

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

October 1, 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** (WebEx), **Matt Kukuk, Hannah Liss, Linda Rhodes, Kes Tautvydas, Lori Clark** Island County Department of Natural Resources (non-voting), **Tim Lawrence** WSU Extension - Island County (non-voting), **Anna Toledo** MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** **Michael Bianchi** (un-notified absence), **Kelly Zupich** (notified absence), **Janet St. Clair** (un-notified absence)

VISITORS: Thomas Mills (presenter), Karen Scharer (WebEx)

CALL TO ORDER: Schwartz called the meeting to order at 3:04pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Liss moved to approve the agenda. Berthold seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Tautvydas made a typo correction to the September 3 minutes. Bennett moved to approve the September 3, 2019 minutes as corrected. Tautvydas seconded. The minutes as corrected were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING (Thomas Mills): Thomas Mills, Public Affairs Deputy for Naval Air Station Whidbey Island presented on communications planning to help the MRC in its communications planning process.

Highlights from the presentation and discussion included:

- Boil down your organization's purpose into no more than three words
- Figure out who needs to know about your organization: who is impacted by what you do and who impacts what you do?
- Understand your audience: use existing research and data
- Assess your assets to figure out what resources you have available
- Determine how to reach your audience:
 - o Always be focused in your messaging
 - o Have a tailored message for each platform and audience
 - o Targeted Facebook advertising can be quite effective
- Effectiveness evaluation will depend on what platform and strategies are implemented.
- Plan should be sustainable and adaptable.

2019 KELP MONITORING UPDATE (Rhodes): Rhodes presented on the 2019 bull kelp monitoring season. Presentation available here:

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org/media/19062/2019-1001-bull-kelp-report.pdf>

Highlights from the presentation and discussion included:

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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- California has experienced a series of events that have led to bull kelp bed decimation.
- In Washington, the average along the coast hasn't changed, though there has been significant bed loss in South Puget Sound. This report by Washington Department of Natural Resources covers bull kelp monitoring and observed bed losses in South Puget Sound.
- The MRC monitoring project looked at three sites in 2019: Ebey's Landing (strong marine influence), Polnell Point (river influence), and Possession Point (some marine and river influence as well as human influence).
- Overall, each of the three sites showed the largest beds this year compared to previous years.
- Rhodes developed a system to measure temperature at multiple depths to develop a temperature profile at each site. It would be worthwhile to continue to monitor water temperature.
- Rhodes also developed a system to capture bulb density using an infrared camera angled at the top of a pole.
- Gregg Ridder and Vern Brisley conducted aerial imaging using visible and infrared cameras. This provides an estimate of the amount of shoreline with associated bull kelp, and can serve as a baseline for future surveys.
- With Rhodes terming off the MRC at the end of 2019, she is planning to continue supporting the bull kelp monitoring project. Liss would like to serve as the MRC project liaison in 2020.

BUSINESS ITEMS

MRC Conference (Toledo): MRC members should have received a registration invitation. If not, contact Toledo or Nicole Jordan (NWSI). Because of the proximity of the venue, lodging costs will not be covered.

The OCTOPOD podcasters will be recording a podcast at the MRC conference, and would like to feature a member from each MRC. The MRC is interested in participating, and wants to know if we can have two members. Toledo will check with Nicole Jordan on details.

Coordinator's Update (Toledo):

- Restoration workshop: Lisa Kaufman (NWSI) is leading a workshop to walk MRC members through the nuts and bolts of nearshore restoration projects. The MRC decided to open the workshop to interested partners. Toledo will forward the invitation to the Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee. The workshop will be held on Friday, November 1, 9:30am-12:00pm.
- MRC Symposium: The Northwest Straits Commission is organizing a symposium for MRCs to share project ideas and lessons learned, and encourage cross-MRC collaboration. This symposium will be held on Wednesday, January 8, and is open to MRC members, MRC staff, and NWSI staff.

NWSI GRANT REPORTS

Forage Fish Monitoring (Kukuk/Bennett): Volunteer teams are getting up and running. Monitoring at Hidden Beach started in May. WDFW found three eggs in one of the samples, but noted that they were severely decomposed, indicating they might have been from a contaminated sample or could have floated down the beach.

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Sampling at Seahorse Siesta and Glendale will start in October or November. Volunteers Matt Colston and Karen Scharer have been sampling at Ala Spit and Cornet Bay since August.

Outreach:

Sea level rise workshops (Bennett): The sea level rise workshops were well-received. Forty-two people attended the Camano workshop and eighty-three attended the Whidbey workshop. Several additional individuals signed up on a waiting list to be notified if the workshop is offered again in the future. Sno-Isle Libraries has expressed interested in partnering on an educational event on sea level rise in the future.

Initial feedback indicated that there was a good sequence of speakers, that complex information was conveyed well, and that the format helped attendees shift from a framework of complaining or fear to thinking about strategies.

Creosote identification workshops (Zupich): Notification about the creosote identification workshops has been sent to the MRC email list and through partner organizations. Anna also has printed flyers available. The workshops are scheduled for:

- Saturday, October 12, 9-11am at Utsalady Ladies Aid
- Saturday, October 12, 2-4pm at Pacific Rim Institute

“Discover Our Island Shores” film screenings (Toledo): The first film screening at the Coupeville Library drew 45 viewers. Florian was able to provide a Q&A time after the film. The library is interested in hosting a screening next year as well. The second screening was held on September 28th at the Oak Harbor Library and drew 32 viewers. Both screenings received very positive feedback.

Rain garden signage (Toledo/Sub-committee): The sub-committee visited the rain garden at Crescent Harbor Elementary School and met with key school staff. The school is enthusiastic about partnering on this opportunity. The sub-committee is working with signage artist Larry Eifert and are in the process of developing wording for the signs.

Orca Recovery Day (Toledo): Three events are planned for Orca Recovery Day on October 19th in partnership with the Whidbey Island Conservation District:

- 9am-12pm: Native Vegetation Planting at Sunlight Shores
- 9am-12pm: Native Vegetation Maintenance at Cornet Bay
- 1pm-3pm: Rain Garden Renovation at Greenbank Farm

OTHER REPORTS

NW Straits Commission/Foundation (Schwartz): The MRC Conference registration is open. If you have trouble registering, contact Nicole Jordan or Anna. The Whatcom MRC is looking for new members. Our MRC is encouraged to reach out to our networks in Whatcom to help get the word out and encourage interested candidates to apply.

Shoreline Restoration and Armor Removal (Toledo):

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Oak Harbor Marina Restoration Feasibility: The County is in the process of establishing a contract with a consultant to conduct the feasibility study. A kick-off meeting is planned for October.

Hoypus Pt and Possession Pt Restoration Feasibility: The Northwest Straits Foundation has funds to conduct a high-level feasibility study, and the MRC has funding through our annual grant to bring one of the sites to preliminary design once the feasibility is complete. Anna and Lisa Kaufman will be meeting to get the process rolling for the feasibility study.

Shore Friendly: Island County is in the process of establishing a contract for the next round of Shore Friendly funding. These funds will allow the creation of a mini-grant program for shoreline homeowners to take actions to remove hard armor or prevent the installation of new hard armor.

Island Location Integrating Organization (Bennett): No updates.

WSU Extension (Lawrence): WSU Extension is hosting a workshop on biosolids at the Coupeville Library on Oct 3, 6-8pm.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: Schwartz congratulated the MRC for great execution of the sea level rise workshops.

County Lead: Clark expressed appreciation to the MRC for hosting the workshops on sea level rise, and sees the MRC as an ideal group to bring this type of information to the community.

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 5:00pm.