

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Minutes

Prepared by Ann Prusha

February 4, 2020

CAMANO ISLAND LIBRARY

PRESENT: Kelly Zupich, Chair, presiding, Ed Halloran, Elsa Schwartz, Scott Chase, Hannah Rae Liss, Kes Tautvydas (WebEx), Matt Kukuk (WebEx), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff), Ann Prusha Environmental Health Technician (staff)

ABSENT: Barbara Bennett (notified absence), Randy Berthold (notified absence), Michael Bianchi (un-notified absence), Jodi Crimmins (notified absence), Gwendolyn Hannam (notified absence), (notified absence), Lori Clark (notified absence) Tim Lawrence WSU Extension - Island County (non-voting, notified absence), Janet St. Clair Board of Island County Commissioners (non-voting, notified absence)

VISITORS: Dawn Spilsbury Pucci Lead Entity Coordinator for Salmon Recovery and PSEMP Salmon Work Group Coordinator (staff), Mark Sytsma (WebEx), Jerilyn Ritzman (WSU Extension), Joan Schrammeck (Sound Water Stewards), Elaine Chan (Sound Water Stewards)

CALL TO ORDER: Zupich called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Elsa moved to approve the agenda. Ed seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Hannah pointed out that there is small typo in the minutes. Anna noted this. Hannah moved to approve the January 7, 2020 minutes. Scott seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

Admin Staff Introduction:

Anna introduced Ann Prusha, who was recently hired as an Environmental Health Technician for the Island County Department of Natural Resources. Her role includes MRC support.

Salmon Recovery Projects:

Dawn then presented potential projects for the MRC to consider supporting. The MRC does not have to be responsible financially, though match funding is always appreciated, but Dawn asked them to consider approving support for projects, helping with outreach, and potentially assigning an MRC member to champion each project once actively proposed and/or funded. MRC's support for a project enables the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) to sponsor that project. These projects require mobilization of resources, and it makes sense to do several derelict debris and armor removal projects at one time if possible. Dawn noted that she is available for questions but is not able to attend the retreat.

Dawn then used Google Maps to show 4 potential projects which were discussed with Mike Bianchi (USN), Lisa Kaufman (NWSF), Anna Toledo and Lori Clark.

- **Beach Armor Removal at Polnell Point:** Dawn showed a potential beach armor removal project with the Navy at Polnell Point in Oak Harbor. She has spoken with Mike about removing the armor. This project will need official support from the Navy.

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- **Crescent Harbor Road Armor removal:** Crescent Harbor Road cannot be abandoned according to the Navy – it needs to be maintained. However, it may be worthwhile to explore if the nearshore riprap armor could be removed. It becomes inundated from king tides and storms. It is eroding from its backside and is not doing its job in places. The first phase, after getting official approval from the Navy, is to do an extensive background investigation to determine if it is a superfund site.
- **Seaplane Base Groin Removal Project:** This would begin with an assessment project due to potential slope endangerment and the potential that the antenna array on the top of the slope is an historical building. There is currently a pocket beach area behind the groin that might be providing habitat as is.
- **Maylor North:** This project is more likely to come to fruition. There is failed riprap on the south west part of beach (which faces Coupeville). This would have been removed earlier when the barges were there for the Maylor Point project, but there was no awareness of it at the time. There is potential to remove the fill and abandon the trail along the north-facing beach of the marsh. The road once serviced a tide gate that is no longer there. It is now an open channel. There was discussion about Maylor North's assessment becoming a part of the Oak Harbor Marina restoration project. A feasibility study would be needed.

Dawn then answered questions about needs for moving forward. She said that if these projects could be included on the MRC work plan, it would enable the NWSF to apply for funding for the project. It could be possible that each project has an MRC champion who can report back to MRC. There was then discussion about accessing project sites on the Navy base. Dawn said that the Navy must be willing landowners. Kes mentioned that he has Navy contacts who could be escorts. Several members affirmed that they would like to have this item on the retreat agenda. There was then discussion about the value of armor removal projects on Navy property.

Dawn then spoke about an idea for a program that would bundle derelict nearshore infrastructure removal projects on Camano and Whidbey Islands. She said that, within one drift cell, resources could be mobilized once and get as much out as possible. This would require landowner permission. She then went over ideas for identifying these structures. The Beach Strategies Tool is backed by Coastal Geological Services and the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program. This is a database and screening tool which gives scores to stretches of beach, within driftcells, to determine if there is a potential restoration benefit. This tool could be used to determine high priority areas. There are several focuses within the beach strategy tool, including armor, beach building processes, forage fish, and drift cell continuity. It was suggested to look at beach processes scores or drift cell continuity and prioritize potential restoration locations based on this. Dawn then pointed out areas along the shoreline that have boat rails, as a hypothetical example of grouping potential opportunities. There is potential to gather funding with partnering organizations to remove these where landowners are interested. Landowner willingness would be a part of assessment and planning. There was then discussion about historic value in certain areas which may raise hurdles and landowner willingness. There was then discussion about outreach and ways in which landowners could benefit. There was also discussion about using the tool to look at projects through different lenses to secure funding from multiple sources.

