

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Project Updates for April 4, 2017 Meeting

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### **NWSC Grant Reports**

Forage Fish Monitoring (Richards/Farrington): Lois and Ruth participated in a forage fish all-MRC phone call initiated by Lucas Hart, NWSC, and including Phill Dionne and staff from WDFW. Questions about survey purpose and duration, how to improve communication between WDFW and MRCs, how our data contributes to spawning beach protection, and how surveys help us better understand restoration effectiveness and no-net-loss were fielded. This call format will be continued, probably quarterly, for all forage fish survey leads. We believe it improves data quality among the seven MRCs, and improves communication with WDFW.

Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood): We are delighted to announce that the Guillemot Survey coordinator position will be filled by Govinda Rosling. Govinda served as an intern with the Whidbey survey for two summers and has continued to volunteer with the project. She has likely spent more time than anyone else studying Puget Sound guillemots. In addition she has conducted volunteer trainings, taught school groups and presented to various community groups.

This position is jointly financed by the Island County and Clallam County MRCs through the Northwest Straits Foundation Opportunity Grant and with additional funding from Whidbey Audubon and Olympic Peninsula Audubon.

The guillemot team is now interviewing candidates for the summer intern position.

Our spring training on Whidbey will be May 24th. The survey will begin on June 12th and Guillemot Appreciation Days will be June 23rd and 24th.

### **Other Reports**

#### NW Straits Commission / Foundation:

*Commission (Adams)*: No update.

*Foundation (Lenny Corin)*: Although currently the burn rate on expenditures is a bit above the break-even rate, unrestricted income for the year so far is around \$42,000, an increase from the previous year. In addition, \$40,000 is pending from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the derelict gear program and another \$35,000 from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Ruth Blyther, formerly with The Nature Conservancy, is under contract through the middle of June to help the Foundation pursue several pending and potential grants. \$10,000 in unrestricted grants have been received from both Shell and Tesoro. Both of these grants are being applied to on-going MRC projects (green crab monitoring and Olympic oyster restoration).

The Friendraiser program is going well, with events planned for Skagit, on Orcas, and in Jefferson County. The Whatcom event was held at Aslan Brewery in Bellingham. An event was held last year in Snohomish County. Funding is available for this program. I'm hoping Island County will step up soon. Grants totaling \$28,560 were awarded to three MRC (Island, Jefferson, and Clallum) through the MRC Opportunity Fund.

Near Term Action (NTA) funding through the Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda update was approved. The Foundation was awarded funding for SHARP (Shoreline Armoring Removal Project), and Maylor's Point restoration on Whidbey Island. The SHARP grant is \$380,000 to continue outreach to shoreline property owners, technical site visits, design and permitting assistance. The goal is to prevent future shoreline armoring, and help remove hardened shoreline with alternative stabilization methods. Lisa is working with each MRC (via staff) to determine how they would like to proceed with the next phase of landowner

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workshops and site visits. The next step may be focusing on vegetation and drainage management. We want to broaden our scope of who we work with on SHARP for the next round. The NTA grant funding duration is April 1 – November 2018.

Maylor's Point restoration is a new Navy project which will restore 1,000+ feet of shoreline. Funding will come from the NTA process, NFWF, the WDFW Estuary and Salmon Recovery Program and maybe the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Lisa is working with the Navy on permitting and there has been a bit of a delay. The goal is to start this summer, and if not next summer.

Simon Geerlofs was appointed to the Foundation Board at the February meeting. Simon previously served on the Snohomish MRC, and is currently living in Port Townsend.

The Foundation and the Commission held a joint EC meeting on March 13th. Rich Childers, the new NWS Commission Director attended and introduced himself to the members of the joint EC meeting. The Commission and the Foundation had previously agreed to hold joint EC meetings a couple of times a year to enhance cooperation and coordination.

