

ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Project Updates for August 4, 2020 Meeting

NWSC Grant Reports

Kelp Monitoring (Liss/Berthold): From Linda: Bull kelp teams have been active this season. Possession Point (R. Beier, lead) surveyed in June & July, Ebey's Landing (L. Rhodes, lead) surveyed in June & July, & Polnell Point (L. Rhodes, lead) surveyed only in July. Windy weather has caused some postponements of planned surveys. The beds look good, although not as large as this time last year. However, last year may have been an exceptionally good year for bull kelp.

We also conducted in-person training at the end of June for a team on Camano to survey Lowell Point. If that team becomes operational, it will represent a resumption of surveys at Lowell Point after a 2-year hiatus.

For the 1st time in 6 years, we were able to document Pacific sand lance feeding in one of the bull kelp beds. Here's a [short video of these important forage fish](#). Look for a couple of Pacific herring who decided to hang out with the sand lance school.

In case you are uncertain about what Pacific herring look like, [check out the video on the project webpage](#) or [this new video taken in the same bed](#) with the sand lance. These videos definitely show that bull kelp beds are important for juvenile forage fish!

Seining/Eelgrass (Tautvydas): The NWSC is putting together a grant application to fund establishment of more no-anchor zones in eelgrass beds. Gregg Ridder and Kes Tautvydas identified Cornet Bay as needing no-anchor zones.

Other Reports

Shoreline Restoration and Armor Removal (Toledo): The Shore Friendly mini-grant program will be ready to be launched in August. The NWSF is developing a video series on Shore Friendly topics, such as beach processes, impacts of hard armor, drainage, and vegetation.

Sound Water Stewards (Chase):

Volunteer Education and Training, 2020

Due to COVID-19, spring 2020 SWS Volunteer Education and Training (VET) was cancelled, though the VET committee figured out a way to hold virtual training, while at the same time maintaining the high SWS standards. Training for the 30 members of the class of 2020 began in June.

Here is what it looks like:

- Live presentations by experts including Q&A using **Zoom** meetings
- Small group prepared interactive exercises for sharing using Zoom *Break Out Rooms*
- Curated reading materials, videos, and online resources, along with details for each presenter. These are also available to the public.
- Small group socially-distanced outdoor guided field trips to beaches, bluffs and forests
- Private "Slack channels" for sharing of photos, learnings, ideas, personal reflections, topical interactions. (Slack is a proprietary business communication platform that offers many features, including chat rooms organized by topic, private groups, and direct messaging.)
- Handheld resources: *Getting to the Water's Edge* book and laminated EZ ID Guides to intertidal invertebrates and seaweeds and seagrasses.

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Training participants have found the experience to be surprisingly engaging, educational and positive. One of the greatest benefits of virtual training is that trainees from both islands are able to interact and learn together. Class of 2020 members are eager to get involved whenever citizen science projects or stewardship projects are offered OR training is offered. Several have already gotten merged into existing programs.

The VET program is field testing this during our summer session along with beach tours focusing on intertidal species and geology on both islands. They have done at least nine on Whidbey and Dave, Brubaker, Trent Lowe, and one of our class members have done a number on Camano. They are clearly one of the favorite part of this year's VET curriculum. Some of these are also offered to volunteers who trained in past years, but each "field trip" is limited to a maximum of four people, plus the person leading the class. Masks and social distancing are required.

Kelly Zupich Hired As New SWS Executive Director

"Our own" Kelly Zupich has been promoted to Executive Director of Sound Water Stewards. Having taken Beach Watchers training in 2012, after which she was a very active volunteer. Kelly was the first SWS staff person hired in 2016. and helped chart the SWS future, both as a volunteer and as a staff member. Kelly started as a Staff Assistant, then as the first Whidbey Coordinator, and most recently as Administrative Coordinator. Through her roles, she has reached out into the community and is currently the Chair of the Marine Resources Committee for Island County. In her new SWS role, Kelly will help lead fundraising, strategic planning, maintaining partnerships, and providing oversight for all aspects of the organization, in collaboration with the Board, Committees, Volunteers and Staff.

Getting to the Water's Edge, Third Edition is here

The book has been an immediate hit, with a large number sold in the first month, despite not having the advantage of being able to sell in-person at events such as Sound Waters University. If you have not already picked up your copy, you can do so at:

Ace Freeland Home Center, 1609 E Main Street, Freeland.

Kingfisher Bookstore, 16 Front St NW, Coupeville

Moonraker Bookstore, 209 1st St, Langley

Wind & Tide Bookstore, 700 S. Pioneer Way, Oak Harbor

Welcome Center at Cama Beach State Park, 1880 W. Camano Drive, Camano Island

Camano Commons Marketplace, 848 Sunrise Blvd Camano Island

Elger Bay Grocery & Gifts / Journey's End Café, 1992 S. Elger Bay Rd, Camano Island

Kristoferson Farm Gift Shop & Canopy Tours NW, 332 NE Camano Dr, Camano Island

J. Matheson Gifts, Kitchen & Gourmet, 2615 Colby Ave, Everett

SeaPort Books, 106 1st St, Suite F, La Conner

The Picnic Pantry, 8706 271st Street NW, Stanwood

Village Books, 1200 11th St., Bellingham

Or order online from Sound Water Stewards: soundwaterstewards.org

WSU Extension: Update at meeting.