



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
January 27, 2012 10:00AM – 12:00PM
Squalicum Yacht Club, 2633 S. Harbor Loop Dr.
Bellingham, WA 98225**

Attending: Tom Hoban, Jerry Masters, Shannon Davis, Bob Vreeland, Ken Carrasco, Terry Williams, Connie Thoman, Joe Gaydos, Terrie Klinger, Jonathan White, Duane Fagergren (alt.)

Absent: Tom Bancroft, Gerry O’Keefe, Lenny Corin

Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price, Sasha Horst

Support: Joan Drinkwin and Tracie Johannessen, Northwest Straits Foundation and Terry Stevens, Padilla Bay Reserve

Other MRC

Representation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC), Christine Woodward (Skagit MRC), Melissa Roberts, Bob Huntley, Bert Rubash, Christopher Brown, (Whatcom MRC), Linda Lyshall, Steve Revella (San Juan MRC)

Jerry Masters opened the meeting with introductions and reviewed the agenda.

Welcome

Carl Weimer from the Whatcom County Council welcomed the Commission to Bellingham. Councilman Weimer explained that Whatcom County is known for being the first county to pass the Shoreline Master Plan and one of the first counties to pass the Critical Areas Ordinance. He said the Marine Resources Committee is important to the County for their knowledge of marine issues. The Commission thanked Councilman Weimer for his support and the work he does in Whatcom County.

Approval of November meeting minutes

The November meeting minutes were approved as written.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Ginny attended a recent Coastal Caucus meeting and gave them an update on our budget. Phil Johnson and Helen Price Johnson, co-chairs of the caucus, acknowledged the value of MRCs and followed up with a letter to the Puget Sound Partnership in support of MRCs. Lovel Pratt, a San Juan County Council member, enlisted support from the San Juan County Council to send an additional letter to the Partnership.

Jerry noted that our annual retreat is scheduled for March 1-2 and many of the topics discussed today will help develop the agenda in March. (items will be marked with ***)

Future budget scenarios

Ginny recently met with Gerry O'Keefe and staff from the Puget Sound Partnership about potential funding support. Much of our work furthers the Action Agenda, and our existence is important to its goals. The Partnership has agreed to provide some funding, but details are yet to be determined. Ginny said she explained that capacity funding is needed. The challenge for us to consider is how we fit their funding into our structure. Jerry explained that if funding comes from the Puget Sound Partnership it will mean much of the Commission's work will be focused around the Action Agenda.

Duane shared that Gerry O'Keefe understands and appreciates the NWSC and the major accomplishments of the MRCs. The difficulty the PSP has is to call out support for funding the MRCs' work above other conservation partners in the Sound without a competitive and open process.

***Retreat item –Discuss how to ensure our work is MRC driven when work has to fit into the Action Agenda. Jerry asked that MRC representatives discuss this and their core projects with the MRC and bring back input to discuss at the retreat.

Ginny said she will need to meet with the Partnership again and draft a proposal within the next few weeks, and she has been working on a list of key focus areas for MRC projects based on existing MRC workplans:

- Eelgrass protection and monitoring through establishment of no anchor zones and other tools
- Developing marine stewardship areas to protect and conserve relatively intact ecosystems
- Helping to restore water quality in shellfish growing areas by raising awareness of needed solutions
- Restoring native shellfish and increasing opportunities for recreational harvest of shellfish
- Promoting stewardship of the nearshore and shoreline areas, particularly feeder bluffs, through community workshops and trainings
- Restoring shoreline habitats, particularly forage fish spawning grounds
- Education about alternatives to shoreline armoring
- Conducting shoreline resource inventories (where there are gaps) that will aid in the development of shoreline master programs
- Working to reduce polluted runoff to marine shorelines
- Organizing HAZWOPER training for citizens to prepare for oil spills

And regional projects to be managed through Commission staff to include:

- Forage fish research and workshop September 2012 at UW Friday Harbor Laboratories

- Regional restoration work to reduce the effects of ocean acidification
- Educational workshops on climate change effects and adaptation needs, including acidification and sea level rise
- Derelict fishing gear removal, research and data compilation
- Transboundary communications and workshop on issues of mutual interest such as oil spill preparedness and protection of marine species

***Retreat item – Discuss projects that we do regionally and individually.

Business Items

NWSC comments on Action Agenda

Ginny explained that the current Action Agenda does not adequately recognize the work of the Initiative. She and Caroline drafted some comments and proposed some near-term actions to include. Ginny invited the Commissioners to review the comments with a copy of the Action Agenda over lunch. Ginny is planning to send the comments to the Partnership early next week.

Debrief on December MRC Conference, survey results

Sasha reviewed the survey results from the 2011 MRC conference and reported that overall the comments were excellent. Most agreed it was the best conference yet. The Port Townsend location worked well and many supported the idea of returning there next year.

Legislative updates, request for support on Medicine Take Back

Ginny explained that the idea of the legislation is to provide a safe easy way for people to dispose of medications so it does not get into the water or into the hands of those who should not use it. Ginny asked the Commission if they agree to add our name to list of supporters. The Commission felt the Medicine Take Back is within our mission to improve water quality and agreed to be listed as a supporter of the bill.

The Commission also discussed whether to be involved with proposed state-wide legislation to ban plastic grocery bags. The specifics of the bill were not discussed but Commissioners felt that it is important to make a connection between plastic bags and plastics in the marine waters.

***Retreat topic – The Commission and MRC support of the statewide plastic bag ban legislation. A link to the bill will be sent out to MRCs.

The Commission moved and approved by consensus to have Ginny write a letter to the bill sponsor commenting on the importance of keeping plastics out of the marine environment.

Budget update

Ginny reported that we are on schedule to spend our existing NOAA grant and EPA funds by June 30, 2012.

State Oil Spill Contingency Plan Rule Advisory Committee

Ginny participated in the Advisory Committee meeting yesterday in Lacey. She will provide occasional briefings on these meetings and welcomes input from Commissioners.

Jefferson County net pen resolution

A county resolution titled “In the Matter of Support of Placing a Moratorium on Atlantic Salmon Fish Farms in Puget Sound” was drafted by Jefferson County Commissioner Phil Johnson. Ginny encourages everyone to read and share with their MRCs. Shannon Davis reported that there was an important meeting with Jefferson County and the Department of Ecology but that the Jefferson SMP is still stalled out because of this issue. [Click here for more information.](#)

***Retreat item – Netpen legislation (Possibly invite Phil Johnson)

Grant proposal for GIS work (USGS)

Ginny reported that Caroline, Suzanne and Sasha submitted a grant proposal to USGS to help pay for additional GIS metadata work.

Staff updates

Linda Lyshall was hired by San Juan County for the joint position for San Juan MRC and the Local Integrating Organization. Connie Price is leaving to take a new position at the WA Department of Transportation.

Public Comment

Elizabeth Kilanowski thanked Connie for always getting back to her when she calls.

The Commission meeting was adjourned.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
March 2, 2012 2:00PM – 2:30PM
Padilla Bay Reserve
10441 Bayview Edison Road, Mt Vernon WA 98273

Attending: Tom Hoban, Jerry Masters, Shannon Davis, Bob Vreeland, Ken Carrasco, Duane Fagergren (alt.), Steve Revella, Tom Bancroft, Lenny Corin
Absent: Gerry O’Keefe, Terrie Klinger, Terry Williams, Joe Gaydos
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Caroline Gibson
Support: Joan Drinkwin and Tracie Johannessen, Northwest Straits Foundation and Terry Stevens, Padilla Bay Reserve

Other MRC

Representation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC), Melissa Roberts (Whatcom MRC), Linda Lyshall, John Aschoff (San Juan MRC), Gabrielle LaRoche (Jefferson MRC), Tracy Alker, Rachel Benbrook (Skagit MRC)

Jerry Masters opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of January meeting minutes

Ginny noted that the wrong version of the draft January meeting minutes were previously sent by email, but the correct version was sent out earlier in the week for review. The Commission approved the minutes as written.