Creosote Removal (Turpin): Since last meeting I have been working with software/computer programmer to develop smartphone (and tablet) applications to be used for identification, location and inventory of creosote impregnated logs and pilings and other hazardous / toxic debris along the shorelines and intertidal areas of Whidbey and Camano Islands. As suggested by Elsa at our last meeting, this appears to be a very useful method of acquiring data from a variety of sources necessary to initiate removal of some of the worst polluters. To date I've made some progress in identifying individuals who will be able to design and test an app for this use. A meeting this week will initiate development. Along with this I am working on a publicity program to inform the general public of the environmental hazards of these materials and to enlist support for debris identification and clean up. A number of possibilities have been considered including listing of target groups that are interested in environmental issues—Sound Water Stewards, Audubon Society, etc that could assist in helping locate and identify the worst potential polluters.

Along with development of this app, I am working with environmental staff at NAS Whidbey Island to schedule a walking "patrol" of US Government shoreline to begin in the late spring / early summer. Three former staffers at NAS Whidbey have agreed to assist. Target date for completion is July 2017. Identify and contact organizations and groups that are interested in environmental issues— in particular those that have occasion to spend time on the beaches and shoreline of Whidbey\ and Camano. Compile a list of target groups and identify points of contact / leadership individuals. Complete list of potential participating groups by June / July 2017. Develop educational materials such as hand out literature to be distributed to groups and individuals who walk and "patrol" the shoreline. This should be a one-page descriptive explanation of the "clean-up" program, how to identify dangerous / toxic debris, how to establish precise location of such, and ways in which to communicate with data gathering and recording entity. Complete first draft proposal by mid-summer, 2017. Develop data reporting and recording format and identify point of contact to save and prioritize information as it becomes available. Complete draft proposal by mid-summer, 2017. Work closely with DNR and other agencies that will allocate resources to assess and prioritize removal of toxic materials posing greatest environmental threat (Chris Robertson— DNR, p.o.c.) On-going.

Develop public outreach program to educate and enlist public participation in overall beach and shoreline clean-up using all resources available. List outreach goals and identify resources to achieve wide dissemination of information. Complete proposal by June / July 2017. Develop and Initiate test / trial program to evaluate effectiveness of the outreach and data collection program. Summer / early autumn, 2017.

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Shoreline Restoration and Armor Removal (Richards): Cornet Bay - Just wanted to pass on some not so positive news about Cornet Bay...Sometime in the last week or two someone decided to top the conifers we had planted at the Phase 2 restoration area, leaving the trees with limited potential for growing tall just as they were getting established. We had a group of school kids from Conway there last week to plant more shrubs, add more willows to replace those that did not survive last year, and do some thinning of renegade volunteer plants at the Phase one site. After this event, someone then came along and decided to pull out many of the shrubs along with the willow stakes. One of the neighbors graciously went in and tried to replant what had been pulled out and is keeping an eye on the site to see if it continues to happen. We'll see how the plants survive.

To remedy this and to provide more in-fill, we will be purchasing a bunch of new plants and will plan to put them in the ground sometime in April. Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group will not be able to provide crews to assist so we will be leaning heavily on volunteers to assist. We don't have a date yet, but this would be a great opportunity to get MRC members and maybe Sound Water Stewards volunteers out to the site to assist. We can make it a fun event for the MRC and include refreshments and educational opportunities if desired. We have previously discussed the idea of developing a stewardship team to help with weeding and monitoring of the plants as funding winds down. This may be a good time to try and kick that off too.

Other restoration projects -

1. Maylor Point: we are still waiting for permits for the Maylor Point armor removal, but have a contract for the funding. If we can get the permits soon (it's in the hands of the Navy to get this done), we could go to construction this summer. Likely, we are looking at next summer.
2. Seahorse Siesta barge removal: still waiting on the Corps to finish the permitting; and waiting on funding.
3. Sunlight Shores armor removal: in permitting process; waiting on potential funding.
4. Monitoring with WDFW: WDFW will continue their pre-construction monitoring at Maylor Point and Seahorse Siesta this spring and summer. Volunteers are always needed and welcome. I don't have specific dates, but Hannah Faulkner is planning on Seahorse Siesta some two days during 5/22-5/26 and Maylor's Point some two days during 7/11 - 7/13. Let me know if there is anyone interested in assisting and I will connect them with Hannah.

Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee (Thomson): Will update at meeting.