



Marine Resources

Committee

January 19, 2005

Minutes

4:04 – 6:14 pm, Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland

www.islandcountymrc.org

PRESENT: Chair Phyllis Kind, Hi Bronson, Tom Campbell, Ian Jefferds, Don Meehan, Rolf Seitle, Ken Urstad, Benye Weber, Bruce Wood, Exec. Director Gary Wood, Admin. Ass't. Dan Pedersen.

ALTERNATES: None. **ABSENT:** Sayed El-Sayed, Jeff Tate.

VISITORS:

Kim Bredensteiner, Coupeville, Island County Public Works.

Nancy Waddell, Maxwellton Salmon Adventure.

Peg Urstad, Greenbank.

CALL TO ORDER: 4:04 pm, Kind called the meeting to order. **QUORUM:** Declared. **AGENDA:** Adopted. **MINUTES** of 1-05-2005: Adopted. Motion by Bronson, second by Urstad, carried unanimously. **CORRESPONDENCE.** Wood reported we are receiving mail just about daily on the proposed Nichols expansion. Meehan reported he received acknowledgment from the Environmental Protection Agency that they've received our pre-proposal for the Shore Stewards grant.

Summary of Decisions

MRC project priorities. The Executive Committee will discuss priorities for spending the \$90,000 of NWSC funds available to us next year, and our preferences for NWSC regional projects, and report back to the MRC.

MRC representative to NWSC. The Executive Committee will discuss the county commissioners' concerns about combining the positions of MRC chair and NWSC representative, and bring a recommendation to the full MRC.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VERBAL REPORT -- WOOD

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife grant. Wood passed around a very thick document, our most recent DFW grant application for \$18,000, to illustrate the work that goes into the grant process. There is no assurance the work will lead to anything at all, since many applications are not approved. But when a grant is awarded, the process moves into the contract stage. We draft a contract for review by the county prosecuting attorney and risk management department. They review it and ask for certain changes. We then make the changes and send it back to originating organization for review and signature. They return it to us. We then submit it to the county commissioners for signature. We do the work or subcontract it out. The county pays the bills. Then we solicit reimbursement from the granting organization.

Grant status spreadsheet. Wood also shared a spreadsheet showing the status of all grants applied for, awarded or turned down.

Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) retreat. Wood reported the recent NWSC retreat at Garrison Hall, Fort Casey Inn, was well attended and the setting was excellent. The funding the MRC will receive next

year from the NWSC, which he described at our Jan. 5 meeting, has been approved. We will receive \$10,000 for administrative use in category A, \$30,000 for MRC support in category B, and \$50,000 for MRC projects in category C, for a total of \$90,000. In addition, our county will share part of \$70,000 the NWSC will use for a regional project. Simultaneous with this increase, to reduce the workload associated with annual grants, the NWSC will be awarding these grants for two years at a time starting July 1. This leaves us needing to fill a funding gap from January through June of 2005, so we are amending our old grant to move up a portion of the new funds to cover the gap.

Allocation of Category B and Category C funds. Wood said we need to have a discussion soon about what we want to do with the \$30,000 of Category B (support) funds and \$50,000 of Category C (project) funds, as well as what we'd like to see done as a \$70,000 NWSC regional project. In addition to all this, the NWSC will spend another \$86,000 on a regional project it will direct, and it is possible that some or all of this could be combined with the \$70,000 regional project. Wood said this MRC is on record that we'd like to see regional funds spent to develop a data management system or database. All the MRCs are gathering data and need a way to store and share it that can be accessed by county planners. Wood suggested that the Science and Executive committees explore how we'd like to see these funds spent. Meehan and Jefferds both pointed out that we spent some time at the retreat considering our priorities, made a list and put together a five-year plan, and that this should guide us.

Jefferds reiterated that data consolidation and access are big priorities for our MRC. Wood pointed out that before we address the regional project, we need to determine how we'll use our local monies. The data issue really should be addressed regionally. Locally, he suggests we consider Shore Stewards and the stewardship areas, and what we want to do for an on-the-ground project. Meehan pointed out that last time we allocated \$10,000 for Shore Stewards, \$10,000 for stewardship areas and \$10,000 for a restoration project. Maylor's Marsh fell through – now we are considering a creosote removal project.

