

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# May 7, 2019

CAMANO ISLAND LIBRARY

**PRESENT:** Elsa Schwartz, Chair, presiding, Barbara Bennett, Randy Berthold, Mike Bianchi (WebEx), Ed Halloran (WebEx), Matt Kukuk, Linda Rhodes (WebEx), Kes Tautvydas (WebEx), Kelly Zupich, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Lori Clark, Jodi Crimmins, Gwendolyn Hannam, Tim Lawrence, Mark Stamey, Janet St. Clair

**VISITORS:** Phill Dionne (WDFW, presenter), Scott Chase, Matt Tripp, Mikaela Montanari (Sound Water Stewards), Paulette Brunner (Sound Water Stewards), Barbara Brock, Hannah Liss (WebEx), Robert Warren (WebEx)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Schwartz called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Berthold moved to approve the agenda. Zupich seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Berthold moved to approve the April 16, 2019 minutes. Zupich seconded. The minutes were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** The MRC was invited to add their signature to a letter developed by the Puget Sound Partnership to be presented to federal legislators during Puget Sound Day on Hill. The letter educates legislators about the need for continued investment in Puget Sound recovery. All three County Commissioners are supportive of the MRC signing the letter.

➤ **ACTION: Zupich moved to have the MRC sign the Puget Sound Day on the Hill letter. Berthold seconded. The motion passed.**

### EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: FORAGE FISH IN ISLAND COUNTY

Phill Dionne with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) presented on forage fish research, monitoring, and fisheries.

Presentation and discussion highlights included:

- Herring stock has seen an overall decline. The Cherry Point herring stock has declined by over 95% since the 1970s. The abundance of other stocks has remained relatively stable.
- Sand lance does not have a commercial fishery. Recreational fishing is allowed, but WDFW is not aware how much is occurring.
- Smelt fisheries
  - A cap was placed on commercial fisheries starting in 2015. Harvest quota is typically reached by mid-September.
  - 90% of commercial harvest is from the Whidbey basin.
  - There has previously been no license requirement for recreational smelt fishing. In the 2019 legislative session, it was decided that a license will be required for recreational harvest of smelt in marine waters. *Update: The smelt license requirement will go into effect July 1, 2019.*

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- Next steps for WDFW include gearing up for the recommendations related to forage fish from the orca task force.
- The MRC can assist by spreading the word about the recreational license requirement. WDFW will share outreach materials once they're ready.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

**Opportunity Fund (Schwartz):** For the stormwater portion of the Opportunity Fund funded by Boeing, Hannam and Toledo developed an application to identify two existing rain gardens to establish as demonstration sites. The funds will cover updated signage at these sites and hosting field trips to the site with students and/or community members.

The MRC discussed ideas for the general Opportunity Fund. Ideas included:

### Glass Quest

- Outreach opportunity on Camano. The event draws over 10,000 people annually to search for balls with clues. The clues could be facts about the marine environment, and would point people to the MRC website. \$650 allows for 10 clue balls. Lower levels are available as well.

➤ **ACTION: Zupich moved to move forward with an Opportunity Fund proposal for the Glass Quest outreach at the \$650 level. Kukuk seconded. The motion passed.**

Creosote prioritization and/or removal:

- Need to know what the needs are of DNR's creosote removal program. Could the MRC help fund creosote removal at areas not currently budgeted within DNR's program?
- Any prioritization should also include follow-up of when/how the creosote will be removed
  - **Follow-up: Zupich** will continue to reach out to Chris Robertson regarding DNR's creosote removal program and how the MRC can help.

Additional project ideas included:

- Stormwater improvement – fill monitoring gaps and/or prioritization report for areas in need of improvement (e.g. rain gardens/bioswales)
- Marine debris resource document
- Plastic Free Salish Sea: need specific project actions – could sponsor cleanup for plastic bags

The June meeting will be utilized to further develop Opportunity Fund ideas. Toledo will check with the NWSF about submitting proposals in early June.

- **Follow-up: Toledo** will email the list of project ideas to membership. **Members** should let Toledo or Schwartz know of any interest in taking leadership on the projects or other project ideas.

