



Jefferson County
**Marine
Resources
Committee**

CLALLAM COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

JOINT MRC MEETING

July 11, 2017
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Meeting Notes



ISLAND COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES
COMMITTEE

Introduction

Wade Crouch, co-chair for Jefferson County MRC, welcomed the participants followed by a brief introduction of all the participants including names, which MRC they were a member of, and what project they were working on.

Approval of Jefferson County minutes:

June MRC meeting minutes were approved.

Approval of Island County minutes:

Kes Tautvydas moved to approve the Island County MRC Minutes from June 6, 2017. Ed Adams seconded. The minutes were approved.

Clallam MRC minutes:

Clallam County MRC did not have a quorum at the beginning of the joint meeting. The minutes will be approved at the August meeting.

Current Status of 2018 Funding for Northwest Straits Initiative & MRCs

Rich Childers, NWSC Executive Director, started out with a brief summary of the Commission which was authorized by Congress in 1998. Since 2011, EPA funding has been awarded through the Puget Sound Partnership. (The Dept. of Ecology has served as the mechanism for all funding to the Commission since its inception, but does not provide any funding). For the past 4 years it has received \$800K from EPA through PSP. Rich was pleased to announce for the first time that the Initiative will receive some funding in 2017 through the general state fund. This was made possibly with strong support from Senator Ranker. Rich finally briefly talked about the "Puget Sound Day on the Hill" event in Washington D.C. organized by PSP. Seventy partners and representatives including several tribal representatives went to the capitol and participated in the three day event. Part of the message to the lawmakers was that Puget Sound is all about jobs. Five NWSI representatives, Nan McKay, Jerry Masters, Rich Childers, Caroline Gibson and Ginny Broadhurst went and for two days after the main event reached out to state lawmakers including Federal Senator Patty Murray, U.S. Representative Derek Kilmer and nine senior state employees. Derek Kilmer provided great support and facilitated many of the meetings.

Caroline Gibson, NWSF Executive Director, followed Rich with a brief description of NWSF. The NWSF is a nonprofit and was created four years after the NWSC to solicit funding to supplement the federal support for the Commission and MRCs. The NWSF board includes 13 members of which nine are currently filled. NWSF has offices in Bellingham and Port Townsend and has four staff. Federal and State funding sources include DNR, EPA, Department of Ecology and WDFW. The Commission's external relations committee has been working with Senator Kevin Ranker to secure state funding for NW Straits MRCs at the same level as for coastal MRCs. NWSF is also working on developing corporate sponsors such as Boeing and Shell Oil. Other potential funding sources include philanthropic foundations. These groups often have a very narrow "need" and timeline so NWSF is working on developing a portfolio which highlights the projects and efforts of the seven MRCs and NWSF. NWSF current budget is \$1.6 million of which \$500K comes from private funding sources. Caroline noted that there will be another invite to apply for Opportunity Fund grants this next year and Shannon Davis added that people should feel free to contact their local Foundation Board member with questions or ideas.

Education Outreach Discussion

Jefferson

Lead: Ashley Mackenzie, Jefferson MRC co-chair

- For the last 3 years Jefferson County MRC has hosted the event "Digging for Dinner"
- It has been a very successful way to reach community members and in 2017 the effort was expanded to two events
- Topics include shellfish identification and safety. The first event in 2017 was focused on clams and the second on oysters and clams.
- The event was advertised through list servers and people were asked to sign up for the event
- Both events filled up quickly
- The license issue was solved by requiring participants to get their own permit before the event. Children less than 14 years do not need a license. This way people would also learn about the how to apply for a license
- High School Engagement is another JMRC educational outreach program. They are just starting the program in collaboration with NW Watershed Institution. The first tasks are to identify interesting projects and advertise the program at the high schools.

