

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

September 3, 2019

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

PRESENT: Elsa Schwartz, Chair, presiding, Barbara Bennett, Randy Berthold, Scott Chase, Jodi Crimmins, Ed Halloran, Gwendolyn Hannam, Matt Kukuk, Hannah Liss, Linda Rhodes (WebEx), Kelly Zupich (WebEx), Janet St. Clair Board of Island County Commissioners (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Michael Bianchi (un-notified absence), Kes Tautvydas (notified absence), Lori Clark (notified absence), Tim Lawrence (notified absence)

VISITORS: Allison Hudec (Sound Water Stewards), Nan Maysen

CALL TO ORDER: Schwartz called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Liss moved to approve the agenda. Berthold seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Hannam moved to approve the August 6, 2019 minutes. Berthold seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (Rhodes): The MRC applied for and received funding through the Opportunity Fund to develop a communications plan. The goal of the project is to develop a plan to improve the MRC's impact and engagement with the County government, citizens, and partner organizations.

The first step in the process will be to conduct an audit of the MRC's current communications capabilities and limitations. Bianchi has connected the MRC with the Public Affairs Officer at the Naval Air Station, Thomas Mills, who has offered to assist the MRC in this process. The MRC will also work with the NWSF to hire a consultant to help develop the plan.

The MRC discussed elements to consider in the plan development:

- Snohomish County MRC has developed a communications matrix that could be a useful tool. It would be helpful to follow-up to see how they use it.
- Crimmins has worked with the WA State Science Teachers Association to go through a similar communications planning process and can provide their framework.
- Communications would need some level of County approval and need to be organized through one person who can then push information out or connect to the right person.
- The plan should be designed to help spread the communications workload.
- Clear guidance should be set on when MRC members are communicating in affiliation with the MRC or individually.
- To help spread the outreach workload, MRC members could sign up to provide a photo or short news blurb each month.

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- It would be helpful to have a document to point people to the right person or organization to contact for marine resource issues.
- A structured intern program could help us take in interns.
- In identifying target audiences, we should include HOAs and water districts and maintain a list of each group's contact information.

Next steps:

- *The sub-committee will meet with Thomas Mills before the October 1st MRC meeting, and will see if Mills can also join the whole MRC for that meeting.*
- *Liss and Hannam would like to join the sub-committee.*

OUTREACH

MyCoast app and marketing materials (Toledo): The MRC reviewed materials developed by the Snohomish MRC to promote the MyCoast app. The MRC expressed interest in having these cards available to hand out at workshops. Snohomish MRC will hold a webinar about lessons learned on September 24.

- *Follow-up: Toledo will work check with Snohomish MRC and NWSF about getting cards to handout at workshops and events.*
- *Toledo will attend the webinar and ask questions about how the data are verified and if the MRC can have data viewing privileges.*
- *Bennett and Allie Hudec will look into whether there are volunteer training needs for the storm surge element.*

Orca Day (Toledo): Whidbey Island Conservation District invited the MRC along with other organizations to partner on activities on Orca Recovery Day – Saturday, October 19th. The MRC will be partnering on three events:

- Concurrent shoreline plantings/maintenance at Sunlight Shores and Cornet Bay in the morning
- Rain garden rehab at Greenbank Farm in the afternoon

Each event will include a brief educational portion before the physical work.

The NWSF has offered to print copies of a rack card developed by the Snohomish MRC for the Island MRC to use during Orca Recovery Day and other events. The MRC reviewed the card for edits which Toledo will give to the NWSF.

Upcoming outreach events (Bennett/Outreach Team):

- Newsletter: The fall newsletter will be coming out in mid-September to align with the MRC's update to the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC). The MRC's updates to the BICC have been rescheduled from quarterly to bi-annually.
- Forage fish outreach sandwich boards: Bennett took the sandwich board to three forage fish surveys. The sign proved to be a good conversation starter. Several people thanked the MRC for doing this work. It helped to have a volunteer dedicated to outreach while the monitoring volunteers completed the surveys.
- Sea level rise forums: Both the Whidbey and Camano forums are planned for Saturday, September 28th – Camano from 9am-12pm and Whidbey from 2:30pm-5:30pm. Speakers from Washington Sea Grant as well as Island County Planning Department will be

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presenting. Participants will also have the chance to explore local maps and utilize web-based tools.

