

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

September 6, 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 (WebEx), Kestutis Tautvydas, Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting, WebEx), Tim Lawrence WSU Extension Island County (non-voting), Jill Wood representing Richard Hannold, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Florian Graner, David Thomson, Anthony Turpin, Stan Walsh, Todd Zackey

VISITORS: Lucas Hart (Northwest Straits Commission, WebEx), Gregg Ridder (MRC eelgrass lead), Linda Ridder (Sound Water Stewards, presenter), Tom Vos (Sound Water Stewards)

CALL TO ORDER: Wood called the meeting to order at 3:31 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Farrington moved to approve the agenda. Bennett seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Adams moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on July 5, 2016. Rhodes seconded. The minutes were approved. Richards moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on August 2, 2016. Bennett seconded. The minutes were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

SOUND WATER STEWARDS UPDATE

Linda Ridder, President of Sound Water Stewards, presented on the transition of Island County Beach Watchers to Sound Water Stewards (SWS), current goals, and future plans. Presentation available online: <http://www.islandcountymrc.org/uploads/pdf/Resources/2016-0908%20SWS%20presentation.pdf>

SWS remains committed to continuing the work initiated through Beach Watchers in training volunteers to promote a healthy, sustainable Puget Sound environment. SWS applied for and received 501(c)(3) status in 2016. A temporary part-time staff assistant has been working with SWS since March 2016. They are now seeking two part-time coordinators – one for Whidbey; one for Camano.

Funding is received primarily through Sound Waters University. Additional sources of income include a portion of sales from Lighthouse Environmental Program license plates, donations, and events.

Volunteer training continues. There are 18 new trainees in the Camano class and 24 in the Whidbey class.

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Citizen science is a large priority. Most citizen science projects are conducted through other organizations. Intertidal monitoring is a SWS project. A strength of SWS is in providing access to dedicated, well-trained volunteers. New projects are considered by the Projects & Science Review Committee. Members are notified of volunteer opportunities through emails as well as through sign-up sheets passed around at monthly meetings.

Future ideas and collaborations:

- Interested in collaborating with the MRC on a lecture series.
- Partnering on grants: SWS has the ability to provide volunteers for a project; they would be interested in partnering with an organization that has the budget or capacity to conduct the necessary lab work or analysis for the project.
- Interested in freshwater monitoring at Cranberry and Pass Lakes in coordination with State Parks.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Oil Spill and Vessel Traffic Meeting (Toledo): San Juan, Island, and Whatcom Lead Integrating Organizations (LIOs) are hosting a workshop to develop ecosystem recovery plan strategies around vessel traffic and oil spill prevention and response on September 13, 10am-2:45pm. The organizers requested participation from the MRC. Farrington and Bennett offered to attend as their schedules allow.

MRC Conference (Toledo): The MRC conference is scheduled for November 4-5 in Port Townsend. MRC members are highly encouraged to attend. Registration is free, but is required for those planning to attend.

MRC grant funds will cover lodging expenses for one night in Port Townsend for the conference. Members should let Toledo know by September 13th if they plan to request reimbursement for lodging. Members are responsible for booking their own hotel room, and need to request the government rate when booking. The Jefferson County government lodging rate at the time of the conference is \$102.

There will be a poster session at the conference. MRCs are encouraged to bring a creative display.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **MRC members** should register for the Nov 4-5 MRC conference and reserve lodging arrangements. Pre-approval requests for lodging reimbursement should be made to Toledo by September 13.
- **MRC members** with ideas for the trifold display or other educational display for the conference should contact Toledo.

Coordinator's Update (Toledo):

ESRP grant: The Oak Harbor Marina Restoration Feasibility proposal was reviewed by the ESRP team and recommended for funding in the ESRP Preliminary Investment Plan. Projects will be incorporated into the ESRP rank-ordered investment plan list, which will be submitted to

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Washington State Office of Financial Management. Funding amounts are contingent on state appropriation levels.

Skagit River Salmon Festival: September 10, 10am-6pm. The MRC has been invited to share a booth with Skagit MRC. This year's festival program will highlight recent restoration work at Deception Pass.

MRC website upgrade: Toledo has been working with the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) and the contracted web developer on a proposed new layout for the MRC website. Toledo will also be updating website content and will be reaching out to project leads for updated information on projects.

County email: County email servers were out of service August 22-25. Any pending emails sent during that time should be resent.

WDFW monitoring: September 13 and 14 at Maylor Point. Pre-restoration surveys led by Hannah Faulkner (WDFW) will include wrack line, log line, beach topography, sediment composition, and forage fish bulk and elevation sampling. Monitoring will begin at sunrise and continue into the late afternoon. MRC members are invited to assist for part or all of the day.

Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) crab pot removal: NWSF is planning crab pot removal events, including one around Sunset Bay/Elger Bay. The NWSF requested help from the MRC in making contacts with local press regarding this work, and participating in the removal. Schwartz and Halloran offered to assist. Toledo will connect them with Jason Morgan (NWSF).

MRC Opportunity Fund: Applications for the MRC Opportunity Fund are due October 31st. Each MRC may request up to \$10,000.

