



Marine Resources

Committee

September 7, 2005

Minutes

4:00 – 6:00 pm, Heller Road Firehall
Oak Harbor

www.islandcountymrc.org

PRESENT: Chair Phyllis Kind, Tom Campbell, Sayed El-Sayed, Ian Jefferds, Don Meehan, Dick Toft, Ken Urstad, Benye Weber, Admin. Ass't. Dan Pedersen. **ALTERNATES:** Joe Burcar for Jeff Tate. **ABSENT:** Hi Bronson, Joe Hillers, Rolf Seitle, Jeff Tate, Executive Director Gary Wood. **VISITORS:** Roger Sherman, Coupeville, to report on the Keystone Ferry Terminal process; Kim Bredensteiner, Coupeville, Island County Salmon Recovery Program.

CALL TO ORDER: 4:00 pm. **QUORUM:** Declared. **AGENDA:** Adopted with minor adjustments. **MINUTES** of 8-10-2005: Adopted, motion by Urstad, no objections. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

Summary of Decisions

Sherman to track Keystone for MRC. By consensus the MRC asked Roger Sherman to continue following the Keystone Terminal process for us and report back to the MRC periodically.

MRC to invite Oregon State University scientists. By consensus the MRC agreed to invite scientists from Oregon State University to present to us the results of their flow-modeling of the options currently being considered for Keystone Harbor.

Action grant project leads. The following individuals volunteered to serve as leads in tracking and reporting to the MRC on our NWSC Action Grant projects:

Shore Stewards -- Camano--Bronson. Whidbey--Toft

Derelict gear recovery – Urstad

Water's edge book – Pedersen

Shoreline signage – Jefferds, Seitle, Weber, El-Sayed

Water quality – Hillers. Seining component – Urstad

Data / blueprint-style mapping – Kind

Grant application and pre-proposal. Motion by Urstad, second by Weber, carried unanimously, to authorize Wood to proceed with a NOAA pre-proposal and an NFW grant application.

REPORTS

Keystone Terminal Update – Roger Sherman

The Port Townsend-Keystone route is our state's most hazardous for several reasons – strong southerly winds, powerful currents, a tiny Keystone Harbor and the fleet's oldest boats. The steel-electric ferries are nearly 80 years old. Community sentiment has overwhelmingly opposed relocating the Keystone terminal to some new location. The Citizens' Advisory Committee reviewed several options to improve safety and service to the existing harbor and Washington State Ferries (WSF) chose these four for further study:

- **Relocate** the jetty 300 feet east, widen the harbor to the east, use 130-car Issaquah-class ferries.
- **Extend** the jetty 600 feet offshore, widen the harbor to the west, and use 130-car ferries. This option would consume about a third of the existing campground.
- **Keep harbor as is.** Build new 100-car vessels for this route with specialized propulsion systems.
- **Keep harbor as is.** Build 75-car “Keystone Special” vessels of same size as old steel electrics.

Right now we have probably the best underwater marine park in the state. Sherman pointed out that computer modeling studies performed at Oregon State University showed extension of the jetty would produce a much larger area of calm waters for ferries to approach Keystone Harbor. He said this would probably also facilitate a larger underwater park.

Two of the options involve building new vessels, or new-style vessels. The state’s objection to these options is that the vessels would not be interchangeable with others in the state’s fleet, and in the event of a breakdown a replacement might not be available. Also, new vessel designs typically bring increased costs as bugs are worked out of the design. The existing Issaquah-class design has been de-bugged. Of the four proposals under study, estimated total life-cycle costs are as follows:

- \$805 million – Relocate jetty and use 130-car vessel.
- \$824 million – Extend jetty and use 130-car vessel.
- \$841 million – Build 100-car special-propulsion vessels.
- \$1,064 million – Build 65-car “Keystone Special” vessels.

Sherman said the question before the MRC at this point is whether to take a position or continue to wait and watch the process until the environmental studies are complete. Campbell recommended the MRC ask Sherman to continue to follow the Keystone Terminal process for us and report back from time-to-time. The group agreed by consensus.

Campbell also suggested the MRC take a closer look at the option of extending the jetty and ask some of our contractors who have expertise in shoreline processes to give us their opinion on it. Kind suggested we invite the experts from Oregon State who did the computer modeling to make a presentation to us and we invite our contractors to listen and contribute. Meehan suggested if we invite the Oregon experts we should reserve space for a large public meeting in Coupeville because it will attract large attendance.