Business items

The Commission expressed support for holding the annual MRC conference in Port Townsend again at the Northwest Maritime Center. Of the available Friday/Saturday dates, November 2-3, 2012 was preferred. Caroline will reserve the dates at the Center. MRC representatives should check in with their members on any known major conflicts on those dates.

Commission staff is currently working on the 2011 annual report. Few printed copies will be made this year, most distribution will be electronic. The content will also be streamlined to create a shorter report. Tom Bancroft suggested that rather than highlight MRC projects, staff tell stories about the volunteers that would be of interest to funders and legislators.

A draft budget and workplan was proposed based on \$900,000 anticipated for fiscal year 2012. Ginny noted that staff would come back to the Commission for further discussion if there are significant changes to the budget amount.

The Commission moved and approved by consensus to adopt the proposed budget for fiscal year 2012.

Round table

Duane thanked the staff and Terry Stevens of Padilla Bay Reserve for hosting the retreat.

Public comment

Linda Lyshall noted challenges to the San Juan CAO update underway posed by property rights groups that are blocking meetings, flying people into county for protests, and selectively posting incorrect information to a science blog.

Tom Bancroft recommended viewing the information on the People For Puget Sound web site about currently proposed legislation being considered by the state house and senate on environmental issues.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Commission will be on Friday, March 30 at the Pacific Rim Institute in Coupeville, Island County.



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**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
March 30, 2012 10:00AM – 12:00PM
Pacific Rim Institute, 180 Parker Road, Coupeville, WA**

Attending: Tom Hoban, Shannon Davis, Rachel Benbrook, Steve Revella, Lenny Corin, Joe Gaydos, Lyn Muench (alt.)
Absent: Jerry Masters, Gerry O'Keefe, Terrie Klinger, Terry Williams, Bob Vreeland, Ken Carrasco, Tom Bancroft
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Caroline Gibson
Support: Joan Drinkwin (Northwest Straits Foundation), Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve)

Other MRC

Representation: Keats Garman (Whatcom MRC)

Lenny Corin opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Additions were made to include an update on the Puget Sound Partnership Science Panel and to convene an ad hoc nominating committee for elections to be held in May.

Welcome

Island County Commissioner Helen Price Johnson welcomed the group to Ebey's Prairie and noted that we are fortunate to live in such a beautiful place. She explained that she is co-chair of the coastal caucus, and knows there is great support for the Marine Resources Committees and Northwest Straits Commission from the caucus as well as leadership in Island County.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Lenny reported on the meeting held on March 14. The Committee discussed the EPA funding provided by the Puget Sound Partnership and several Commissioners sent personal notes to Gerry O'Keefe to thank him for his support. Sasha is proceeding with preparing the Interagency Agreement for the funds, and will work with MRCs to prepare grant agreements.

The group had a debrief on the work accomplished at the retreat, and wanted to be sure that Cindy Galvan was thanked for her help in coordinating the event.

Tribal Committee

Ginny reported that the committee had historically met to discuss how to spend funding available for tribal projects. In the absence of funding, the committee has lapsed but she has communicated with Harlan James, the committee chair, and a meeting will be scheduled for April to reinvigorate the group.

Education Committee

Ginny explained that with Kathy Fletcher's retirement, there is no chair for this committee. Lenny suggested re-convening the group by soliciting volunteers from among the MRCs and also include Foundation staff. The group could provide assistance to MRCs with projects related to outreach, social marketing and education, and help with effective use of social media. Additional opportunities include film screenings, such as the upcoming *Ocean Frontiers* premiere in Seattle. Copies of the film will be available to MRCs interested in hosting a screening. Rachel also suggested the *Sound and Vision* film. For those on Facebook, please "like" our page and encourage friends to do the same: www.facebook.com/NWStraits.

Business items

Budget updates

Ginny shared the draft budget for the Interagency Agreement with the Puget Sound Partnership. The budget includes \$60,000 for each MRC to support staff and infrastructure, but does not provide support for implementing projects. Commissioners requested information about the Ecology indirect rate, which Terry Stevens explained includes IT support, human resources, contracting/fiscal/purchasing staff support, administrative functions, cell phones, etc.

Sasha noted that the new funding, like the current funding we are working with, requires a 1:1 match. MRCs are already tracking volunteer hours, in kind support and other funding, but are encouraged to think creatively about the support they receive so that we can document all sources of support. Governor's appointees are also encouraged to document their time and expenses as match.

Blue Ribbon Panel on Ocean Acidification

Governor Gregoire convened a Blue Ribbon Panel on Ocean Acidification, which is holding its first meeting today. Commissioners Terrie Klinger and Terry Williams are both panelists. Other individuals we have partnered with are also on the panel, such as Richard Feely, Betsy Peabody and Brad Warren. More information about the panel: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/water/marine/oceanacidification.html>

Ocean Acidification Seminar

The Commission hosted an ocean acidification seminar at Padilla Bay Reserve on March 22. Presentations from Terrie Klinger and Brad Warren were well received by an interested audience, and the question and answer session following presentations was excellent. Brad Warren is enthused about continuing outreach in partnership with the NWSC on this issue, and Commission staff will coordinate future events.

Oil Spill Advisory Committee

Ginny reported on the Oil Spill Advisory Committee, which she serves on. The group is providing advice on legislation passed last year, which includes developing a framework for a vessel of opportunity program, increasing the use of aerial surveillance and improving volunteer coordination. Ginny will continue to report on this group's work at future meetings.

Approval of March meeting minutes

The Commission approved the minutes as written.

Nominating Committee

Terry Stevens outlined the elections process, during which a chair and vice-chair will be elected for a one-year term. There are no term limits on the positions, and no requirement that the vice-chair move into the chair position. The chair of the Commission is also the president of the Foundation Board of Directors. Jerry Masters, the current chair, has offered to serve another year if elected. An election committee made

up of Tom Hoban, Duane Fagergren and Terry Stevens will bring forward nominations for consideration at the April 27 meeting.

Puget Sound Partnership Science Panel

Joe Gaydos updated the group on the work of the Science Panel, which he chairs. The group has created their workplan for the next two years, and now needs to determine who is responsible for carrying out the tasks. The work of the Panel helps ensure scientific credibility to the Partnership. One challenge is that the near-term action list is very long. He noted an upcoming event on transboundary science coordination, to be held in Bellingham on September 18 or 19.

MRC Reports

In addition to the written reports provided, several MRCs included verbal reports:

Clallam: Lyn Muench reported that the MRC is very interested in derelict crab pot removal, but does not have funding for the work. The MRC is working on materials with a local emphasis for outreach to recreational crabbers. Beach cleanup efforts are of interest, and many people are focused on the tsunami debris expected to be washing ashore. The MRC is working on how to take the interest in marine debris and turn it into practical removal. Monitoring for Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning continues, with support by the Lower Elwha staff to collect samples.

Island: Lenny referred to the information about a presentation by Chris Luerkens on the salmon recovery program in WRIA 6.

Jefferson: Shannon reported that the Department of Natural Resources will remove creosote material from Indian Island in April. The Maynard Beach project is moving forward, and project partners are submitting a proposal for trail funding. Two new MRC members are pending.

