

Project Updates for December 6, 2016 Meeting

NWSC Grant Reports

Eelgrass Monitoring (Tautvydas): Four volunteers are currently analyzing the underwater videos for the presence of eelgrass. Process expected to be done by January 1, 2017. Gregg Ridder expects to complete the data mapping and calculations in time for presentation to IC MRC in April. Albert Foster is also using the underwater videos and spreadsheets as a basis for comparison to his BioBase sonar results. The team will meet in late January to review 2016 results and develop long-term plan for continuing the project.

Seining (Tautvydas): No update.

Bull Kelp Monitoring (Rhodes): The field season is over. A workshop to review the season was hosted by NWSC in Port Townsend on Tuesday, November 1. Due to the weekday scheduling, most Island County participants could not attend. However, Lucas Hart & Brittany Jones (NWSC marine program manager & NWSF kelp project coordinator, respectively) will be distributing workshop notes & summary of the season soon.

Other Reports

Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve – SMIAAR (Rhodes):

The kelp kiosk is in place at Libbey Beach Park (Figure 1). Currently, the display board identifies the park as part of Washington State’s Aquatic Reserve system, & contains enlarged versions of WA Department of Natural Resources’ sustainable harvesting brochure (in English & in Korean). Future displays will explain the ecological important of kelp & possibly the Aquatic Reserve system.



Figure 1. Kelp kiosk at Libbey Beach Park. Enlarged versions of DNR’s bilingual sustainable kelp harvest brochure are positioned at the right side of the display board.

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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A bird disturbance survey at Libbey Beach Park was sponsored by the SMIAR Citizen's Committee on October 29, 2016. Steve Ellis (survey leader), Rick Baker (Whidbey Watershed Stewards executive director), & citizen committee members were joined by Birdie Davenport (program manager for DNR's Aquatic Reserve system), Betty Bookheim (DNR kelp researcher), & Kathy Jacobson (North Sound Aquatic Reserve coordinator) (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Bird disturbance surveyors at Libbey Beach Park in late October 2016. Notice all of the bull kelp still visible in the nearshore area!

Storm Surge Monitoring (Tautvydas): For Whidbey Island, Storm Surge Monitoring training took place on 10/19/2016 at the Coupeville Rec Hall. Dr. Eric Grossman (USGS Pacific Coastal and Marine Science, Dept. of Geology at Western Washington University) gave an overview of the project and then completed the training on the beach at Ebey's Landing. Thirty one volunteers, most but not all from Sound Water Stewards, signed up and another 15 expressed interest but could not attend the training. Ten beaches have been surveyed on Whidbey Island by Paul Bigelow (team lead/coordinator) and Kes Tautvydas. Another 14 have been suggested as interesting and will be surveyed by Paul and Kes. Beach assignments are still being worked out although most of the assignments have been completed. On Camano Island Storm Surge Monitoring training took place on 10/17/2016 at Cama Beach. Carol Gillespie is the team lead/coordinator on Camano Island. Beaches have been identified and surveyed and volunteers have been assigned.

Outreach (Bennett): No update.

Island Local Integrating Organization (Bennett): No update.

Sound Water Stewards (Farrington): On November 15, members from both islands gathered at Deception Pass State Park for the Annual Membership Meeting, followed by a potluck lunch. Elections were held for three expiring board positions. Jay Adams, who is currently vice president of the board, was re-elected to a new 3-year term. John Mathis of Camano Island and Anne Baum of Whidbey Island filled the other two expired board positions. We look forward to a fruitful year working toward our vision of a sustainable Puget Sound!