**Art contest (Zupich):** We received 70 entries for the "Discover Our Island Shores" art contest. There will be two award categories at each of the three grade levels: one chosen by MRC members, one chosen by the general public. Toledo will send out links to both voting options.

## Coordinator's update (Toledo)

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- Funding increase: The Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) was successful in doubling their state funding for the 2019-2021 biennium. This will result in a \$16,000 increase for MRCs. MRCs are encouraged to utilize the funds to increase staff capacity. The NWSC will also move MRCs to a 2-year funding cycle.
- Crabber outreach: The Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) is supporting crabber outreach again this year, and can provide informational cards and crab gauges.
  - **Follow-up: Zupich** offered to lead the effort and coordinate with SWS on Camano and Whidbey. **Berthold** offered to assist.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS

**Eelgrass Monitoring (Tautvydas):** The eelgrass team plans to do the underwater videography in Cornet Bay sometime between June 20 and 22.

**Kelp Monitoring (Rhodes):** NW Straits Commission hosted a workshop for MRC bull kelp monitoring at the Port Townsend Maritime Center on April 18th. Island County was represented by Vernon Brisley, Gregg Ridder, & Linda Rhodes. The program was a blend of presentations on bull kelp biology, survey technologies, & results from both citizen science & WA Department of Natural Resources surveys. It was a useful & informative workshop, & well timed before the field season begins.

## OTHER REPORTS

**Smith & Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve (Rhodes):** No news to report.

**Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee (Pucci/Kukuk):** The state technical review committee attended site visits with SRTCC members and project sponsors. The four projects are: Elger Bay Acquisition, culvert prioritization list, Hidden Beach shoreline restoration, and Greenbank Marsh restoration.

**Sound Water Stewards (Zupich):** If any projects have volunteer needs, let Zupich know, so she can reach out to SWS membership.

**WSU Extension:** No updates

**Island Local Integrating Organization (Bennett):** Report on a noteworthy meeting 4/17

### INTRODUCTION:

This report is about an important meeting held last month between the County Commissioners, the Island County Local Integrating Organization (ILIO) and Strategic Leads from the Puget Sound Partnership.

This report also is taking this opportunity to provide an overview of the ILIO and its relationship to important funding for marine resource stewardship in Island County and to note that the MRC holds a seat on ILIO.

### OVERVIEW:

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) is a Washington State entity charged to restore Puget Sound. PSP develops a work plan for the entire estuary of Puget Sound and is the conduit for funding to local projects that support the overall plan from a variety of organizations.

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Among a variety of sources, PSP receives funds from the National Estuary Program (NEP) which emphasize several categories of importance to the PSP work plan including Habitat, Stormwater, and Shellfish.

ILIO is a formal link between the County and PSP's work plan. In line with PSP's work plan, the ILIO identifies locally-specific issues, prioritizes local issues in line with the County's unique needs, and works with local entities to develop projects from concept to full proposals to address each.

Local proposals for funding, once fully developed, are called Near Term Actions (NTAs) and ILIO is charged to rank its NTAs and submit them to PSP's Strategic Initiatives Advisory Team (SIAT), for funding consideration.

This system is intended to leverage the local perspective of LIOs across the region for restoration on a multi-jurisdictional scale.

## PROBLEM:

In the FY 2018-2022 NEP funding cycle NONE of the NTAs from rural west-side geographies of the Salish Sea, the Strait, Hood Canal, Island and San Juan LIOs, were funded with regional allocation funds. This situation creates a significant loss of opportunity to protect/ restore important habitat in the Puget Sound western geographic area.

## ILIO RESPONSE:

After learning of these funding decisions, the ILIO collected ILIO comments on this process and outcome and communicated these in writing to SAIT. Strategic Initiative Leads came to Island County to discuss these concerns.

## ILIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 4/17/19:

On 4/17/19, ILIO Joint Executive and Technical Committee met with Strategic Initiatives Leads to better understand the SIAT's review process and selections, discuss concerns and make specific recommendations.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS

**Chair:** Reminder to MRC members: If you are unable to attend a meeting, let Toledo and/or Schwartz know in advance. Attendance will be marked as notified or un-notified.

The Executive Committee is exploring developing a conflict of interest policy.

**County Lead:** No updates.

**County Commissioners:** No updates

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:01 pm.