San Juan: The MRC hosted the Marine Managers' Work Session, which focused on oil spill issues and coordination. Participants included representatives from the Coast Guard, IOSA, the San Juan Emergency Management department and WDFW. The event was well attended, with a registration cap at 75 people. The MRC has received funding for a marine specimen bank that will make information available to agencies in the event of an oil spill. Funding is still needed for the actual equipment (freezer) that UW Friday Harbor Labs has agreed to house.

Skagit: There is a new Beach Watcher coordinator for Skagit County, a position which has seen a lot of turnover in the last few years. The spring training for new members is coming soon. Other upcoming events include community beach seining days in June and August, and the annual Fidalgo Bay Day to be held September 15.

Snohomish: The Port Susan MSA Conservation Action Planning process is going well. There were some issues with the analysis of Mussel Watch samples, but that has been resolved and results are anticipated soon.

Whatcom: Keats Garman reported that the coal train is a big topic in the area right now. The MRC will meet next week, and Kate Litle from Washington Sea Grant will talk about citizen science. Keats mentioned some planned signage for Larrabee State Park on fecal issues related to raccoons. Joe Gaydos recommended conducting bacterial source tracking prior to installing signage. Keats also noted that the MRC is increasing outreach to the County council members by holding individual meetings to hear their concerns about local marine issues.

Public Comment

During public comment, Barbara Bennett, WSU Beach Watcher coordinator for Island County, noted that the Beach Watchers are available for MRCs to help carry out projects such as outreach and monitoring. She is concerned for the program's funding and encouraged MRCs who partner with Beach Watchers to build in capacity for that work in grant proposals.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Commission will be a brief business meeting on Friday, April 27 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
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Northwest Straits Commission Meeting

April 27, 2012, 2:00 pm -3:00 pm

Northwest Maritime Center, Port Townsend, Jefferson County

431 Water Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368

Attending: John Aschoff (alt.), Joe Gaydos, Tom Hoban, Shannon Davis, Bob Vreeland, Neil Borman (alt.), Ken Carrasco, Jerry Masters
Absent: Terry Williams, Terrie Klinger, Gerry O'Keefe, Rachel Benbrook, Tom Bancroft, Steve Revella, Lenny Corin
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst
Support: Joan Drinkwin, Tracie Johannessen, Terry Stevens
Other MRC
Participation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC), Gabrielle La Roche (Jefferson MRC)

DRAFT

Jerry Masters, chair, opened the meeting at 2:30pm. There were no changes to the agenda.

Approval of March 30 meeting minutes

The Commission approved the minutes of the March 30 meeting as written.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

A written summary of the Executive Committee meeting was provided as a handout.

Technical Committee

There was no report of the Technical Committee.

Education Committee

A written summary prepared by Ginny was provided as a handout as a follow up to last month's discussion, outlining work that has been done that falls into the category of an education committee. Ginny explained that a committee structure would allow us to better plug in the MRCs and better identify regional priorities. The committee needs a chair, but it would be supported by staff. Membership could be members of the Commission, MRCs or others. More discussion can be done at a future meeting. MRC representatives were asked to take the information back to the MRCs and look within the MRC for people who are interested in participating. Please bring forward names at the next meeting.

John Aschoff noted the opportunity for leveraging the work of this group through other networks, such as the San Juan Stewardship Network, ECO Net, etc.

Several upcoming screenings of Ocean Frontiers were mentioned, including one in Snohomish co-sponsored by City of Everett and one in Port Townsend on June 29.

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee proposed a slate of candidates for the positions of chair and vice-chair of the Commission:

Jerry Masters as chair

Steve Revella as vice-chair

Motion: It was moved and approved by consensus to elect Jerry Masters as chair and Steve Revella as vice-chair for the period of May, 2012 through April, 2013 with all duties as associated.

Business items

Annual Report

The 2011 Northwest Straits Annual Report is now complete. Distribution will be mainly electronic this year, and an email has already been sent to the full newsletter mailing list directing people to a link on the web site. (<http://bit.ly/IE5ly7>)

Tsunami debris workshop proposal

Ginny noted that she has been approached by people who would like to partner on a workshop related to tsunami debris. It is not anticipated that much debris will enter Puget Sound, but there is a lot of interest in the issue. There is a good opportunity, particularly in Port Townsend, to host an event around marine debris.

Hiring process update

Ginny reported that there is a revised job description for the position vacated by Connie. The process is moving forward but the announcement has not yet been posted.

Funding requirements

Ginny outlined the 1:1 requirement for matching funds and opportunities for tracking. Staff will work with MRCs to track this information.

Ginny referred the group to a written update on other recent work by the Commission staff.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Round Table

Terry Stevens mentioned that funding just passed in the state budget for Puget Sound Corps, similar to AmeriCorps. The Department of Natural Resources will receive the funding, and it is expected that in mid- to late-summer there will be 225-350 new employees in the program, with an emphasis on youth and veterans. There will be opportunities to propose projects and work, and Terry will keep the Commission informed of those.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm. The next meeting will be held on Friday, June 1 in San Juan County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
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Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
June 1, 2012, 11:30 am -3:45 pm
Mullis Center, Friday Harbor, San Juan County
589 Nash Street, Friday Harbor 98250

Attending: Steve Revella, Joe Gaydos, Shannon Davis, Bob Vreeland, Ken Carrasco, Jerry Masters
Terry Williams, Gerry O'Keefe, Rachel Benbrook, Lenny Corin
Absent: Tom Hoban, Terrie Klinger, Tom Bancroft
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst
Support: Joan Drinkwin
Other MRC
Participation: Linda Lyshall (San Juan MRC), Bert Rubash (Whatcom MRC)

Open meeting and review agenda

Chair Jerry Masters opened the meeting and reviewed agenda to outline revisions to accommodate the shorter meeting time due to travel delays.

Approval of April 27 meeting minutes

Approval of minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

MRC Reports

Jerry Masters requested that MRC representatives provide a brief verbal report to help inform Commissioners about discussions that led to any recent decisions and how their priorities are lining up with the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

San Juan MRC – Steve Revella reported that their MRC is well represented on the Local Integrating Organization (LIO). The MRC's action list was the starting point for the LIO's list. An example of a current project related to an Action Agenda priority is the specimen bank that will allow the County to be better prepared in the event of an oil spill. They are currently developing protocols for the specimen bank. The MRC is also working on a report for the County Council on finfish netpens. They are heavily involved in the Shoreline Master Program and Critical Areas Ordinance updates. The MRC has helped the County communicate the importance of those updates to the public.

Skagit MRC – Rachel Benbrook reported that the MRC is eager to connect with the LIO process but it has been challenging because the Whidbey area is so large. The MRC has good support from the County and also has project funding from the Skagit Restoration Initiative, and in-kind support from Shannon Point Marine Center, so they have continued to move projects forward. There is a community beach seining day scheduled for June 14 at Ship Harbor, and Fidalgo Bay Day will be held on September 15.

There are still a few projects that the MRC hasn't found funding for, and they are planning to put additional effort into communications in the next year.

Clallam MRC – Bob Vreeland noted that MRC staff member Cathy Lear is attending LIO meetings on behalf of the MRC. Previously the MRC reviewed their project list with the Action Agenda in mind. The MRC is working on recreational crabber outreach, with the season opening July 1. Noteworthy in the County is the removal of the Elwha dam, one year ahead of schedule. The MRC held a beach cleanup on April 21 and followed that in May with workshops on tsunami debris. Bob commented that tsunami debris was not anticipated in the Action Agenda but it is a big deal with the public in Clallam County, and the MRC is seeking funding for training and supplies for beach cleanups. Curt Ebbesmeyer, an oceanographer and flotsam expert, anticipates that debris will begin hitting the shorelines hard in October.