Action Grant Project Reports

Shoreline resource book -- Pedersen distributed a one-page, side-by-side comparison of the existing 52-page book, Getting to the Water’s Edge and the proposed 100-page book, tentatively called Getting Outdoors in Island County. Our Action Grant budget for this project is \$12,500, which will go toward Sarah Schmidt’s work as editor, Pedersen’s work as supporting writer-editor, and for graphic design. Once the book is further along and we have a sense of printing cost, Meehan will seek separate funding for printing. We presently visualize a pocket-size book with about twice as many pages as the current publication and with a broader scope. We expect to include all the current shoreline sites plus some maps, color photography and attention to trails, kayaking, bicycling, hiking and birding. We anticipate a larger press run – possibly 5,000 copies, as opposed to 1,000 – and a higher price, perhaps \$9.95 as opposed to the current \$6. All these details are subject to change as we get further into the project. The mission of the book is to be about 75 percent practical tool and 25 percent education on such subjects as stewardship and marine processes. We are considering a map pocket for a large lidar map keyed to the shoreline sites. We hope to have the capability for much more color photography and the Beach Watchers’ sealife I.D. guide. We hope to complete the writing and editing by Oct. 15, the design by Dec. 1 and printing by Dec. 15. Bredensteiner commented that an “even dollar price” such as \$10 would facilitate purchase of the book at conferences, rather than a more complicated price such as \$9.95. Meehan said he thinks the book will be sharp enough to command a higher price than \$10. Urstad pointed out that since we are including hiking and birding, what about fishing? The west side of Whidbey Island offers some excellent shoreline fishing areas and huge numbers of people take part in this. Meehan encouraged Urstad to review the shoreline access sites in the book and make sure we include comments on fishing areas.

Water quality – Hillers. Although Hillers was unable to attend today, Kind said she had received a note from him saying he has made contact with the Beach Watchers working on the buoy and equipment. Meehan said Bob Buck, Jim Somers and himself are working on this. A week ago they brought in the individual who operated this equipment for the Poulsbo Marine Science Center to assist us in understanding how to calibrate the equipment. Meehan said we still need to make arrangements with the Port of Coupeville regarding where to place the computer system, since it is a line-of-sight system. Jefferds asked where the buoy will be placed. Meehan said he'd like Jefferds to help us make that decision so we can get the best data. Once we know the buoy location, we can determine where to place the computer system. Within about a month Meehan hopes we'll be able to launch this project. He said also we must comply with Coast Guard regulations in siting our buoy. **Seining project.** Kind said Urstad has volunteered to work with Hillers on the seining component of the water quality project.

Shore Stewards – Bronson. Bronson could not attend today. Kind said Bronson had asked if she would appoint a member from Whidbey to track the Whidbey Island piece of the project, and he will track the Camano piece. Toft volunteered to collaborate with Bronson as the Whidbey Island member.

Derelict Gear Recovery – Urstad volunteered to track this project in Island County. This will be primarily to follow the Northwest Straits Commission's activities, since this is a regional project they will administer.

Interpretive Signage – Jefferds volunteered to track this project, supported by Weber, Seitle and El Sayed. Pedersen remarked an informal committee exists on interpretive signage, consisting of himself, Scott Chase and Nancy Waddell. Kind asked Pedersen to send the names of these committee members to Jefferds, Weber, Seitle and El Sayed.

Data mapping – Kind.

Salmon Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Report – Bredensteiner

Bredensteiner said the Salmon TAG met last week and ranked the Salmon Recovery Funding Board applications. Tomorrow the Salmon TAG will submit the list to the Water Resources Advisory Board. The Salmon TAG rankings are:

1. Livingston Bay project to purchase 300,000+ acres of tidal land, nearshore and conservation easements, requesting \$400,000 from SRFB.
2. Skagit Bay project to evaluate feasibility of protection and restoration sites, sponsored by Skagit River System Cooperative with MRC involvement, approximately \$250,000. The MRC piece is about \$10,000 focusing on Shore Stewards.
3. Ala Spit Protection Assessment, to look at drift processes and determine whether any restoration is needed, and to do feasibility analysis of protection. Sponsored by Island County Public Works.
4. West Whidbey Nearshore Fish Assessment, sponsored by Washington Trout.
- 5 and 6. Deer Lagoon and Crockett Lake restoration feasibility studies, sponsored by Washington Trout.