Scott pointed out a potential project – there is a public beach on Camano Island near Lactrup Road that has some derelict infrastructure. Dawn asked that members send project ideas directly

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to her. There was then discussion that the IC DNR and MRC is non-regulatory and this might help landowner buy-in. The program would not be looking for permitted vs non-permitted structures and enforcement actions. There was then a suggestion of the name DIRP for this program: Derelict Infrastructure Removal Program.

MRC Retreat:

Kelly asked Board Members to give recommendations for the upcoming retreat. These included:

- Putting all funding sources on one document, to see when funding is coming in and when plans are due.
- Talking through questions from the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC), and sending those questions out ahead of time.
- Identification of interests and passions, regarding the concept that Linda Rhodes introduced about self-selecting into different MRC focus areas.
- Creating focus area buckets including lists of relevant projects. This will allow visibility about where projects and roles fall so people can choose what's most interesting for them. Areas where more work is needed can also be determined.
- Discussion about recruiting younger people to become involved with the MRC.
- MRCs cohosting events and picnics, and the value of this.

Volunteer of the Year Award Update

Anna gave an update about the Volunteer of the Year Award. Nicole Luce was awarded this year. The Volunteer of the Year Award committee has proposed changes, and is asking for feedback from the MRC. There was discussion around:

- The application form, which was simplified last year. It would be beneficial to include a few more questions on it this year.
- Making the form available online.
- Opening up year-round submissions – the cut-off would be at the end of the year.
- The ability for committee members to make nominations. Selection committee members can provide nominations, but on the same form and within the same timeframe as other nominations.
- Re-nomination of previous winners, and keeping them in a nomination pool.
- There was discussion of committee members voting for their own nominations and if there is a need for committee members to recuse themselves. The MRC recommended committee members would not need to recuse themselves as the selection committee consists of six individuals representing the three sponsoring organizations.
- Individuals may nominate more than one person.

Upcoming Outreach Events:

1. Camano 101

Scott spoke about Camano 101. Its new date is Sunday, March 1st in the Camano Center. Sixteen groups are taking part including Camano Center. The MRC will be staffing a booth. This is an opportunity to reach out to the public and solicit volunteers. Members are taking on little bits to make it happen. Anna will check to see if there's funding to improve the booth and materials. Kelly stated she will be happy to find materials for the booth. There will be a lot of representation from environmentally focused groups on Camano. Anna spoke about advertising for the event on Facebook.

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2. Great Northwest Glass Quest

Elsa informed the MRC about the Great Northwest Glass Quest. It is a scavenger hunt for Camano and Stanwood. There are glass clue balls. The meeting for this is tonight, so there is not a lot of information yet. Ten clue balls will be hidden in county and state parks. Clues can be put on the MRC website and pushed out through social media. This event is beginning on February 14. Elsa asked for clue input and volunteer hidiers. There was discussion about clues and the use of plastic balls, and outreach value. Hannah and Scott offered to hide balls.

Coordinator's Update

Anna is going to send out calendar invites for MRC meetings. They need to be sent out individually, and Members should expect a lot of emails.

Island County DNR is putting together a 5K run called the Stormwater Run-off. It will be held May 16th in Coupeville and will include a fun-run for kids. There will be an opportunity for booths. It's the same day as the Water Festival, but the 5K will be in the morning, while the Water Festival is in the afternoon.

The MRC symposium has been rescheduled for April 3rd at Padilla Bay. It is an all-day event. Anna will send out the information for this. It's specifically for MRCs to share ideas, projects, and suggestions. There is no attendance limit, but there should be participation from at least 2 members. Hannah and Kelly said they are interested in attending.

There will be a Raingarden Tour with Island Transit on April 3rd. One is for Greenbank Farm and the other will be at Crescent Harbor Elementary School. It is funded through Boeing. Part of the funding required a tour. It is a good opportunity to partner with Island Transit. Island Transit organizes tours each month. The tour will stop at Greenbank Farm, Island Transit Offices, and the Coupeville raingardens by the county offices and library. Crescent Harbor Elementary School will have a separate tour with students. Currently the itinerary is being finalized. Anna encouraged attendance if members are not going to the Symposium. She will invite Boeing. There is a 20 person limit for riding the bus. There will be an option for people to meet at Greenbank Farm and see the information there. There was a suggestion for getting press, including Commissioners. There was also a suggestion to put the route on the website in case there are too many people to get on the bus.