- Film screenings: The film screenings of “Discover Our Island Shores” are scheduled for:
 - Saturday, September 14, 1-2pm at Coupeville Library
 - Saturday, September 28, 2-3pm at Oak Harbor Library

There is not currently a screening scheduled on Camano, as the current screenings are being held in partnership with Sno-Isle Libraries at the two libraries that expressed interest when outreach was made to all Island County libraries. Commissioner St. Clair offered to coordinate on scheduling a screening after one of her monthly town halls.

- Creosote identification workshops: The creosote identification workshops with Chris Robertson from Washington Department of Natural Resources are scheduled for:
 - Saturday, October 12, 9-11am at Utsalady Ladies Aid
 - Saturday, October 12, 2-4pm at Pacific Rim Institute

Teacher trainings (Crimmins): Crimmins organized a STEM teacher training for Oak Harbor teachers. Zupich and Toledo trained three teachers on the “Discover Our Island Shores” film and classroom activity on food webs. Crimmins also attended a teacher training on ocean acidification hosted by the Jefferson MRC and Port Townsend School District. Six teachers from Island County attended. Crimmins shared about the work of the MRC.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Coordinator’s Update (Toledo):

- Film festival: Toledo had submitted both the MRC film and the Shore Friendly film to the American Fisheries Society/ The Wildlife Society 2019 Film Festival in Reno, NV. Both films were accepted and will be shown at the festival on September 30.
- Letters of support: At the August MRC meeting, the MRC recommended that the Board of County Commissioners (BICC) add their signature to the PUGET SOS Act letter of support. Due to the deadline for the signature request, the recommendation was brought to the BICC as an add-on to their work session agenda. Because the item was not included as part of the regular agenda, the BICC did not sign the letter, however Commissioners Price Johnson and St. Clair added their individual signatures. Moving forward, letters of support should be added as an agenda item to the BICC work session agendas. When there isn’t time to get the letter onto the BICC agenda, the MRC can still discuss the letter during a meeting with the understanding that it will not be brought to the BICC work session.

NWSC GRANT REPORTS

Eelgrass Monitoring (Tautvydas): Eelgrass monitoring will not be included in next year’s grant cycle, though Gregg Ridder will continue to provide aerial images. The MRC thanked the eelgrass team for their tremendous work on this project.

Kelp Monitoring (Rhodes): The team has gathered kelp bed data from three sites. The general summary is that the beds were bigger earlier in the season. They have also tested deploying temperature loggers to gather temperature information. Rhodes will be providing a presentation at the October meeting.

OTHER REPORTS

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Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve (Rhodes): There is no longer a citizen stewardship committee for the SMIAR. The committee previously helped conduct kelp harvest surveys. To stay updated about the Aquatic Reserves, you can subscribe to a quarterly e-newsletter here: <http://aquaticreserves.us15.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=f46309060b167b49bce717b28&id=882e166bfa&e=7cabe4cd15>

Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee (Pucci/Kukuk): The SRTCC is in the middle of their grant cycle. There was some additional funding available, which the SRTCC allocated to the E Camano Dr Barrier Removal project. They are also working on their recovery plan chapter update.

Sound Water Stewards (Zupich): Zupich has finished her position at Sound Water Stewards, and moving forward, Chase will be serving the liaison role between MRC and SWS. They have hired a new Coordinator on Camano, Joan Schrammeck. Allie Hudec will be taking on the coordination of outreach and education in addition to her Whidbey Coordinator role.

WSU Extension (Lawrence): No updates.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: Schwartz reminded project leads to send written reports to Toledo ahead of the meeting to include in the written project reports that are sent with the agenda.

There are a few ways for members to consider plugging into the MRC: The Chair and Vice-Chair seats, currently held by Schwartz and Bennett, will be open starting in January. The MRC seat on the Island Local Integrating Organization (ILIO), currently held by Bennett, is available. Bennett will hold the position until filled. The ILIO has the opportunity to influence future planning and recommendations to the Puget Sound Partnership for recovery efforts.

County Lead: No updates.

County Commissioners: The Board of County Commissioners (BICC) is entering into budget season. They will be working with a consultant to develop a legislative agenda. Environmental responsibility is one of their stated goals for 2020. They are also encouraging cross-departmental collaboration and education to the public. Commissioner St. Clair would welcome the MRC to provide educational information about blue carbon.

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

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:06pm.