Crescent Harbor project -- Toft

Toft presented several photographs he took recently of the Navy's work at Crescent Harbor Marsh, which is being reopened to tidal access. Originally the project was being done with SRFB funding, but the grant expired and the project currently is in the hands of the Navy. For several years a 36-inch pipe with a tide-gate has provided an opening to the saltwater, but Chinook salmon have not used the pipe. Toft hopes to include the photos in a poster exhibit at the Northwest Straits Commission's fall training conference in Bow. Meehan commented the Crescent Harbor situation is somewhat analogous to Maxwelton Beach, where a pipe passes under the road to the saltwater. But Maxwelton backs up to agricultural lands.

Executive Director – Wood

Wood was unable to attend because he is caring for his father, who is in poor health. Meehan reported Wood has requested permission from the MRC to proceed with a pre-proposal for a NOAA grant dealing with marine debris and with an application for the National Fish and Wildlife's Pioneers in Conservation grant. This grant seeks private property owners to partner with them on restoration work. El Sayed pointed out that one of the roles of the MRC Science Committee is to evaluate any grant proposals before Wood proceeds with an application. Meehan commented the NOAA grant is a pre-proposal and that

before Wood proceeds with the full proposal it definitely should be referred to the Science Committee. Meehan commented Wood should definitely share the first draft of the application for the Pioneers in Conservation application with the Science Committee for comment. **Motion by Urstad, second by Weber, carried unanimously, to authorize Wood to proceed with the NOAA pre-proposal and the NFW grant application.**

County Lead – Meehan

Fair exhibit and Shore Stewards display. Meehan reported we had a good exhibit this year at the county fair including a tabletop display for Shore Stewards that Pedersen had photographed, written and designed. It was on three poster-size panels produced on a large-format printer in Public Works.

Action grant project budgets. Meehan reviewed our action grant budget, pointing out we have \$112,500 for MRC projects, plus the NWSC's regional project for derelict gear. Many of our committee members now are project leads who will be tracking these activities and budgets.

Billing procedures. Meehan said that in the future, when an invoice is received he would like to route it first to the Executive Committee so that at least one member reviews it before payment. He has assigned Jim Clark of his office to work with the grants and budgeting, in an effort to establish tighter and more timely tracking of grants.

Chair – Kind

NWSC meeting on Lopez Island. Kind said the topic of *artificial reefs* was raised at the last NWSC meeting. Some individuals present felt artificial reefs are wonderful and others felt they are terrible. Bottom line of the discussion was that if any MRCs are considering proposing artificial reef projects at some future date, such projects will not be funded by the NWSC. On a different topic, Kind said San Juan County gave a superb presentation on the *"Five S" planning framework* for identifying conservation and restoration sites. The *next NWSC meeting* will be **Sept. 30 in Island County** and Kind encouraged members of our committee to attend. The host MRC usually is given some time for a presentation about their activities and Kind suggested our shoreline mapping project with Doug Kelly might interest the group. Kind said the **NWSC Science Committee** has asked us what kinds of data we have collected so they can begin working on data coordination among all the MRCs. She will ask Wood to send this information to Andrea Copping. The **NWSC Growth and Development Committee** is now getting organized. They have about \$40,000 available and Kind expects it will be used to hire a coordinator and perhaps a grant-writer. Jefferds asked whether the Foundation might be a potential competitor for grant funds otherwise available to our MRC. Meehan pointed out the NWSC's success really is dependent on the success of the MRCs. County members in the NWSC outnumber the non-county appointees, so he does not see the Foundation as a threat in any way to the MRCs. He said a regional body such as the Foundation would have leverage in approaching large companies such as Microsoft, whereas a local MRC might not be in a position to do so.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Kind declared the meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.

Coming Events

Sept. 30, Friday, 9 a.m.—3 p.m., **NWSC** meets in Island County.

Oct. 5, Wednesday, 4-6 pm, **MRC** meets at **Heller Road Firehall, Oak Harbor.**

Oct. 19, Wednesday, 4-6 pm, **MRC** meets at **Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland.**

Speaker: Jim Johannessen, Coastal Geologic Services.

Nov. 2, Canceled, Wednesday, 4-6 pm, **MRC** meets at **Heller Road Firehall, Oak Harbor.**

Nov. 4-5, Friday-Saturday: **NWSC** fall training conference at **Skagit Casino, Bow, Wash.**

Nov. 16, Wednesday, 4-6 pm, **MRC** meets at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Speaker: Fred Goetz, fish biologist, US Army Corps of Engineers, on tracking bull trout with sounding devices and hydrophones.

Dec. 7, Wednesday, 4-6 pm, **MRC** meets at Heller Road Firehall, Oak Harbor.

Dec. 21, Canceled, Wednesday, 4-6 pm, **MRC** meets at Trinity Lutheran Church, **Freeland.**

