

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

September 5, 2017

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

PRESENT: Elsa Schwartz, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Barbara Bennett, Ed Halloran, Kestutis Tautvydas, Dave Thompson (WebEx), Frances Wood, Lori Clark Island County DNR (non-voting) Tim Lawrence WSU Extension Island County (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff)

ABSENT: Lois Farrington, Jill Johnson, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards

VISITORS: Tom Vos (SWS & SRTCC), Janet St. Clair (SWS), Tom Koontz (UW – Tacoma), Lisa Kaufman (NWSF)

CALL TO ORDER: Schwartz called the meeting to order at 3:32pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Bennett moved to approve the agenda. Tautvydas seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** A spelling correction was noted in the August 1, 2017 minutes. Halloran moved to approve the corrected minutes. Tautvydas seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

Shoreline Armor Reduction Program Update: Lisa Kaufman, Nearshore Program Manager for the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) presented on their Shoreline Armor Reduction Program (SHARP). The presentation is available online:

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org/media/17641/2017-0905-sharp.pdf>

Highlights of the program include:

- Goal is to influence shoreline landowners to remove, soften, or forego shoreline armoring
- NWSF wants to involve the MRC during all phases of restoration projects.
- NWSF is receiving funding for a new round of workshops, site visits, and outreach.
- A workshop will be held in Snohomish County in the fall, which can be open to Camano residents. The Whidbey workshop will be held in the spring.
- Priority sites were identified as sites where armor removal is feasible and there are either moderate or high ecosystem benefits.
- Postcards and letters were sent to priority sites to encourage landowners to sign up for a site visit. They have only received 3 responses.
- The SHARP website has been updated:
http://www.nwstraitsfoundation.org/project_cat/shoreline-landowner-program/
- Outreach ideas suggested included utilizing NextDoor and drewslist

Kaufman also reviewed the armor removal projects underway in Island County:

- Maylor Point: 1500 feet of shoreline with varying types of armor at the base of a feeder bluff at the point of a divergence zone. Armor removal is planned for next summer. Funding has been awarded through the NTA process. WDFW has been conducting pre-

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construction monitoring and is scheduled to continue with post-construction monitoring. Permitting is underway.

- Sunlight Shores: Community beach in Useless Bay with about 350 feet of shoreline with various bulkhead material, including creosote wall, riprap, and debris. Located in a low-energy, marsh-like habitat. The project would remove the armor, regrade the shoreline, and install soft shore protection in one corner to protect the adjacent property's bulkhead. The project is being considered for SRFB funding. Still need 30% matching funds. The community association will be providing volunteer time for vegetation planting and maintenance.
 - o How the MRC could help:
 - Kaufman would be interested in conducting seining here, though there are concerns it may be too mucky.
 - Wood noted they might be able to do shore bird monitoring here.
- Seahorse Siesta: Large barge and fill on a feeder bluff. There has been documented forage fish spawning on both sides of the barge. The project would involve removal of the barge, surrounding bulkhead, and associated fill. The project also includes maintaining the beach access with the addition of a small rockery. Funding sought from SRFB and USFWS. Permits are almost complete.
 - o How the MRC could help:
 - Conduct forage fish surveys here.
- Cornet Bay Stewardship: Due to the lack of SRFB funding because the capital budget has not been passed, the NWSF had to stop their contract with Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group who was conducting the vegetation maintenance and monitoring at Cornet Bay. As such, currently there is no watering or weeding going on
 - o How the MRC could help:
 - Establish a stewardship team, either within the MRC or with another related group.
 - Through the end of the summer water the conifers in the recently restored area (Area 1).
 - Create press release for Cornet Bay, including forage fish findings and need for stewardship.
- NWSF projects must have a link to the MRC. Some overall ways for the MRC to help at all project sites include:
 - o Public outreach
 - o Monitoring
 - o Ongoing stewardship

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **Bennett** will connect with **Kaufman** regarding coordination of a future MRC forum on aging infrastructure that could relate to SHARP work.
- **Toledo** will develop press release regarding forage fish findings at Cornet Bay and drum up interest for stewardship group.

BUSINESS ITEMS

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MRC Retreat (Schwartz): Schwartz announced that the MRC retreat will be held on Tuesday, November 14th in lieu of the November 7th MRC meeting. The retreat will be on Camano; exact location and time are being worked out.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **ACTION: Adams moved to move the November MRC meeting from November 7th to November 14th. Wood seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Toledo** will follow up with the Northwest Straits Commission and Foundation for their involvement in the retreat.