Whatcom MRC – Ken Carrasco reported that they are working from their recently-completed strategic plan and need to re-orient to how that aligns with the Action Agenda. In Whatcom County the proposed coal terminal is overshadowing everything. The MRC is working on stormwater issues that are a priority in the Action Agenda, including their Smart Sponge project in Drayton Harbor and coastal landowner workshop scheduled for June 9 in Drayton Harbor. The MRC has also just completed an upgrade to their web site, which is up and running at <http://www.mrc.whatcomcounty.org/>.

Jefferson MRC – Shannon Davis reported that their Shoreline Master Program update is still under discussion because the County and the Washington Department of Ecology disagree on the issue of finfish aquaculture. The County is pushing for upland based systems instead of marine systems. The buoys were installed for the season to mark the No Anchor Eelgrass Protection Zone in Port Townsend. The LIO process in the County has been challenging for the MRC to integrate with because of the split between two Action Areas (Straits and Hood Canal).

Island MRC – Lenny Corin reported that the process for their LIO is working now, and the benchmarks for the Island MRC line up well with the Action Agenda, including water quality (phytoremediation), habitat restoration (Coronet Bay), database management (SoundIQ). The SoundIQ project is wrapping up phase two, and he encouraged other MRCs to consider utilizing the system. The derelict vessel that sank in Penn Cove recently should be raised over the weekend, but the overall losses and cost for cleanup will be significant. The boat owner does not have insurance.

Snohomish MRC – Tom Hoban was absent but Jerry Masters provided a brief update on the work of the Snohomish MRC, including their input on the update of the County's Shoreline Master Program. Jerry noted that there are still significant development pressures in Snohomish which will only increase as the recession ends. He also complimented the MRC for working so effectively.

Public Comment

Sally Hintz from Senator Cantwell's office reported that there was a recent Senate hearing on the tsunami debris issue, and the Senator was not pleased with the lack of action by NOAA, noting that local emergency management departments do not have the capacity or resources to deal with this debris. She also noted that the Senator is expecting to reintroduce a bill on oil spill technology and research in the next few days.

Director's updates

This agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

Committee Reports

Committee reports were provided in written format only.

Local welcome and legislative updates - Washington Senator Kevin Ranker

Senator Ranker updated the Commission on current efforts to bring West Coast oceans issues to the national level, including marine debris, derelict gear and forage fish. He emphasized that we should keep jobs in the forefront when communicating about our work – not only the jobs created by the work we do, but also the existing jobs that are protected.

The Senator explained that he requested that the Environmental Impact Statement scoping for the proposed coal terminal in Whatcom County include an assessment of the statewide impact and address transportation issues. He thanked County Councilor Lovel Pratt for raising the concerns about vessel traffic to his attention and agrees that vessel traffic also needs to be further assessed for impacts.

Senator Ranker expressed his appreciation to the Puget Sound Partnership for sustaining the Northwest Straits Initiative this year, and would like to see continued and increased funding. Information that can be provided to him about critical research and compelling projects we are doing will help him make the case for funding our work. He also encouraged MRCs to be involved in the local Shoreline Master Program and Critical Areas Ordinance updates, noting that those processes are directly related to the quality of life in the region.

Business Items

Ginny reported that Commission staff has been focused on contracting for the 2012-2013 funding, including the interagency agreement with the Puget Sound Partnership and the MRC grants. Ginny thanked the Partnership.

Ginny will be visiting Washington DC next week during National Oceans Week in order to meet with a variety of legislative staff and others working on ocean and coastal issues. ,
Jerry mentioned that there is interest in meeting with state legislators and local elected officials to talk about the work of the Initiative, in conjunction with representatives from the local MRCs. This effort would help to raise the profile of the Northwest Straits Initiative. Gerry O'Keefe offered assistance in our outreach to state legislators.

Vessel traffic in the San Juan marine waters: presentation and discussion

Todd Hass, Puget Sound Partnership and Chip Boothe, WA Department of Ecology, provided an overview of ship vessel traffic in the San Juan county area and associated risks such as increased risk of oil spills. Click here to view the presentation made by Todd Hass and Chip Boothe (pdf). Their presentation referenced a Vessel Traffic Risk Analysis, available online at http://www.seas.gwu.edu/~dorpir/tab4/publications_VTRA_Final_Report.html .

Lovel Pratt, San Juan County Councilmember, welcomed the group and gave an overview of the concerns that San Juan County has about increased vessel traffic in the region and the local efforts to prepare for oil spills.

Steve Revella, chair of the San Juan MRC described the work that the MRC is doing, including the recent Marine Managers' work session which focused on oil spill issues, and the development of a marine specimen bank.

Round Table

Ken Carrasco shared his personal concerns about ocean acidification and climate change issues, and distributed a copy of the recent Whatcom Watch article he wrote (June 2012 issue). Ken was the first official user of the Bellingham charging station that's part of the West Coast Green Highway (www.westcoastgreenhighway.com), at an event with Washington Department of Transportation director Paula Hammond. Ken noted that he is interested and willing to speak to groups on the topic.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm. The next meeting will be held on Friday, June 29 at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center in Sequim, Clallam County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
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Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
June 29, 2012, 10:15 am -2:45 pm
Red Cedar Room, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Center
1033 Old Blyn Highway, Sequim, WA 98382

Attending: Tom Hoban, Terry Williams, Rachel Benbrook, Ken Carrasco, Shannon Davis, Joe Gaydos, Lenny Corin, Steve Revella, Jerry Masters, Gerry O’Keefe, Bob Vreeland, Tom Bancroft

Absent: Terrie Klinger

Staff: Sasha Horst, Caroline Gibson

Other support: Joan Drinkwin, Terry Stevens

Open meeting and review agenda

Jerry Masters opened the meeting with a round of introductions. There were no changes to the agenda.

Welcome

State Representative Steve Tharinger welcomed the group to Sequim and the 24th legislative district. He noted that he has been involved in marine issues for a long time, including while he was a county commissioner where he was involved with discussions that led to creation of the Puget Sound Partnership. He currently serves on the Partnership’s Ecosystem Coordination Board and the House Environment Committee.

Representative Tharinger noted that oil spill response is a major initiative of the Strait ERN (Local Integrating Organization for the Strait of Juan de Fuca Action Area). The Clallam County Shoreline Master Plan is also important, as well as stormwater and forage fish. Steve Revella asked if the Northwest Straits model is well known among legislators in Olympia. Representative Tharinger recommended that Ginny and Commission representatives should meet with legislators and provide opportunities for site visits to MRC projects, to demonstrate the advantage of having the Northwest Straits Initiative and the diversity of the representation on MRCs. He sees a clear advantage to resolving many marine resources problems at the local level.

Local project update: Jefferson MRC and the Mystery Bay Harbor Management Plan

Shannon Davis from the Jefferson MRC presented the Port Townsend Voluntary Eelgrass Protection Zone project, which has successfully reduced the number of boats anchoring in eelgrass to less than 1%. She also showed a short film describing Jefferson MRC’s work to develop a Harbor Management Plan for Mystery Bay in order to protect shellfish harvest.

Partner update: Olympia Oyster Restoration through the Washington Shellfish Initiative

Sasha Horst described the Olympia Oyster Restoration Project that is currently funded by NOAA through the Puget Sound Partnership. Restoration work with this funding is planned in Clallam and Whatcom counties, and includes some funding for MRC participation. The MRCs are providing survey and monitoring support, and public outreach on the project.

Chris Kaplan from the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe gave an update on the work that the Tribe is doing on the project. To date, that has included a site assessment with project partners (Wash. Dept of Fish and Wildlife and Puget Sound Restoration Fund), completion of the Tribal Environmental Policy Act filing, and re-issuance of a Nationwide Permit 48 (from the Army Corps of Engineers covering shellfish aquaculture). Outplanting is scheduled for July 5, followed by genetic testing of the existing oysters.

