

Island County MRC
Approved Minutes of Wed., June 5, 2002 meeting
Amended and Approved 8-14-02
Heller Road Firehall, Oak Harbor

MRC Members Present: Chair Tom Campbell, Don Meehan, Hi Bronson, Dick Toft, Phyllis Kind, Mike Gallion, Marty Behr, Roger Sherman, Benye Weber, MRC Exec. Dir. Gary Wood, MRC secretary Kate Poss. Absent members: Sayed El-Sayed, who was out ill; Jeff Tate, Tom Roehl, who was ill. **Visitors:** Frank Roberts of Lagoon Point; Today's speaker: Mike Sato of People for Puget Sound; and Rick Levin, reporter for Whidbey News Times.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m.

Additions to the agenda: Roger Sherman will talk about Wash. Dept. Fish & Wildlife's marine protected areas.

Approval of May 15 minutes: Action: Hi Bronson moved and Phyllis Kind seconded approval of the May 15 minutes. The motion was carried.

Discussion: Meehan will scan Liam Antrim's 5/15/02 presentation about Olympic Coast Marine Sanctuaries and **post to the MRC website.**

Presentation—Orca Pass International Stewardship Area—by Mike Sato, People for Puget Sound—1/2 hour presentation. Summary to follow minutes.

Introductions:

Benye Weber, our newest MRC member, represents the Port of Coupeville. She replaces Sharon Hart, who served for the interim until the Coupeville Port selected Benye to represent it. Hart replaced former Port **Commission representative** Tom Shaughnessy.

Reports

- Sherman handed around copies of Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife's (WDFW) latest sport fishing rules, effective from May 1, 2002 through April 30, 2003. This version included a copy of Marine Area 9—featuring Keystone Conservation Area, which the MRC noted is correct; and the Admiralty Head Marine Preserve, which our members said had the arrow (indicating where not to fish) pointing the wrong way—a misprint.
- Our MRC discussed possibly using grant funds to monitor whether these MPAs are protecting bottomfish over the long run. Campbell said he favors having Wood explore with WDFW its interest in collaborating with us on monitoring the Keystone and Admiralty sites.
- Wood will be in Olympia June 7 and will ask if WDFW is planning to monitor these sites and if we can collaborate with them.
- Talk drifted to how best to advise fishers on where they can and cannot fish. We have the chance to get grant funds from ALEA—Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account—which is funded from
- Wash. Dept. of Natural Resources leases such as marinas. The funds could be used to post information signs at the Keystone and Admiralty Head marine protected areas. While Gallion said it is the WDFW's job to post the signs, Wood said he'd like to work with the WDFW and not against them; perhaps they need our help. Mike Sato suggested contacting State Parks for working with a sign on their property at Keystone. Meehan added that ALEA must use the funds; and since State Parks are facing budget cuts, it might be in our interest to help them with sign placement. Weber said she totally agreed that the ALEA funds should be used. She suggested checking with chambers on replacing forlorn signs in Pt. Townsend. **ACTION: Meehan moved that our Exec. Director draft a grant request to ALEA for signage, including posting one at the Pt. Townsend ferry (if the Coupeville Chamber is agreeable); plus explore with WDFW as to posting signs at Keystone and Admiralty MPAs. The Exec. Director will then report back to us. The motion was seconded by Weber. The motion was carried by all.** Discussion: The

signs would warn boaters/fishers about the MPA boundaries; Gallion said there would be a heck of a sign if boaters were to read it from the water all the way to the shore.

- Meehan passed around a thank you card for the MRC's \$500 contribution toward sponsorship of the Penn Cove Water Festival with the theme of Nearshore.

Grants with Gary Wood

- Following is the actual grant funds for 2002-2003 for our MRC:
 - \$75,000 left from Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) FY 2001-2002. Of that amount, \$20,000 will go to Dan Penttila, the WDFW scientist who is mapping forage fish spawn at Island Co. beaches; \$55,000 will be paid to Jim Norris for continued eelgrass videography
 - \$50,000 for 2002-2003 from NWSC—Northwest Straits Commission, our parent organization
 - \$10,000 for administrative costs from NWSC
 - \$227,000 from SRFB
 - \$45,000 from National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
 - \$70,000 from NWSC in the fall—\$40,000 to be used for restoration and conservation projects
 - TOTAL: \$407,000
- Wood asked members to contact him with ideas and proposals on spending the money. Grants will be submitted on pre-written forms to expedite the process.
- \$407,000 is not bad, Wood said, especially since we started with \$25,000 in 1999
- \$200,000 of the total can be used to hire WDWF personnel, who would otherwise be laid off.