Coordinator's Update (Toledo)

- MRC Conference: The MRC conference will be held on November 3-4, 2017 in Bellingham. All MRC members are encouraged to attend. Additional information will be distributed as it becomes available.
- Sound Water Stewards Presentation: Toledo will be presenting to the SWS Camano meeting on September 11th regarding the MRC. Wood noted that they are looking for more pigeon guillemot volunteers on Camano.
- SWS Coordination: Toledo will be meeting with SWS Executive Director, Janet St. Clair and Coordinators, Kelly Zupich and Suzie Gaffney in October to help facilitate communication between the two groups.
- Children's Day: The MRC will have a booth at Children's Day on Sept 23, 10am-2pm. We will be borrowing the forage fish toss game from Skagit MRC. Toledo will staff the event. Other volunteers are welcome.
- Be Whale Wise Brochures: Toledo has received several "Be Whale Wise" brochures, which are available in her office.
- Net Pens: Island County Emergency Manager, Eric Brooks, is receiving daily briefings from the Unified Incident Command. Over 142,000 Atlantic salmon have been extracted from the damaged net pen. Over 1700 have been reported to WDFW through fish tickets.

NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

NWSC Grant Reports and Other Reports include information shared from written project updates submitted by project leads as well as any additional information shared during the meeting.

Forage Fish Monitoring (Richards/Farrington):

Eggs have been found at Cornet Bay! Surf smelt eggs were found at Station 4 on 8/23 for the first time. This is the first documented evidence of spawning within the restored area of Cornet Bay. Station 4 is within the area where spawning habitat was restored in 2012, which goes to show the importance of long-term monitoring.

June-July results:

- Cornet Bay: One dead smelt egg was found at Station 4 at Cornet Bay on 6/9, which is the first instance of an egg found at this site. However, for findings to be counted as presence, at least 2 eggs must be found during the sampling.
- Ala Spit: 9 smelt eggs found on 7/21
- Camano Island State Park: 4 smelt eggs found on 7/28

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- Maple Grove: 249 smelt eggs found on 6/26, 210 smelt eggs found on 7/28

We are adjusting the forage fish survey effort to make it more sustainable. Until we find a person on Camano who can conduct surveys there, sampling at Maple Grove and Camano Island State Park sites will be suspended, starting in October. On Whidbey, we will move to monthly sampling year-round at restoration sites Cornet Bay (3 beach stations) and Ala Spit (1 station). We will also sample monthly at index sites Glendale, Freeland Park, Long Point and Windjammer Park.

Many thanks to Dan Matlock for continuing to do south-end sampling, and to the volunteers who have given us help over the past two years.

Lucas Hart is coordinating a second conference call on Aug 29, 1:00, for WDFW and all MRCs with forage fish projects. The purpose is to provide a platform for MRC volunteers and others to ask questions and provide relevant insights.

Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood): The breeding season is winding down and most of the birds have completed their breeding activity. Early summary reports indicate an average year for guillemot numbers and breeding activity, however not all data have been entered.

Over 70 volunteers participated this year along with our summer intern, Caitlyn Connolly. Caitlyn completed her survey work and has returned to Maine for her senior year of college. She will participate via Web Ex at the October MRC meeting.

We will present survey results to the MRC on October 3rd and hold our end-of-year potluck with volunteers on October 4th.

Outreach (Bennett): Proposals for in-field identification of IC MRC volunteers and public information on-site while IC MRC work is being done were both presented at the July meeting. Following MRC decisions, 3 sandwich boards have been purchased, and Beau Gaughran is coordinating drafts for content to be posted on the boards with Barbara and Anna.

Following up on a question about uses of citizen science data in peer reviewed journal publications, Bennett contacted COASST which is a strong model of best practices in citizen science. COASST reports that 7 peer reviewed journal articles have relied on COASST data. The entire list of documents using COASST data is on their website:

<https://depts.washington.edu/coasst/news/news.html>

In addition, the following articles address this question:

- The science of citizen science: Exploring barriers to use as a primary tool:
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320716301951>
- The Invisible Prevalence of Citizen Science in Global Research: Migratory Birds and Climate Change:
<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0106508>
- Global change and local solutions: Tapping the unrealized potential of citizen science for biodiversity research:
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320714004029>

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OTHER REPORTS:

NW Straits Commission / Foundation:

The Foundation is looking for representation on the Board, especially from Island County. Any recommendations should be passed along to the Foundation. The Board meets every other month.

The RFP for next year's Opportunity Fund will be made available in the next few months.

The Commission met on August 25 in Coupeville. Bennett presented on our education and outreach efforts. The meeting highlights will be distributed when available.

Creosote Removal (Turpin): Turpin is continuing to coordinate with DNR. There is no update regarding the MyCoast app due to the delay in passing a capital budget.

Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee (Thomson): No update.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: No report

County Lead: The County is processing the contract for Toledo's coordination with the MRC on the NWSF's SHARP project. Clark will be providing an update on LIO projects at the next meeting.

County Commissioners: No report.

COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.