stanwood Camano Glass Quest: The MRC would pay to hide balls with clues for community members to find. The clues would point to the MRC website. This would increase awareness and presence of the MRC on Camano. The cost is \$650 for 10 balls.
- Marine debris educational document: Put together a document of information on which agencies or foundations to contact for specific marine debris issues. This would go beyond the work of the MyCoast reporting tool to be a one-stop-shop of information for what people should do when encountering marine debris.

➤ *Follow-up: MRC members are encouraged to come to the May meeting with additional ideas for the Opportunity Fund.*

**Orca Outreach (Rhodes):** Rhodes contacted Orca Network to discuss areas for collaboration with respect to the orca outreach funding opportunity offered through the NWSF. They are planning outreach activities during June, which is Orca Action Month. Additionally, they are partnering with Washington State Ferries to have naturalists talk about orcas with ferry riders.

The NWSF offered another opportunity for outreach: Friends of the San Juans has developed a workshop about orcas, and actions individuals can take to support orca recovery. The MRC could host the presentation in partnership with Whidbey Island Conservation District's (WICD) orca recovery outreach during October.

- *Follow-up: Rhodes will continue to coordinate with Orca Network to identify collaboration opportunities for outreach.*
- *Toledo will advise the NWSF that the MRC is interested in hosting the Friends of the San Juans orca presentation, potentially in partnership with WICD's orca outreach work.*

**Stormwater grant (Toledo):** Toledo shared the updated RFP for the Boeing stormwater funding opportunity offered through the NWSF. Discussion included:

- Signage would be the most feasible approach given the grant timeframe.
- Another approach would be to develop a prioritization list of locations for rain gardens.
- When identifying sites, consider prioritizing sites for most positive impact for fisheries and aquatic resources.

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- **ACTION: Hannam moved to form a subcommittee to develop a grant application for the Boeing Stormwater Grant. Bennett seconded.** Hannam and Bianchi offered to be on the subcommittee. **The motion passed.**

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** No further updates.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS

**Forage Fish Monitoring (Toledo/Bennett):** Forage fish sampling is on hold while we re-evaluate project sites and recruit additional volunteers. Barb, Kelly, Matt, and Anna have spoken with the NWS Foundation and Commission and WDFW to outline a plan. Monitoring will focus on restoration sites: Cornet Bay, Ala Spit (pending confirmation of monitoring plan schedule), Hidden Beach, and Seahorse Siesta. On Camano, we will discontinue sampling at Camano Island State Park, as the potential restoration was determined not to be feasible. Sampling will continue at Maple Grove, with the capacity to add an additional Camano site. We will work with NWS and WDFW to schedule a volunteer training in early summer.

**Outreach (Bennett):** The educational film developed by Florian, "Discover Our Island Shores" and the accompanying classroom activity have been distributed to local schools. Students are invited to participate in an art contest, and answer the question: "What will you do to make a positive impact on the Salish Sea?" Finalists' artwork and written responses will be displayed on the MRC website in May. MRC members will select the awardees at the May meeting. A people's choice award will also be given in each grade category.

Kelly designed a display on marine food webs, using photos and concepts presented in the "Discover Our Island Shores" film and classroom activity. The example food web and posters about the MRC are on display at the Coupeville library for the month of April. Be sure to check it out! The display can be used at other venues in the future.

## OTHER REPORTS

**NW Straits Commission/Foundation (Schwartz):** The Northwest Straits Commission and Foundation had their annual retreat March 21-22. One recommendation from the retreat was for MRCs to look for a broad skill set in their members, not just those interested in science, but who also bring experience in other areas, such as graphic design or education.

**Shoreline Restoration and Armor Removal (Toledo):** The Sunlight Shores planting party was a great success. Eighteen volunteers planted 1,336 plants, including 1,500 pieces of dunegrass and several other species, including coastal strawberries, beach pea, ocean spray, and Nootka rose. Island County and the Northwest Straits Foundation are submitting applications to continue Shore Friendly funding. Island County's proposal would offer mini-grants to shoreline homeowners to remove or avoid hard armor.



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**Island Local Integrating Organization (Bennett):** No updates.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS

**Chair:** The May 7<sup>th</sup> MRC meeting will be at the Camano Island Library. Phill Dionne from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will be presenting on forage fish and smelt fisheries.

**County Lead:** No updates.

**County Commissioners:** No updates

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Paul Onerheim asked about the status of the Hidden Beach restoration project. The feasibility and preliminary design should be ready soon, and a community meeting will be held to share that information.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.