MRC Reports and Foundation Update

In addition to the written reports, MRC representatives provided the following updates:

Clallam: Bob Vreeland reported that the MRC has not yet resolved the details of their 2012-13 workplan. He expressed an interest in having the MRC produce a newsletter style outreach piece, and had questions about some of the logistics of holding community events. Staff will follow up with him and Cathy Lear.

Skagit: Rachel Benbrook said that the Partnership’s liaison attended their last meeting. The MRC is still struggling with how to get traction on the LIO process. Joe Gaydos suggested that the MRC ask the County to create a scoping committee to establish the LIO, which was the process followed in San Juan County. The MRC is planning a presentation to the County Commissioners in September. The MRC is interested in partnering with others on projects that are relevant to large scale marine issues, such as climate change and water quality.

NW Straits Foundation: Joan Drinkwin provided a written report, and noted that she will be contacting MRCs to provide assistance with preparing case statements and other tools for MRCs to use in developing projects. She reported good progress on two MRC restoration projects, Cornet Bay Restoration and Shannon Point Rip Rap Removal.

San Juan: Steve Revella noted that the MRC and its partners filled the theatre for the recent Ernest Brooks event. They are continuing to discuss the issues around the proposed coal terminal in Whatcom County, and submitted a letter to the Board of County Commissioners requesting that a programmatic EIS be conducted.

Whatcom: Ken Carrasco noted the challenge that the MRC faces in addressing concerns about the coal terminal is that the County Council cannot consider input regarding the coal terminal that is received outside the judicial process.

Snohomish: Tom Hoban noted a disappointing turnout for the recent showing of Ocean Frontiers, despite very good publicity. Sunny weather may have been a factor, but he emphasized that for such events, MRC members should attend and make an effort to talk with people and promote the MRCs.

Jefferson – In addition to the project presentations, Shannon Davis noted recent concern by citizens about finfish aquaculture in light of the recent viral outbreak at a salmon farm near Bainbridge Island.

Update on Coastal MRCs

Jenna Jewett, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, provided an update on the work of the Coastal MRC Program. She included a summary of the MRC activities for the North Pacific Coast, Grays Harbor, Pacific and Wahkiakum MRCs. A written handout is available. Commissioners expressed interest in a report prepared for the coastal MRCs by Olympic Natural Resources Center, assessing marine resources jobs on the coast.

One issue that Coastal and Northwest Straits MRCs have in common is an interest in tsunami debris. Jenna will forward a draft copy of the Washington Marine Debris Response Plan, which are due by July 6.

Caroline noted that there is interest in including representatives from each of the coastal MRCs in the annual Northwest Straits MRC conference this year. Jenna plans to attend the conference.

Approval of April 27 and June 1 meeting minutes

The minutes of the April 27 and June 1 meetings were approved as written.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Committee Reports

The Executive Committee summary was provided in written format. The Commission discussed the conference in further detail. Caroline is drafting an agenda based on the input provided in the brief online survey sent to MRC members. The survey will close on July 13. There are many opportunities for MRC members to assist with the conference, either in the preparation or at the event. Those interested should contact Caroline.

Steve made note of the list of known derelict vessels in the Northwest Straits region, provided by the Department of Natural Resources. Five of the vessels are located in Clallam County, with two right in Sequim Bay.

The Commission discussed the key points for a letter requesting a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for coal transport, based on the memo provided as a handout by Ginny Broadhurst. The Commission moved and approved by consensus that a letter be drafted that includes the points from the memo, and that it be sent under Jerry's signature to the appropriate regulatory agencies when complete. A copy of the letter and list of who it was sent to will be provided to Commissioners, and Terry Williams will provide a list of tribes who should also be copied on the letter.

Director's Report and Business items

Ginny provided a written report in her absence, which included a summary of a potential project in partnership with Padilla Bay Reserve on Tsunami Debris Monitoring.

Caroline noted that the Commission is organizing an International Forage Fish Research Symposium in Friday Harbor on September 13-14, 2012. The symposium is open first-come, first-serve to scientists and managers working on forage fish. Representatives of WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife, US Geological Survey and the Puget Sound Partnership are on the program committee.

Sasha reported that the Commission staff position as Program Coordinator is open and application is through the Department of Ecology online system. The position is 80% time with benefits, and based at the Padilla Bay Reserve.

Sasha also reported that she participated in a “Train the Trainers” workshop held by the Puget Sound Partnership on social marketing, and will schedule training for interested MRC members and others.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm. The next meeting will be held on July 27 in Snohomish County at a location to be announced.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
July 27, 2012, 10:00 am -3:00 pm
Snohomish County Admin Building East, Public Meeting Rm #1**

Attending: Terrie Klinger, Terry Williams, Rachel Benbrook, Ken Carrasco, Shannon Davis, Lenny Corin, Steve Revella, Jerry Masters, Bob Vreeland, Tom Bancroft, Duane Fagergren, Lincoln Loehr (Alt.)
Absent: Tom Hoban, Joe Gaydos
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Caroline Gibson
Other support: Joan Drinkwin (NW Straits Foundation), Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC)

Open meeting and review agenda

Jerry Masters opened the meeting with introductions and review of agenda. There were no changes to the agenda.

Welcome

Snohomish County Councilmember Dave Gossett welcomed the Commission to Everett. Councilman Gossett expressed his appreciation for the work of the Commission and Snohomish MRC, emphasizing the value of the over 10,000 volunteer hours contributed for MRC projects last year. He noted his appreciation for the MRC as a non-partisan effort to preserve Puget Sound.

Mussel Watch Program

Lincoln Loehr, a member of the Snohomish MRC and alternate representative to the Commission, gave an overview of the MRC's Mussel Watch program, a subset of NOAA's national long-term water quality monitoring program that is run by the MRC and uses mussels to determine toxics in the water. A copy of his presentation is [available online](#) (pdf).

Jim West from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife provided information about a pilot expansion of the agency's Mussel Watch project to include 60 sites Puget Sound. He noted that there are many partnering organizations and volunteers at the ready to collect the samples, and that there are opportunities for MRCs to provide support for additional sampling sites. A copy of his presentation is [available online](#) (pdf).

Forage Fish Research Symposium

Caroline Gibson gave an update on the Forage Fish Research Symposium, co-sponsored by the Northwest Straits Initiative, WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife, US Geological Survey, Puget Sound Partnership, and Tulalip Tribes. The event will be held in mid-September at the UW Friday Harbor Lab, and is anticipated to draw research scientists and fishery managers from Washington, Oregon, California and British Columbia. A presentation on the outcomes from the symposium will be part of the November 2-3 MRC conference.

MRC Reports and Foundation Update

In addition to the written reports, MRC representatives provided the following updates:

Clallam: Bob Vreeland noted that the MRC had a presentation on the potential hazards from netpen aquaculture. County Commissioner Mike Doherty attended their recent meeting, where there was a lot of discussion around tsunami debris.

San Juan: Steve Revella reported that the San Juan MRC is also talking about tsunami debris, and there is a Facebook page for people to post photos of debris that they find. The MRC recently prepared a letter to the Pacific Fishery Management Council recommending that new fisheries for currently unmanaged species not be opened until more is known about the resources. The MRC hosted a screening of Ocean Frontiers with a good mix of community members attending, many of whom were able to learn about the MRC for the first time.

Skagit: Rachel Benbrook said that the MRC had a presentation from Wendy Steffensen on the Fidalgo Bay Citizen Stewardship Committee. Through the Skagit Restoration Initiative, a total of 70 acres was purchased that will be held by Padilla Bay Reserve. They are hosting a community beach seining event on August 13 at Ship Harbor. Rachel noted that the MRC is exploring the possibility of the car wash kit program expanding nationally through a partnership with Les Schwab tire stores.