Project ideas discussed:

- Partnership with Jefferson MRC on a social media project, such as eelgrass protection
- Partnership with Snohomish MRC on something in Port Susan, such as outreach to shoreline landowners
- Creating templates for interactive outreach displays to be used when projects are in the field. This could be used as a template for other MRCs.
- A facilitator position to help the pigeon guillemot project with data management and coordination with the Clallam MRC
- One or more interns, who could work on different MRC projects (monitoring and/or outreach/communications)
- Hosting outreach events, such as a forum on sea level rise or oil spill prevention/response

Questions of clarification for NWSF:

- How important is having a partnership with another MRC? Would both MRCs be able to request \$10,000 each for a joint project?
- Is it possible to use the funding for administrative support?
- Is outreach/education an allowable use of funds?

NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

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Forage Fish Monitoring (Richards/Farrington): The forage fish team continues to survey at three restoration sites - Waterman, Ala Spit, and Cornet Bay - twice monthly, and at Camano Island State Park once a month. In addition, they are now surveying multiple sites for WDFW's Index Site tracking. These include South Sandy Point, Freeland Park, Long Point and Windjammer Park on Whidbey, and Maple Grove on Camano. These Index sites were chosen by WDFW because they are public-access locations with known past spawning activity.

Maple Grove, a heavily-used 200' wide County Park with a boat ramp and a bulkhead, is the star for egg finds. The samples there have yielded 100-200 eggs at times, when other sites number eggs in single digits.

The crew of volunteers is getting skilled at surveying, so both restoration and index sites can be completed in one day with good results. All MRC members are welcome to join any time.

Shoreline Restoration – Cornet Bay and others (Richards): No further update.

Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood): All but a handful of the guillemot colonies have closed down for the season. There are still a few adults feeding young birds, but expect the entire survey to end in the next couple of weeks. Most guillemots have vacated the waters near the colonies for the fall and winter.

So far, results for this summer are right on average with previous years. Volunteers have reported a total of 1067 guillemots at the colonies surrounding Whidbey Island. 215 active burrows have been recorded and prey deliveries to 162 of those burrows have been noted. Thus far, volunteers have logged 311 one-hour surveys at their colonies.

The online data input system that was initiated last year has worked beautifully. It can produce up-to-the-minute reports on the data submitted by volunteers.

There will be an end-of-year potluck dinner and program for all volunteers on September 21st at the Unitarian Church just north of Freeland.

Summer intern, Emily Terao, has completed her on-site visits and is now compiling the data that she has collected. She will be reporting to the MRC at the October 4th MRC meeting.

OTHER REPORTS:

NW Straits Commission / Foundation (Adams/Corin):

Commission: See attached summary from August 26th NWSC meeting.

Foundation:

Personnel: Two new members of the Foundation Board attended the August 18th Board meeting: Betsy Lyons from Seattle, and Anne Murphy from Port Townsend. Tom Hoban left the Snohomish MRC due to term limits and stepped down from the Foundation Board at the same time. Tom had been with the Initiative for many years and will be greatly missed. With the August meeting Jerry Masters began his term as president, Lenny Corin as VP, Shannon Davis continues as Secretary, and Jay Lind will now serve as Treasurer. The Foundation continues to look for new Board members, and hopes to see recommendations from the

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MRC's. Currently there is representation lacking from the San Juans, and Whatcom County.

Citizen Science Opportunity Fund: The Request for Proposals will go out to the MRC's this month (September). Up to \$10,000 will be available for each MRC. The intent, as indicated in the name, is to support citizen science efforts led by the MRC's. Expect a simple, one-page form.

Potential MRC county events: The Snohomish MRC, in coordination with Snohomish resident and Board member, Jerry Masters sponsored an "Evening with the MRC". Jerry is willing to sponsor events in other counties. Please think about the potential to co-sponsor a similar event in Island County. The event in Snohomish County was not a fund-raising event but an opportunity for MRC members and friends to get together and to promote MRC support.

Foundation Retreat: The Foundation Board will be having a two-day retreat on Camano October 7-8. There is not an agenda yet, but likely topics will include discussing current status and future direction of the Foundation.

Joint Commission/Foundation Executive Committee meeting, July 26th: At the recommendation of the Commission a joint meeting of the Commission and Foundation EC's was held in July. The intention is to continue having these joint meetings, but the frequency is still to be determined. It is important to continue to emphasize good coordination and communicate within the Initiative. Given that Ginny Broadhurst is stepping down from the Commission and there will likely be a new Commission ED by the November Conference, it is important to continue to emphasize that we are all part of one Initiative.

November Conference: The Conference will be in Port Townsend, November 4-5. All MRC members are highly encouraged to attend the Conference.

Creosote Removal (Turpin): No update.

Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Toledo): The kiosk area by the Planning and Public Health front desks is being prepped for installation of the interactive video kiosk which will host videos on soft shore protection and the permitting process. A document outlining the permitting process for soft shore protection projects has been developed, and will be available on the Island County Shore Friendly webpage.

WSU Extension (Lawrence): Lawrence requested a discussion on the criteria for the 2017 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year award, emphasizing the importance of getting the word out to as many organizations as possible. Due to time constraints, the discussion was tabled for the following meeting.

WSU Extension will be moving to 406 Main Street effective October 31st. They currently have 5 modules from the Master Naturalist curriculum in the review process.

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/FOLLOW-UP

- **The MRC** will discuss the 2017 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year award at the September 20th meeting.

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LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: No report.

County Lead: No report.

County Commissioners: No report.

COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC: No comment.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:31 pm.