



Island County Marine Resources Committee

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org>

MINUTES

April 2, 2003, 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Heller Road Firehall
Oak Harbor

Present: Chair Tom Campbell, Martin Behr, Hi Bronson, Mike Gallion, Phyllis Kind, Don Meehan, Roger Sherman, Jeff Tate, Dick Toft, Admin. Ass't. Dan Pedersen.

Absent: Sayed El-Sayed, Tom Roehl, Benye Weber, Exec. Director Gary Wood.

Visitors: Frank Roberts, Lagoon Point.

Call to order: 4:05 pm, Chair Tom Campbell called the meeting to order and declared a quorum.

Agenda: Adopted. No additions, no objections.

Minutes of 3-19-2003: Adopted. Motion by Bronson, second by Toft, no objections.

New/unfinished business

> MRC retreat, June 4. Meehan asked for some discussion of what we should cover at the MRC retreat to be held during a five-hour dinner session at one of our regularly-scheduled May meetings. Behr explained that with the NWSC scheduled to sunset in 1-1/2 years, he felt now is the time to consider embarking on a significant project that goes beyond just studying the resource and collecting data. We don't know whether Congress will extend the NWSC beyond its five-year initial phase. Meehan said his gut feeling is that they probably will. Campbell said we should talk about "what ifs," such as what we will do if they don't. Meehan said the retreat also will be an excellent opportunity to look at the data we've collected. Gallion asked who should attend the retreat – whether to restrict it to voting members or include employees (Wood and Pedersen) as well. There was general agreement that Wood and Pedersen should attend, and perhaps also a few individuals such as Doug Kelly, who is doing the data mapping. Behr volunteered to draft an agenda for the retreat. Meehan said he will find a location for it – several possibilities were mentioned, including the Oyster Catcher in Coupeville, the Jim Davis House in Greenbank, the Garrison House at Fort Casey, and the Best Western in Oak Harbor. Because of attendance conflicts with the May dates, it was agreed by consensus to hold the retreat June 4.

> Workplan 2003. Meehan led a discussion of goals for the 2003 benchmarks, during which the following goals were identified:

1. Local Participation

- Continue to reach out to the public with our public relations program.
- Publish the MRC brochure. A draft was completed some time ago, but not printed.
- Produce an Island County MRC insert for the NWSC brochure.
- Hold workshops throughout the year.

2. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

- Work with other MRCs to develop a network of MPAs in Puget Sound.
- Pursue obtaining a grant to hire professionals to design a network of MPAs for Puget Sound.
- Begin MPA criteria designation.

3. Net Gain in Nearshore Habitat

- Complete shoreline hardening survey for Whidbey Island
- Continue eelgrass surveys, feeder bluff study, forage fish survey
- Conduct additional derelict gear removal
- Implement the Shore Stewards program

4. Shellfish

--Ask the Island County Health District to give us an update on monitoring of shellfish beds for contamination.

5. Bottomfish Recovery

--Continue our support for derelict gear removal.
--Have a presentation on Holmes Harbor flatfish and their habitat

6. Increase in Indicator Species

--Seek funding to consult scientific data on habitat of the following indicator species, concentrating on banks, fluffs and estuaries, and then catalog Island County habitats and, where necessary, recommend procedures to improve these habitats: eelgrass, forage fish, pigeon guillemot, belted kingfisher, rough-winged swallow, great blue heron

7. Sharing Data (Meehan will confer with Tom Roehl)

--Share data with Department of Fisheries & Wildlife

8. Outreach and Education

--Shore Stewards – this is the big one this year.
--MRC speakers
--Educational programs
--Sound Waters, Penn Cove Water Festival, Wonders of the Islands
--MRC press releases and news coverage

> Creosote program. Meehan mentioned he wants to schedule a field trip for our group to Port Townsend for a presentation on the toxic compounds used in treated lumber.

> Credit. Phyllis Kind commented that the MRC does not seem to get as much recognition as it should for its sponsorship role in various events such as Sound Waters University. Dick Toft pointed out that the Progress Report recently issued by the NWSC included a relatively small section about Island County MRC, compared to the other counties. He felt this was not indicative of the lead role Island County has taken in securing grant funding and setting up many studies.

> Whidbey-Camano Land Trust (WCLT). Behr commented on last meeting's presentation by WCLT's executive director and board president. He said WCLT is conducting a land conservation plan this year so they can be proactive in determining which lands they want to protect. He said the MRC should provide input to them on specific lands or areas we'd like to see included in the land conservation plan for salmon habitat protection.

> Jet boat. Behr mentioned he has taken delivery of a 20-passenger jet tour boat that does 40 mph and is equipped with a bow landing gear. He would like to take the Marine Resources Committee on a trip from Coupeville to Camano Island to hold one of its regular meetings there – perhaps at Utsalady or Cama Beach. Date was tentatively set for May 21.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Campbell declared the meeting adjourned, 6 pm.

NEXT MEETING: April 16, 2003, Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland.