



Island County Marine Resources Committee

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org>

MINUTES

May 7, 2003, 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Heller Road Firehall
Oak Harbor

Present: Chair Tom Campbell, Martin Behr, Hi Bronson, Sayed El-Sayed, Mike Gallion, Don Meehan, Tom Roehl, Dick Toft, Exec. Director Gary Wood, Admin. Ass't. Dan Pedersen.

Absent: Phyllis Kind, Roger Sherman, Jeff Tate, Benye Weber.

Visitors: Kim Bredensteiner, Island County Public Works, Watershed Project Manager for Whidbey Island; Frank Roberts, Lagoon Point.

Call to order: 4:05 pm, Chair Tom Campbell called the meeting to order.

Quorum: 4:10, with the arrival of Marty Behr, Campbell declared a quorum.

Agenda: Adopted. No additions, no objections.

Minutes of 4-16-2003: Adopted as revised to clarify that at 5:30 pm, the public meeting ended and the committee went into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. At 6 p.m., the executive session ended and no further business was conducted. Motion by Bronson, second by Meehan, no objections.

Reports – Gary Wood

> **Derelict gear.** Wood reported that the NOAA Community Restorations Projects office this morning announced their grants for next year, unofficially. They plan to fund phase II of the Northwest Straits derelict gear project with a \$100,000 grant. This is a pretty nice endorsement from the office that funded the initial project last year.

> **Forage fish PowerPoint presentation.** Wood shared the forage fish PowerPoint presentation he gave recently at the Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference in Vancouver, B.C. He pointed out that forage fish – sand lance, herring and surf smelt -- are the ultimate non-charismatic species, but they form the base of the food chain on which all the charismatic species rely. They aren't noticed much until they are gone, and in Puget Sound this has substantially happened -- the historic harvest data have crashed since 1990 and the mortality has greatly increased. The benefit of our approach to gathering forage fish data is that all seven counties in the Northwest Straits Commission area are administered under one program, with one set of protocols and one set of overhead, rather than seven different programs. Dan Penttila of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is doing the research, supported by a great many volunteers who assist him in gathering the samples from beaches throughout the seven county area. Wood coordinates the program. The resulting data will be accessible in exactly the same format for all the counties, with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping developed by Doug Kelly.

New / unfinished business.

> **Shore Stewards.** Meehan reported that a contract for design work should be signed next Monday by the county commissioners.

> **Feeder bluff / shoreline survey.** Jim Johannessen of Coastal Geologic Services has already started work – his contract also should be signed next Monday.

> **Amendments** are in progress for the funding of Penttila's work, and for two new biologists to work with him.

> **Our board retreat** is scheduled for 4-9 p.m., Tuesday, June 3, at the OysterCatcher, with a target of under \$15 for the meal. Duane Fagergren of Puget Sound Action Team will be our moderator.

> **Workplan 2003.** Wood reported he had received input from Pedersen regarding outreach. El Sayed provided a write-up on indicator species. Meehan explained that Wood is still doing some tuning to finalize the Workplan, but that it needs to be approved tonight. **Motion to approve: Behr. Second: Bronson.** Gallion asked whether it will still be possible to add to the Workplan or make changes after it is approved. Meehan and Campbell assured him that changes may still be made. **Adopted,** no objections. Wood said he will wait a week for additional comments before revising and sharing the plan.

> **Bluff-nesting birds.** Meehan reported that C.J. Contracting will perform the shoreline hardening survey on Whidbey Island. Over the course of several conversations, it was determined that conducting a survey of bluff-nesting birds at the same time would complicate and slow the contractor's work. Instead, Phyllis Kind, Frances Wood and Sarah Schmidt are assembling a team of Beach Watchers to conduct the bird survey independently, using hand-held global positioning equipment, and this information will later be added to the shoreline data map.

> **May 21 Camano Island meeting.** For the May 21 meeting, it was agreed that we will leave Coupeville at 2:00. Our first destination will be Cama Beach, arriving about 2:30. We'll depart Cama Beach at 3:30 and arrive at the Yacht Club about 3:50. The public meeting will run from 4-6 p.m., and we'll be back in Coupeville about 6:15 or 6:30. Brittany Stromberg will give a presentation on Shore Stewards at the Yacht Club meeting. Marty mentioned he would like to distribute some marketing literature for the boat during the Camano visit.

> **Use of research vessel.** Wood mentioned that Friday Harbor Labs has acquired an Alaska salmon boat they have modified to use as a research vessel, and they are offering each MRC one day's free use of the vessel. Snohomish MRC has asked whether we would be interested in pooling our days to conduct remotely-operated video research in the channel between Camano and Snohomish County. Meehan said he'd like to see what's around the Deception Pass area. Gallion agreed that Deception Pass would be of interest and added that he'd also be interested in looking for rockfish in the Admiralty Head area to put that question to rest. The consensus of our group was that either of these areas would be of greater interest to us than the Snohomish MRC proposal.

> **Agenda item for Camano.** Meehan asked Campbell to include on the agenda for the Camano meeting a few minutes for Marty Behr to speak to the group about The Langley Explorer, in appreciation for his having donated the boat for the MRC's use in traveling to the Camano Yacht Club and Cama Beach.

Public input

Frank Roberts mentioned that some time ago he had purchased a copy of the original eelgrass CD rom. He asked whether any additional studies on eelgrass or other subjects have since been made available. Meehan replied that data collection is ongoing on a number of subjects, but nothing has been completed and therefore nothing has been released. As soon as data collection is completed we will put it on the Web so it is accessible to the public. Wood said he expects that by the end of this summer, more will be available.

Adjournment: 5:27pm. Motion by Behr, second by Meehan. No objections.

Next meeting: May 21. MRC members will depart Coupeville at 2 p.m. aboard the Langley Explorer and return about 6:15 – 6:30. There will be a stop at Cama Beach from 2:30 – 3:30.