Clallam

Lead: Jeff Ward, Clallam MRC chair

- Clallam County MRC has identified four audience groups to target through their educational outreach effort: elementary school kids, college students, young adults, and adults/seniors
- The intern program targeting college students has been a success
- The intern program consists of 3-5 paid internships where the students are working on current MRC projects along with the members
- The program culminates in the Intern Celebration where the students give a public presentation of their work
- Another successful program is the Oil Spill Preparedness training that Clallam County MRC has offered for numerous years
- The training includes one HAZWOPER training and two oiled wildlife classes annually
- Clallam County MRC has tried to reach young adults with kids through adult presentations and kids hands-on activities. The first event had fair attendance
- Clallam County MRC has now so many field projects that we are looking for citizen science volunteers
- In his presentation Jeff asked the following three questions: How do you reach college students? How do you reach young family adults? How do you create and sustain a pool of volunteers?

Island

Lead: Barbara Bennett, Island MRC Vice Chair

- Because Island County MRC is always busy they decided to conduct a need assessment in 2017
- Their mission includes informing county contacts on issues related to the marine environment
- Barbara had face-to-face meetings with 11 department heads and their staff
- Some of the feedback included: be bold and persistent in reaching out to county employees, monitor county projects, identify research questions, provide educational outreach to county staff and build educational communication with the public
- Island County MRC is currently working on a finfish net pen white paper to be submitted to the Commissioners in 2017
- She also suggested using the public forums to leverage the MRC website

Discussion

- Lunch activities is a good time to reach students or after school games
- Use local community papers or neighborhood newspaper and list serves to reach local residents

- Port Townsend Leader is a good way to promote events in Jefferson Co; Peninsula Daily News is another option, but at times it is difficult to get timely information in the newspaper
- WDFW Facebook page or "Next Door" social media can be useful as well
- Island County MRC has used the shoreline landowner forums to reach out to landowners
- Island County MRC will be making a video to be displayed at a kiosk by the planning department.
- Suggestions were made to create a shared depository for any MRC related videos for all of the NWSI.
- Neil Harrington suggested reaching out to sister organizations to share volunteers
- A short discussion followed about how interested the MRCs should be in promoting themselves. Jeff Ward pointed out the uniqueness of the NWS Initiative and suggested that the MRCs use that when promoting their events; Ashley Mackenzie would rather see the MRCs be promoted through promotion of their projects
- Finally it was suggested that communication with county employees be one of the topics for the upcoming MRC conference.

Eelgrass Discussion

Jefferson

Lead: Dale Moses

- Jefferson County MRC has deployed buoys marking voluntary eelgrass protection zones and encouraging boaters to anchor outside of these zones.
- The public has responded very well to the buoys.
- Difficulties have included buoy maintenance and buoys floating away.

Island

Lead: Kes Tautvydas

- Island County MRC monitors eelgrass beds through a combination of underwater videography, aerial photography, and the recent addition of multi-beam sonar.
- Most beds appear to be stable. Increases have occurred in only a couple areas.
- The new sonar data consistently correspond to videography data and aerial data.

Discussion

Monitoring

- Albert Foster invited interested individuals to accompany him on a trip to see how the sonar monitoring works.
- Could sonar be used to detect derelict crab pots? Possibly. Albert can look into this further.
- Any boater with the Lowrance sonar gear could upload data to BioBase account (currently funded through Island County MRC's NWSC grant). This could be a good citizen science opportunity.
- Compare results with WA DNR data.

Are there other ways to educate the public about anchoring outside of eelgrass beds?

- Include information for individuals obtaining Boater Education Card
- Publish advertisements or an article in boaters' magazines, Waggoner Boating Guide
- Get beds onto GPS charts
- Utilize apps, such as Active Captain
- The buoys have also served as an outreach method in getting the public aware of the Jefferson MRC and what they do
- Share with County officials and departments where eelgrass beds are located
- Existing video footage of eelgrass is quite low quality. Create higher quality footage and also take the opportunity to discuss anchoring outside of eelgrass zones