NWSC GRANT REPORTS

Forage Fish Monitoring (Kukuk/Bennett): Monthly monitoring continues at Cornet Bay, Ala Spit, Hidden Beach, and Seahorse Siesta. The volunteer at Glendale is planning to start sampling this month. We would like to start sampling at Sunlight Shores, though we will need additional volunteers to help cover south Whidbey sites. Any interested volunteers can contact Anna. Big thanks to our dedicated volunteers who have been consistently braving the rain and cold and difficult winter tides to gather samples! Winter is typically the slow season for spawn activity, but it is still important to monitor because spawning can (and does) occur year round in our area.

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Update: There was a request for volunteers for forage fish monitoring. It's a lot of work for the team to do every month, and perhaps another team can take over some work. Kelly will send out a request to Sound Water Stewards for volunteers.

Outreach (Bennett): Outreach has grown into a portfolio that includes outreach projects and support of the communication elements for other MRC projects. The MRC has secured a grant from the Northwest Straits Foundation through their Opportunity Fund to develop a communication plan. To date an inventory has been developed that includes missions and roles for communication, audience types, core themes and means of outreach. The MRC as a whole and the Outreach Committee have consulted on the nature of a communication plan with several public relations and communication professionals. Next steps will be to consider strategies to assure quality outreach to the unique communities of Whidbey and Camano e.g. consulting with PR professionals that serve these islands specifically, and strategies to leverage the time and skills of the new administrative assistant position in Island County Natural Resources.

OTHER REPORTS

NW Straits Commission/Foundation (Schwartz): The January NWSC meeting will be held at Coupeville Library on January 31st, 10:30am-3:00pm.

Update: Elsa said that Anna gave a presentation about the MRC's sea level rise workshops, and that everyone was impressed. Opportunity Fund money will be available again. It will not be as much as previous years. She asked members to think about how to use this money.

Island Location Integrating Organization (Bennett): Update at meeting.

Update: Dawn spoke about a decision making tool called DASEES – the Puget Sound Partnership is looking at it. The upcoming meeting at ILIO will have more information. Anna said that Randy has offered to be an alternate with Barb. Both of them will plan to attend meetings. Dawn said that the entire LIO program funding policy is being discussed and potentially changing.

Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee (Kukuk): Update at meeting.

Update: Dawn spoke about a big grant year – both the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) and State matching funds and the next round of Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) are coming up. They are asking for applications for projects which will be funded in July 2021. She will send out a notification of the itinerary for the site visits. The State Salmon Recovery Funding Board Technical Review Panel looks at the technical merits on site of each project. MRC members are welcome to attend site visits. The MRC and NW Straits are doing a feasibility study for 2 sites on Whidbey Island – Hoypus Point and Possession Point. Contracting is just beginning. Due to the timing with the grant round, it is recommended to put in an application for permitting and design for the next phase at Hoypus Point. It will be possible to withdraw applications, but applying will put projects on the schedule for moving forward. There was then discussion about site visits.

The Salmon Recovery Plan update is finalized, and is waiting for the last meeting with a Commissioner. It then goes to a public meeting and adoption. It is part of NOAA's ESA Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan. Dawn offered to give a presentation about this.

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Dawn and Kes then gave an update on the Cornet Bay beach seining. The catch was small, as expected. There is indication that very young fish are being swept in due to rain and flooding. Another event is coming up on February 7th. High School kids came to the Jan 24th seining day – Lisa and Dawn showed them around.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Chair: No updates.

County Lead: No updates.

County Commissioners: No updates.

COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:

There was a comment from that the MRC is doing good work, and another comment that it is great to see overlap between organizations.

Mark said we are doing good work and he appreciates it.

Anna shared news from Island County's Water Quality team. She passed around data that shows an improvement in water quality after the culvert project at Kristoferson Creek.

Elsa reminded everyone that one MRC seat is open. She asked members to encourage people within their networks to apply, and the County to do some outreach.

WSU Extension – There are events coming up for Earth Day. Anna suggested that MRC should think about Earth Day events.

Kelly reminded everyone to put the upcoming retreat on their calendars. It will be at Cornet Bay on February 18th. Anna will send out more details.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Feb 14 – 23, The Great Northwest Glass Quest on Camano

Feb 18 Tue, 10:00a – 3:00p: MRC Retreat – Location TBD, probably North Whidbey

Mar 1 Sun, 1:00p – 4:00p: Camano 101 – Camano Center (606 Arrowhead Rd, Camano)

Mar 3 Tue, 3:00p – 5:00p: MRC Meeting – Commissioners' Hearing Room, Coupeville

Apr 7 Tue, 3:00p – 5:00p: MRC Meeting – Commissioners' Hearing Room, Coupeville

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.