Other grant possibilities

- Marine Ecosystem Health Program or MEHP grants from UC, Davis. Meehan said Davis funds science-based projects. Their grants could be used to map kelp beds, use bathymetry—measuring the sea bottom with high resolution photography— to map flat fish habitat. We received a MEHP grant for FY 2000-2001 of \$17,000. Wood will explore getting funds from UC Davis again

MRC Workplan 2002-2003—Meehan

- Suggested priorities include:
 - Crab breeding habitats
 - Estuaries
 - Algal survival
 - Urban runoff
 - Creosote—is it a problem?
 - Outreach to youth
 - Data Interpretation
 - What do we need to do to get on the ground for MPAs?
- Kate will email this list to MRC members

Derelict Gear Removal--Wood

- Navy will give us a video of their derelict gear removal @ Stewart Island in the San Juans. June 20th.
- Our MRC has an action grant of \$15,000 for derelict gear removal education/outreach
- Toft praised Wood's presentation on derelict gear removal efforts at the Whidbey Angler's club.

Shoreline Hardening Update—Meehan

- Meehan passed around a map noting where hardened shorelines are on Camano Island. Project should be wrapped up by the end of the month.
- Frank Roberts wants to see the data dictionary about hardened shorelines. He wonders if it includes what materials they are made from. Meehan will put this info. on our MRC webpage. For more on the Beach Watcher's/MRC shoreline hardening research project, visit <http://www2.whidbey.net/skagit/gps/progress.htm>

Next meeting-- Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping technology

- Meehan asked for ideas on how the presenters—Jeff Tate, Doug Kelly and Joe Burcar, all of Island County—might shape their talk.
- Suggestions on this day included: making sure the talk is simple; that it include what have we already mapped; that we have a handout explaining how the technology might be used in overlay maps; how does this information affects us.
- Those with other suggestions can email Jeff Tate at jeffT@co.island.wa.us

Summer meeting schedule for MRC

- July 10 –Heller Road Firehall, Oak Harbor, 4 pm – 6 pm
- August 14—Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland—4 pm – 6 pm
- September—return to two meetings on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 4 pm – 6 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm. Our next meeting is scheduled for June 19 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Freeland, 4 pm to 6 pm.

Summary & Discussion of Proposed Resolution on Orca Pass International Stewardship Area by Mike Sato, People for Puget Sound

- Sato passed around copies of the proposed resolution on the Orca Pass International Stewardship Area. NWSC/MRC resolutions. He also left a few detailed copies of the area with Meehan.
- Sato said the Orca Pass International Stewardship Area Initiative advocates (for more information visit <http://www.pugetsound.org/habitat/default.html>) are asking the Northwest Straits Commission and its member Marine Resources Committees for resolutions on this proposed Marine Protected Area. These are the "trans-boundary" waters between British Columbia and Washington State, which advocates say are really a single ecosystem. The area of interest includes and adjoins Boundary Pass (between the Canadian Gulf Islands and the US San Juan Islands), and was named the "Orca Pass International Stewardship Area" (after the Orca whales that transit these waters regularly. Protection would extend to marine mammals, fish, seabirds, invertebrates, plants. Aim is to protect and enhance biodiversity. Organized by People for Puget Sound.
- Wood will be asked to represent the Island County MRC's position on the resolution to Northwest Straits when it votes next month.
- Getting Clallam and Tribal support will be tough, says Sato
- Discussion
 - Our members wanted to know why there was no support from fishers, when there is support from whale watchers, divers, boaters, scientists, conservation groups, Snohomish, Whatcom and Skagit counties. Sato said fishers hackles get up if they believe their fishing rights will be taken away. Yet WDFW supports this initiative.
 - Another question was who would manage this if it were approved. Sato said it would be a coordination of efforts.

Near the end of today's meeting, after Sato left, MRC members commented on the proposal

- Comment ranged from support to questioning of who will manage this to concern about becoming an unwilling party should a lawsuit occur. There is talk about connecting a natural gas line from the mainland to Vancouver Island. Question of whether this initiative would impact that line. Why aren't MRC's going to be part of this management?
- We will ask San Juan MRC what their ideas are.
- Members should email Gary with additional opinion/comment.