

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

September 20, 2016

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

PRESENT: Frances Wood, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Barbara Bennett, Lois Farrington, Ed Halloran, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Kestutis Tautvydas, David Thomson, Stan Walsh, Tim Lawrence WSU Extension Island County (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Lori Clark, Florian Graner, Richard Hannold, Anthony Turpin, Todd Zackey

VISITORS: Lucas Hart (Northwest Straits Commission), Rick Baker (Whidbey Watershed Stewards)

CALL TO ORDER: Wood called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Walsh moved to approve the agenda. Tautvydas seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Bennett moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on September 6, 2016. Richards seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

MRC Opportunity Fund (Toledo): Project ideas were discussed, and are detailed on the attached Excel spreadsheet.

2017 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award (Wood): This award is a partnership with the MRC, WSU Extension, and SWS, and will be presented at Sound Waters on February 4, 2017. An award committee with 2 members from each partner will discuss the award criteria, and will select the awardee. Nominations should be solicited from as many different organizations as possible.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **Halloran** volunteered to serve on the award committee.
- **Any member** interested in serving on the award committee should contact Wood.

Coordinators Update (Toledo): Members are highly encouraged to attend the MRC Conference, November 4-5 in Port Townsend. Lucas Hart will have Nicole Jordan resend the registration link.

Toledo will be taking maternity leave starting in February. Duties of the MRC Coordinator will be covered by Island County staff.

NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

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Eelgrass Monitoring (Tautvydas): All eelgrass beds that were designated for this year's program, 8 on Whidbey Island and 2 on Camano Island, were surveyed successfully this summer, using Ken Urstad's boat and the standard equipment, after some equipment failures early on were corrected. A reconnaissance survey of marine vegetation at Useless Bay along the North shore was completed. No eelgrass was found, but there were patches of sea grass. Albert Foster completed his survey of the same beds on Whidbey Island and Camano Island using his own boat equipped with multi beam sonar. Data analysis and comparison of the two approaches to surveying eelgrass beds will be completed later this year and over the winter.

Toledo and Cheryl Lowe (Jefferson MRC) will be presenting to the PSEMP Nearshore Workgroup on the Island and Jefferson MRC eelgrass projects on September 29.

Albert Foster, who has been testing the use of multi-beam sonar to track eelgrass beds, will be moving to Port Angeles. Ken Urstad will not be conducting underwater videography next year, but has offered use of his boat and the equipment.

Seining (Tautvydas): Toledo is working with Lucas Hart to discuss options for working with a grad student to conduct comprehensive data analysis of seining data from Cornet Bay over the past 8 years.

Kelp Monitoring (Rhodes): The field work is winding down and should be completed by the end of September. The report for the grant is in progress. For some fun footage of forage fish schools in the Ebey's Landing bed, take a look at these videos!

<https://vimeo.com/178768831> (July 2016, tentatively identified as Pacific herring)

<https://vimeo.com/180467239> (July 2016, tentatively identified as Pacific herring)

<https://vimeo.com/180453405> (August 2016, also includes some shiner perch)

OTHER REPORTS:

Smith and Minor Island Aquatic Reserve (SMIAR) – Rhodes: This year's kelp and macroalgae survey work has concluded. There were many more harvesters observed and contacted on the beach this year than in 2015. Bird disturbance data continues to be collected. Construction on the Libbey Beach Park kiosk is underway and should be completed by the end of September.

Salmon TAG (Thomson): Salmon TAG is reforming to become a citizen's advisory committee with seats representing specific areas. This will shift the role of the Salmon Recovery citizen's advisory committee from the Water Resource Advisory Committee (WRAC) to the newly formed Island County Salmon Recovery Technical and Citizen's Committee.

Island Local Integrating Organization (Bennett): The ILIO approved the project selection criteria for allocating the \$100,000 that each LIO is responsible for allocating to 2016 projects.

Island, San Juan, Strait, and Whatcom LIOs participated in a workshop to develop conceptual models around oil spill preparedness and response which LIOs will consider for adoption in their respective 5-year Ecosystem Recovery Plans.

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Outreach (Bennett): The Outreach Committee met with the Executive Committee right before the MRC meeting, and will report more at the following meeting. They are looking for 1-2 more members to join the Outreach Committee.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **Any member** interested in joining the Outreach Committee should contact Toledo.

Sound Water Stewards (Farrington): SWS is currently in the process of interviewing and hiring coordinators for both Whidbey Island and Camano Island.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: Wood reported that the election of officers will be held at the first January meeting, and encouraged members to think about serving as Chair or Vice-Chair.

Due to the MRC Conference scheduled for November 4-5, Wood recommended canceling the November 1st MRC meeting.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **ACTION: Adams moved to cancel the November 1, 2016 MRC meeting. Schwartz seconded.** The motion passed unanimously.

County Lead: No report.

County Commissioners: No report.

COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:

Lucas Hart reported that the NWSC is in the process of seeking a new Director. A meeting is planned in early November for the hiring committee and Commissioners to meet final candidates.

Hart and staff from WDFW will be meeting with Oregon Fish and Wildlife to share about the forage fish work being done in Puget Sound. Hart and Brittany Jones are organizing a kelp workshop in Port Townsend on October 14.

Hart is organizing ocean acidification forums, and encouraged the MRC to coordinate with him on any future forums. Hart is also coordinating with Pacific Northwest National Labs, who are developing climate change prediction models related to ocean acidification and will be hosting stakeholder workshops.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.