Snohomish: Lincoln Loehr reported that they are continuing with crabber education now that the crabbing season has started but decided to adjust their approach because of the challenges associated with talking to people while they are launching their boats. Beach Watchers are distributing materials and they are developing a display for stores that sell licenses. The MRC is preparing a Request for Proposals for removal of derelict pots in Port Gardner study area. The Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area project continues, with a Measures Workshop scheduled for October 2. Kathleen Herrmann reported that MRC member Jared Bond had to resign his position due to scheduling conflicts with work.

Whatcom: Ken Carrasco said that the MRC talked about tsunami debris, but it is not a high priority. They are working with Joan Drinkwin on developing a restoration plan for Cain Creek, which has historically high levels of fecal coliform and low dissolved oxygen. They are also working on preparing signage for Larrabee State Park to remind guests not to feed raccoons.

Jefferson: Shannon Davis reported that the MRC is interested in the derelict vessel program, and also the mussel watch program. The MRC prepared a letter to the County Commission regarding

the transport of coal from the proposed terminal in Whatcom County. The issue of whether or not the Department of Ecology should allow finfish aquaculture in the County Shoreline Master Plan continues to delay final approval of the document.

Island: Lenny Corin updated the group on the work at Cornet Bay in Deception Pass State Park. Permits are in place for September construction. The phytoremediation project is in its second year of sampling, and they will need three years of results to show what is going into and out of the system. The SoundIQ online data sharing system is now in phase two, and they encourage other MRCs to expand the system into their counties.

NW Straits Foundation: Joan Drinkwin reported that the Foundation is seeking sponsorships for the MRC conference. Any suggestions can be forwarded to Tracie Johannessen. They are also soliciting silent auction items and encouraging MRCs to consider putting baskets together again this year. Joan thanked Lincoln Loehr for contributing the first donation. The Foundation is also still working to build its mailing list, so names and contact information can be sent to Tracie.

The Russell Family Foundation is providing support to develop MRC water quality projects and for the MRC conference. Foundation staff is also working with a communications person to develop a four page piece with an option for MRCs to develop a companion insert specific to their MRC.

Approval of June 29 meeting minutes

The minutes of the June 29 meeting were approved as written.

Public Comment

During public comment, Jesse Sayles, a student from Arizona State University, described his dissertation research in the Whidbey Basin Action Area. He explained that he is interested in interviewing people about restoration projects.

Discussion: Developing a Sustainability Plan for the Initiative

Ginny walked through the first cut draft sustainability plan circulated with the meeting handouts. Much of the information contained in the draft was a compilation of information the Commission has previously discussed. Noteworthy is the fact that there is greater funding disparity between MRCs than ever before mostly because of the differences in local contributions and funds that have been awarded through competitive grants. Ginny also emphasized some of the changes that have occurred within the organization as a result of reduced budgets and encouraged Commissioners to consider some changes in how the organization might work in the future to be successful.

The Commission discussed components of the draft plan, including how it intersects with the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda and whether to set targets for MRCs to raise funds.

The Executive Committee will continue to discuss the draft plan and a revised version will be distributed for discussion at the August 24 Commission meeting. In the meantime, MRC representatives should consider and discuss with their MRCs:

- What is the budget that each MRC needs for the coming year?

- What are the capabilities locally to find funds for local projects?

Update on the Puget Sound Partnership

Duane Fagergren provided an update on the leadership changes at the Partnership. Duane provided the new director, retired Colonel Tony Wright, with a very short briefing about the Northwest Straits Initiative and is hoping that Tony will be able to attend the August meeting.

Update: Blue Ribbon Panel on Ocean Acidification

Terrie Klinger explained that the Blue Ribbon Panel is a diverse group of people. The science subgroup has taken the last several months to prepare a white paper summarizing ocean acidification in state waters, and are now drafting recommendations. The presentations from the panel meetings are [available online](#). The panel is focusing on four areas for their recommendations: research and monitoring; quantifying local source contributions; adaptations and remediation; and public education and outreach.

Terry Williams added that they are working with Brad Warren of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership to respond to recommendations. Terrie Klinger said the group is likely to come up with a short list of prioritized actions for their August 8 meeting, and the timeline requires that it be ready for the Governor's signature by October 1.

Committee Reports

Jerry Masters summarized the written report of the Executive Committee and requested that MRCs report back to him before the committee's next meeting (August 8) with any feedback or input on what Commission staff should be focusing on.

Business Items

Ginny updated the Commission on the hiring process to fill the administrative position.

The meeting dates and locations for the remainder of 2012 was circulated to ensure everyone has the same information. The August 24 meeting will be held at Padilla Bay Reserve in Mount Vernon, and the September 27 meeting will be in Bellingham.

The Commission moved and approved by consensus to appoint Raechel Waters as an alternate for Terrie Klinger.

Ginny noted that the final draft of the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda includes most of the recommendations provided by the Commission.

Round Table

Joan Drinkwin noted that there is a funding opportunity for surf scoter protection if anyone has ideas for habitat restoration projects.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting will be held on August 24 in Skagit County at Padilla Bay Reserve in Bayview.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
August 24, 2012, 10:00 am -1:30 pm
Padilla Bay Reserve, Skagit County**

Attending: Tom Hoban, Jerry Masters, Joe Gaydos, Ken Carrasco, Bob Vreeland, Shannon Davis, Lenny Corin, Duane Fagergren (alt.), Steve Revella, Christine Woodward (alt.)

Absent: Terrie Klinger, Terry Williams, Rachel Benbrook, Tom Bancroft

Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Caroline Gibson, Andrea Hood

Other support: Joan Drinkwin (NW Straits Foundation), Tracie Johannessen (NW Straits Foundation), Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve)

Open meeting and Welcome

Jerry Masters opened the meeting, welcoming 10th District State Representative Norma Smith. Representative Smith is a member of the capital budget committee and local government committee; she is also appointed to the economic development commission for the state. In the 1990s, Representative Smith worked as Special Assistant to Congressman Jack Metcalf as the Northwest Straits Initiative was developed; she is now a member of the Ocean Acidification Blue Ribbon Panel (Panel).

Representative Smith said that only an estimated seven percent of the public is aware of ocean acidification threats and issues, so there is a great need to educate. Stakeholder needs must be understood, with input from all sectors, including agriculture. Pending Panel recommendations should acknowledge those needs, represent scientific consensus, and recognize the necessity of including our Pacific Rim neighbors' role in responding to the threat. Representative Smith encouraged everyone to view the Panel meeting summaries available on the Department of Ecology's website (see <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/water/marine/oceanacidification.html#meetings>) and provide input and feedback to her.

There was recognition of inadequate funding for already identified local source reduction actions. The question is how to prioritize and pay for new tasks. If the Northwest Straits Initiative can present specific projects that clearly itemize investment and outcomes, Representative Smith may be able to find ways to support funding. She noted the success of thinking creatively and that people will rally around a compelling story with clear goals.

Discussion continued about the community-driven, bottom-up approach that was envisioned when the Northwest Straits Initiative was created. The Murray-Metcalf coalition was a Democrat/Republican as

well as a Senate/House partnership. Public outreach regarding ocean acidification threat response and the Panel recommendations should use local resources such as MRCs and extension offices to spread factual, scientific information separate from the global warming issue. Local shellfish growers should tell their stories. A public outreach communication plan is forming with the Panel's recommendations.