On-the-ground restoration projects. Wood said our top priority should be finding an on-the-ground project. We thought Maylor's Marsh would be this project for us. It's hard to find an appropriate restoration project. A willing landowner is needed, but the project can not be for the "benefit" of a private party. Permits also are needed. Bredensteiner pointed out that in addition to a willing landowner, a project also needs willing neighbors. The problem with Maylor's Marsh was that the neighbor, Oak Harbor, wasn't willing.

Education and outreach. Meehan commented that we have some good projects under way. While Shore Stewards has been "interestingly slow" in developing, we have a group enrolled on Camano and the program is now expanding to Whidbey and to Hood Canal. Every person who gets on the Shore Stewards rolls is an asset to the community -- it's money well spent. The stewardship areas also are worthy of further development. Pedersen has some pieces of stewardship area work in his contract, and perhaps this can be bolstered with signage and other actions. Waddell commented maybe an education/outreach committee could be helpful. She also pointed out opportunities exist for partnering with other organizations.

English sole in Holmes Harbor. Meehan pointed out Sayed El Sayed did his thesis on English sole in Holmes Harbor. We don't know anything about the condition of flatfish in Island County. Maybe this is something we should be looking at. We don't have rockfish but we are flatfish territory.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S WRITTEN REPORT (distributed in advance by e-mail)

Straits Commission retreat

Last Wed/Thurs the annual NWSC retreat was attended by over 20 participants, including Phyllis and Gary. Don also reported on Sound Waters. The FY 2005 Workplan and Budget were determined and approved. Important issues brought back to the MRC are selection of our local projects for 2005-06, and MRC intentions/preferences re new \$70,000 regional-MRC project(s) allocation. The Oystercatcher dinner made us proud to be 'locals.' The role of the regional non-profit Foundation and expanded fund raising/grant writing were discussed, and our "wish lists" for the Initiative's future.

Shore Stewards expansion

Mason, Kitsap and Jefferson counties are now funded to establish a Shore Stewards program, based on our model. Last Friday, Jan. 14th, Scott Chase and I met with Cammy Mills, new Hood Canal Shore Stewards Coordinator, and Pat Pearson, WSU Extension, Jefferson.

Grants summary

A summary in worksheet format was emailed to the MRC, still a work-in-progress. It should develop as a good tool for tracking our complex workload.

Holmes Harbor/Nichols Boat Builders

Residents continue to write the MRC on this issue. Our reply advises them of the public comment process and the appropriate process for their interests.

Coming events

- > Chair/county-lead meeting 1/20 (Padilla Bay). This annual meeting assists with staff and reporting issues. Regional projects will be the prime issue.
- > Creosote cleanup projects 1/28 (Padilla Bay). The Commission, DNR and MRCs are working on regional creosote removal projects. NWSC/DNR jointly committed \$85,000 /applied for pending CRP grants. Lisa Kaufman and Ginny Broadhurst are the leading an advisory group/ 3 projects in Whatcom, Skagit & Padilla Bay NERR. Next: developing list of project areas and gauging MRC's participation.
- > Sound Waters 2005 (2/5 Coupeville) The MRC will co-sponsor, have a display and show the Forage Fish poster as well. MRC-related class topics include talks on Shore Stewards, Maritime History, Derelict Gear, Habitat Mapping, Spartina removal, eelgrass, juvenile salmon, creosoted debris, shoreline planning, coastal geology, oil spills and responsible boating are included among the 60 available classes.
- > Next month, the MRC hosts a presentation about the new Clinton Ferry Park project (2/16 Freeland Meeting). Landscape architect Matt Swett will describe the Port of South Whidbey's beach-access park project, for which the Rotary Club is considering to fund MRC/Beach Watcher interpretive signage.
- > MRCs to be recognized! The Shared Salmon Strategy Summit will again honor the MRCs www.sharedsalmonstrategy.org/summit at a special presentation (Tacoma Conference Center/Jan 26-27) Contact: Shelby Smith 206-447-7052.
- > The 2005 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference, State Convention and Trade Center Seattle, March 29–31, will include two of our projects:

Abstract #99: **Island County 'Certified Shore Stewards'**

Session Assignment: C3. Environmental Education and Outreach I; Wednesday, March 30, 2005; Gary Wood presenting.

