



Island County Marine Resources Committee
www.islandcountymrc.org

2004 RETREAT SUMMARY ONLY

September 14, 2004, 2:00 – 8:00 pm
Phyllis Kind's home
Greenbank



Clockwise from left: Rex Porter (Island County Public Works), Roger Sherman, Dan Pedersen, Ian Jefferds, Phyllis Kind, Hi Bronson, Dick Toft, Ken Urstad, Sayed El Sayed. **Photographer:** Don Meehan (not pictured). **Facilitator:** Don Meehan. Absent: Tom Campbell, Rolf Seitle, Jeff Tate, Benye Weber, Bruce Wood, Gary Wood.

Summary

What have we accomplished?

Baseline data collection – eelgrass, forage fish, shoreline hardening, feeder bluffs

Outreach – speakers, articles, Shore Stewards, stewardship areas, Sound Waters University, website, direct-response eelgrass survey, 5-Year MRC Report to the Community.

What are our greatest strengths?

Our data

Extensive outreach

Grants

Effective executive director

An engaged, diverse and talented board

Innovative programs – Shore Stewards, Sound Waters, Stewardship Areas

What are our greatest weaknesses?

Failure to publish our data – it's not publicly accessible

County departments aren't using our data

Data is growing old

We are under-using our committee's talent

Our group is not setting the direction. Group should set the agenda for E.D. to carry out. In the past, the opportunistic pursuit of grants has steered the agenda by default.

Poor attendance by some.

What is missing or needed?

We have not engaged someone to analyze our data

We are not partnering sufficiently with universities and others

We are not doing follow-up monitoring—revisiting our data every few years for change

We should compile a to-do list of needed research projects and make it known to the universities -- Western, Skagit, University of Washington, etc.

We should convert the 5-Year Report to a pdf and put it on our website.

How can we better use the talent of this group?

Set up a grant-review subcommittee to work with Gary and give him feedback

Set up a university outreach subcommittee to contact universities about research opportunities and needs, and availability of data the MRC has gathered.

Appoint permanent alternates for key members who cannot regularly attend meetings

Empower members to take risks and communicate with potential partners about opportunities, as long as they don't commit the group's time or resources without consulting it.

What should be our top priorities in 2005?

Stewardship areas

Shore Stewards

Maylor's Marsh

Who should we partner with?

Universities -- perhaps use Johnny Palka as a resource to assist us in finding partners.

Island County Surface Water Management

Which programs would be most valuable to us?

Creosote

Nonpoint pollution -- outfalls, surface water runoff

Indicator species – determination of what they are for Island County

What constitutes success? How will we know when we get there?

We'll know if we monitor and follow-up

Where do we want to be in five years (five-year plan)?

Incomplete. We will assess it based on the notes from this retreat.

Our Top Priorities For 2005

Meehan -- We've already made those decisions. Stewardship areas are our top priority. Shore Stewards, that's another. Maylor's Marsh. We've actually, as a committee, dedicated \$10,000 to each of those out of our NWSC grant. That doesn't mean we can't have other things, but those are big-ticket items right now. Though, if we want to change courses we could do it.

Bronson -- We really have to exploit the Stewardship Areas. That's a logical area to get into. We can crank a lot of things into that.

Jefferds -- I agree. The more we follow up on stewardship the more it's going to take care of some of the nonpoint areas like fecal coliforms. That's one of the best things we ever could have come up with -- having people take ownership and pride in their own situation. And that follow-up monitoring, once they realize they've made a difference, that's a good way to point out what constitutes success.

Partnering with Universities -- Forming a Subcommittee

Toft -- So you just mentioned following up on those three areas. At today's meeting we batted around that we want to marry up with the universities somehow -- academia -- to be able to tap that resource. Maybe we'll give them the idea of studies. Maybe we should let them know we're always looking for opportunities to work with, or join with, universities, academia and other MRCs.

Meehan -- To me it makes a lot of sense to have that as an initiative, to form a committee whose job is to reach out to the universities to people who ought to know about us.

Kind -- We have a wonderful resource right here in Island County, Johnny Palka, who was a director of environmental programs at the University of Washington until he retired about a year ago. He knows practically everybody.

Jefferds -- If after today's meeting we're all fired up and have new ideas about resources, as a member before we contact somebody do we need to come before the group and say I'm thinking about contacting these people regarding projects for their students, or do we need to just do that and bring that feedback to the group?

Toft -- If you're committing the group's time or resources you should bring it to the group first and ask if they're interested. On the other hand, if you're just reporting back, then I'd do it.

Meehan -- We will be successful if members feel free to operate as members. When it comes to committing the group's time or resources, then it's a risk. But I'd rather have people taking chances than sitting on their hands doing nothing.

Our Five-Year Plan. Where Do We Want to Be in 2009?

Meehan -- Obviously we didn't get to this. We will do this based on the notes Dan is taking. We need an annual plan also, a workplan for 2005.

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