Ginny Broadhurst noted that the Northwest Straits Commission (Commission) will be recognized as a co-lead in implementing recommended public education and outreach actions related to ocean acidification. The Commission is in a good position to help due to its local MRC network.

Approval of July 27 meeting minutes

Members unanimously approved the July 27, 2012 Commission meeting minutes as written.

Business Items

Andrea Hood was introduced as Program Coordinator for the Northwest Straits Commission. Andrea will be the main contact for MRCs and for a variety of projects including the newsletter and event planning. Andrea will be working with other staff to coordinate the annual MRC conference to be held November 2-3 in Port Townsend at the Northwest Maritime Center.

Conference registration information will be sent to MRC and Commission members in early September, with recommendations for Friday night lodging. All MRC members are encouraged to attend. Northwest Straits Commission will coordinate to place MRC members with local hosts who offer accommodations and will reimburse for travel/lodging if MRCs cannot afford it.

Caroline Gibson provided an update on the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Mussel Watch Pilot Project Expansion. Jim West, guest speaker at the July Commission meeting, oversees the program and has been building public and private partner support for the program. MRCs are acknowledged as being instrumental in program success. Sampling will be done at 80 sites, including new areas in the San Juan Islands. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is sponsoring mussel cages in all of the DNR Aquatic Reserves. The Stillaguamish Tribe is sponsoring a site in Port Susan. Sponsorship of \$1350 covers one cage and analysis of samples. Contact Caroline if your MRC would like to sponsor a sample site, and Jennifer Lanksbury at Jennifer.Lanksbury@dfw.wa.gov for information about the Pilot Expansion Project.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Bob Vreeland added to the written Clallam MRC report that the state's tsunami debris response plan is currently in its ninth iteration and yet to be completed. Approximately 450-500 Japanese vessels are unaccounted for and clean up is very expensive. At the MRC meeting, the discussion after Dr. Egan's presentation revolved around debris removal efforts already completed or underway, and the need for funds. Spotters have seen the first Chinook above the location of where the lower Elwha Dam used to be. Beginning in September, representation on the Commission from the Clallam MRC will rotate among members; Andrew Shogren will attend the next Commission meeting.

Jefferson: Shannon Davis reported that the Mystery Bay project won a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators award. The state Department of Natural Resources submitted the nomination for the national award, which will be awarded in Mobile, AL in September. The Jefferson MRC sent a letter to its County Commission expressing support for a programmatic Environmental

Impact Statement regarding coal transport in Puget Sound. Lacking full consensus, the MRC members also submitted a minority report. Shannon encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming Wooden Boat Festival in Port Townsend, September 7-9.

San Juan: Steve Revella reported that San Juan MRC members are working on the fish and wildlife section of the county's Critical Areas Ordinance, expressing concern because the ordinance is proposing to reduce required setback widths. Steve will present to the county council as a recreational fisherman. The MRC will collect rain garden baseline data. The project may need a refurbished sand layer, as sand applied to pavement during winter ice/snow washed into the project and may have affected system functionality.

Island: Lenny Corin reported that a derelict vessel was removed from Penn Cove; vessel removal and habitat restoration costs are huge. The lack of larvae attachment to mussel strings at nearby Penn Cove Shellfish is likely linked with associated pollution, but end of month flush should help. The Cornet Bay restoration project is going forward and a recent State Parks newsletter featured the project.

Whatcom: Ken Carrasco reported that the MRC is conducting crabber outreach, which has been well-received. The MRC will host a beach clean up as part of Whatcom Water Weeks events in September. As a featured presenter, Rachel Benbrook spoke about invasive *Spartina*. *Spartina* has been seen in Boundary Bay. Joe Gaydos is scheduled to give a "Bears to Barnacles" presentation. Elizabeth Kilanowski, Whatcom MRC education and outreach committee volunteer, is involved in hosting the second annual Whatcom County climate change symposium – Climate Change and the Future of Food – on October 25. See the [Whatcom MRC website](#) for details.

Snohomish: Tom Hoban noted that the submitted written MRC report is comprehensive. Not reflected is much additional work including conference calls, project planning, grant writing and efforts to align activities with the Puget Sound Action Agenda and Snohomish County. October events include the second annual 'Sound University' and a chili cook-off with Island MRC.

Skagit: Christine Woodward reported that Neil Borman moved out of the state and is no longer a Skagit MRC member. Jay Lind is the new MRC member representing recreational fishing. Skagit River System Cooperative reported on the success of a self-regulating tidegate project. The Beach Watcher's Program has run out of funding so must be re-structured. Recent MRC events included community beach seining. Everyone is invited to Fidalgo Bay Day on September 15. Thanks to Northwest Straits Foundation funding, Skagit MRC received forage fish survey training. Another 500 feet of Weaverling Spit in Fidalgo Bay will be restored starting in September.

Discussion of Sustainability Plan

Ginny introduced the draft Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Sustainability Plan. Funding for the current year work totals \$900,000, but the future is uncertain and diversifying funding sources is necessary. The goal is for Commission members to provide input to strengthen the plan, adopt the plan, and commit to actions.

A bar graph within the plan shows historic, current and projected future Initiative funding. Funding commission staff may be difficult but would benefit from being linked to regional program funding.

Discussion moved to the different levels of potential budget sources – local, state and federal. Local MRC financial support varies, with some MRCs getting money from their counties while others do not. All local MRCs must become active in seeking capacity funding. The Sustainability Plan proposes that each MRC seek \$20,000 in local financial support, with possible sources to include the county, cities, ports, corporate or others. For state level support, a goal is for each MRC to receive the same level of support from the state as each of the coastal MRCs (\$38,500).

In order to be successful, Ginny needs to be able to tell legislators exactly what will be done with the money, preferably through a list of projects with anticipated costs. Obtaining state financial support will require demonstrating to legislators that supporting the Initiative is a good investment. Terry Stevens noted that, in addition to Ginny's communication with legislators, it is important and very effective for local MRC members to also contact legislators and register support for the work of the Northwest Straits Commission.

A unified vision is needed for how the Commission currently defines itself, its role, its mission, and its relationship to the Puget Sound Partnership. There was discussion about how high to set goals for funding and the need to build in room for failing to reach goals but still be functional. There was agreement on importance of securing local financial support to lend credibility to the "ask" for state and federal financial support. Governor appointees to the Commission should also be strong advocates to state legislators.

After a lunch break, Jerry Masters focused on the local county MRC funding piece. Jerry asked each county MRC representative to identify challenges and also identify which MRC member(s) would or should do the "ask" at the local level. After a good discussion of opportunities and challenges for each MRC, Jerry asked that by September 28, every MRC should know and report out on who will make the local ask.

Jerry Masters and Joe Gaydos offered to do some one-on-one coaching by phone with the MRC members who will be doing the requests for funding from local sources. Jerry said that he would follow up with other gubernatorial Commission appointees and Terry Williams to discuss supporting roles. In future meetings the Commission will continue discussion of the sustainability plan and how things are progressing with different aspects of the plan.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35pm to transition to a Northwest Straits Foundation meeting. The next Commission meeting will be a brief morning business meeting on November 2 in Port Townsend.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
November 2, 2012, 9:30am-11:30am
Northwest Maritime Center, Port Townsend, Jefferson County**

DRAFT

Attending: Rachel Benbrook, Ken Carrasco, Lenny Corin, Shannon Davis, Joe Gaydos, Tom Hoban, Steve Revella, Raechel Waters (alt.), Terry Williams, Christine Woodward (alt.), Anthony Wright

Absent: Terrie Klinger, Terry Stevens

Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Andrea Hood

Support: Joan Drinkwin, Robyn du Pre', Cathy Cameron

Other MRC participation: Ivar Dolph (Skagit MRC), Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC staff), Ian Jefferds (Island MRC), Michelle LaForge (Snohomish MRC staff assistant), Gabrielle LaRoche (Jefferson MRC staff), Keeley O'Connell (Snohomish MRC), Frances Wood (Island MRC), Jeff Ward (Clallam MRC)

Open meeting and Welcome

Jerry Masters opened the meeting with a round of introductions. No agenda changes were made.