Abstract #100 - Poster: **The Incredible Egg Hunt -- Mapping Forage Fish in the Northwest Straits (2001-2003)**

COUNTY LEAD'S REPORT -- MEEHAN

Sound Waters University. Meehan said registrations are pouring in for Sound Waters University, Feb. 5 in Coupeville. He said there will be 64 classes this year and he expects to register about 450 attendees and fill the auditorium of Coupeville Middle School for the keynote address.

Creosote. Meehan said he had been in touch with Lisa Kaufman of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the proposed creosote removal project on the west side of Whidbey from Ebey's Landing to Ft. Casey State Park. This would be a joint project of state parks, DNR and the MRC. He suggested DNR turn over its creosote funds to state parks. Island County would sign a contract with state parks awarding \$8,000 for creosote removal, \$1,500 for marketing and media, and \$500 for administrative time by WSU Extension. Jefferds expressed skepticism that creosote log removal will produce the best net

benefit for the money. Meehan agreed there are conflicting opinions in the scientific community. Bredensteiner said it may be more of a human health issue. Wood pointed out we'll be leveraging our money -- \$10,000 only -- and that DNR made the selection of creosote as their project. Kind commented the scientific questions aren't going to be answered today and we need to move on.

Island County Commissioners' position on alternates and NWSC representative. Meehan reported he had met with the Island County Commissioners regarding last meeting's changes to our policy on alternate members and the election of Kind to be our MRC's representative to the NWSC. He said they had agreed to appoint Joe Burcar as Jeff Tate's designated alternate. They expressed a strong desire for us to bring the names of proposed alternates to them for approval before we designate them. They also expressed concern about the idea of rolling together the positions of MRC chair and NWSC representative. This is because the MRC chair changes annually, whereas our representative to the NWSC may serve for many years and accumulate influence with the NWSC as a result of long service. Meehan said he told the commissioners he would share their concerns with the MRC. Kind said she agreed this made perfect sense. Still, she said she had learned a great deal by attending the NWSC retreat and believes there is benefit in rotating the position. She said one of her goals is to involve more members of the MRC in more things, and this is one way to do it. Campbell asked whether a compromise was possible where Wood could continue to serve as our representative, but our chair could be an alternate and also go to the meetings. Seittle pointed out that even though the MRC chair will rotate, the NWSC rep position does not necessarily need to rotate when the chair changes. Kind said she'd like to see the NWSC consider setting term limits on these positions. Meehan commented it's always good to have new blood. On the other hand, Wood has done a fabulous job with the NWSC and they have relied heavily on him. The challenge is to figure out how to keep Wood engaged with the NWSC. Technically, right now, Wood remains the NWSC commissioner. Wood said he wishes the committee had discussed this decision before acting -- that he would very much like to see the position rotate. All the other counties except Clallam have rotated their representative to the NWSC. He said the NWSC representative position is a bigger job than being chair of this MRC. It was agreed that the executive committee will discuss this issue and make a recommendation to the MRC.

CHAIR'S REPORT -- KIND

Benchmark subcommittees. Kind pointed out that we now have a new series of NWSC benchmarks to guide our work. She would like the MRC to consider creating subcommittees for each of these benchmarks. A member of the MRC would serve as chair of each subcommittee, but the recruiting of subcommittee members could be broadened by reaching into the community and involving Beach Watchers and others. Jefferds said he thought it was a great idea. Meehan agreed that it makes a great deal of sense to broaden our subcommittees into the community.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Kind declared the meeting adjourned at 6:14 pm.

Coming Events

Feb. 16, Wednesday, 4-6 pm: MRC meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland. Speaker, landscape architect Matt Swett describing the Clinton Ferry Park, beach-access project.

Mar. 2, Wednesday, 4-6 pm: MRC meeting at Heller Road Firehall, Oak Harbor.

Mar. 16, Wednesday, 4-6 pm: MRC meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland. Speaker: Jeannie McElwain, Freeland Water Quality Improvement Program.