Approval of August 24 meeting minutes

Members unanimously approved the August 24, 2012 Commission meeting minutes as written.

Business Items

Commissioners reviewed a draft 2013 Northwest Straits Commission meeting date schedule and expressed the need to schedule a retreat for early in the new year. After reviewing calendars, Commissioners will revisit the proposed 2013 meeting schedule at the November 30 Commission meeting. Commission staff will send out a poll to determine retreat dates.

Executive Committee report: Steve Revella reviewed the September 26th Northwest Straits Commission Executive Committee report, noting that Ginny visited MRCs during September to discuss sustainability planning. Given the new emphasis on diversifying funding sources and building local support, Steve spoke of the need to revisit the Northwest Straits Initiative's strategic plan last developed in 2008, with a retreat being a good opportunity to do so.

Executive Director report: Ginny reviewed the agenda for the 2012 MRC conference, with Friday devoted to speakers and presentations. Saturday's agenda is workshop style, with an opportunity for MRCs to discuss topics of immediate interest. Joe Gaydos has fulfilled two terms with the Northwest Straits

Commission and will be stepping off the Commission, making this his last meeting. Brad Smith, retired Dean of Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University, has applied to fill Joe's position. Tom Bancroft submitted his resignation as a member of the Northwest Straits Commission, creating another open position.

Puget Sound Partnership report: Tony Wright expressed his appreciation at being asked to speak on behalf of the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) and announced the recent release of the State of the Sound report. Two indicators are making progress – increased health in shellfish beds and restored estuarine acreage – but other indicators are going down or flatlining. While we are doing good things; Tony acknowledged that we are not on track to achieve a healthy Puget Sound by 2020.

Tony discussed how overlapping and/or not clearly defined roles of MRCs, LIOs, WRIAs, lead entities, etc., create confusion and make it difficult to analyze the effectiveness of work accomplished within context of efficiency. Overlap and perceived inefficiency is exacerbated by organizations working within different boundaries – some work within a watershed but may cooperate with agencies that use county/state boundaries or congressional districts. Tony stated that he is still observing and collecting information about the Northwest Straits Initiative.

Tony explained that he re-organized the PSP to result in action. Tony used a Gantt chart strategy to 'operationalize' the PSP Action Agenda. This strategy will better identify the sequence of what needs to be done and will better account for money needed or spent. Tony recognized the need for a comprehensive monitoring plan, especially as a way to verify assumptions that are being made. Tony emphasized the need for facts and for good communication. The PSP is supposed to coordinate and lead, but must know what's going on and how much is being spent in order to do that. Putting the Agenda Gantt chart together is an activity to lead discussion resulting in action.

Terry Williams noted that his perspective differed from Tony's on the importance of different organizations such as LIOs. Terry explained that LIOs are important as a forum to bring planners/permitters together so that land use decision makers and tribes can agree on levels of protection. LIOs were not meant to take the place of other organizations. Watershed and MRC funding levels don't reflect the importance of work they are doing locally. Tribes try to influence decision making at a watershed scale that ignores political boundaries. Terry is worried about talk of getting rid of organizations. He is also concerned about addressing ocean acidification. The science has shown that we can help shellfish by controlling nutrient input, but political will is lacking to tackle agriculture and other sources. Government and tribes need to figure out how to make it work – we have the process, we just don't want to face the problems.

Northwest Straits Initiative Sustainability Plan: Jerry Masters noted the existence of 12 legislative districts within the Northwest Straits region and the need for local support to seed support from higher levels. Ginny reviewed that in 2010, the Initiative's budget went from \$1.6 million to zero. The sustainability plan outlines steps to secure funding from within each MRC's county as well as state level support. Federal support will also be needed and the Northwest Straits Foundation will assist by leveraging additional private and competitive grants. MRCs were asked to report on progress toward achieving local funding support.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Jeff Ward reported that Clallam county commissioners are supportive of the MRC; the county provides in-kind website hosting, coordination, and proposal support. Clallam County is somewhat separated from Puget Sound – sometimes it's considered connected, sometimes not. Jeff noted that vacant positions on the MRC are available to be filled. A strategic plan is being formed to focus on strengths within

the MRC and to determine what's fundable. Jeff is leading the effort to create a value proposition within each program explaining why it's valuable to funders. MRC staff is housed within the county and the \$60K from the Northwest Straits Commission funds Cathy Lear as MRC staff.

Jefferson: Shannon Davis noted that with Gabrielle LaRoche on vacation, she has had a chance to find out what the MRC would be like without staff support. Jefferson receives no funding from county (e.g. no meeting space, no website, no county staff). In seeking local funding, the MRC asked the Port Townsend paper mill for \$10K, with unknown result. Other potential funding sources could be WSU beachwatchers, Port of Port Townsend, and shellfish companies. In Jefferson County, the \$60K Northwest Straits Commission funding comes through WSU, not the county. Gabrielle reviewed the year's budget – \$60K Commission money, small grant for eelgrass protection buoys; \$27K for Marine Protected Area in south Port Townsend Bay.

San Juan: Steve Revella reviewed that the San Juan MRC was funded and created by the county council but was de-funded. Ten thousand dollars for the MRC was recently included in the county budget. The MRC asked for \$10K (vs. \$20K) because the current budget only goes through June 2013 and is therefore only half a year's worth of funding. The two San Juan County council members who are supportive of the MRC are up for re-election.

Skagit: - Christine Woodward reported that no LIO exists yet in Skagit County. Skagit County provides staff for the MRC, plus in-kind support. Skagit MRC works with the Northwest Straits Foundation and used about \$220K of the \$500K available from Kimberly Clark funds on projects in Fidalgo and Padilla Bay during the past two years.

Island: Lenny Corin explained that the Island MRC is waiting until after the election to ask for local financial support because two Island County council members are up for re-election. Currently, the MRC gets in-kind support from the county for meeting space (\$2,000?). A lot of money is represented by the volunteers involved in the local WSU Beachwatchers program. The Town of Coupeville supports phytoremediation with \$5K. Frances Wood announced the MRC has a new funding source to support the pigeon guillemot project. A local winery has produced a special label wine with a pigeon guillemot picture and 55 words devoted to the MRC; for each bottle sold, \$1 will be contributed to the MRC's pigeon guillemot project. Other annual project funding includes Cornet Bay (\$400K, with \$200K of that from Salmon Recovery Funding Board, the rest is federal and private money). The Port Susan project was \$50K.

Whatcom: Ken Carrasco reported that the MRC needs to raise its visibility within the county and made good progress towards that with the MRC sponsored "Barnacles to Bears" talk by Joe Gaydos, which drew a standing room only crowd and offered the chance to increase the MRC's profile among local residents. Whatcom County does not currently provide MRC funding. Whatcom County can cover match through support of complementary county programs. Cash, or a line item for the MRC within the county budget, is not planned for the coming year. The Whatcom MRC has re-organized to include a financial sustainability committee. The current MRC budget includes \$60K from the Commission, some Burning Foundation funds, and \$200K spent in Whatcom County to remove derelict fishing gear.

Snohomish: Tom Hoban reported that Snohomish MRC is in relatively good shape, but there are lots of maybes. Snohomish County's watershed district tax is a source of funding that provides an annual \$131K for the MRC. The county also provides building space, supports part of the coordinator's salary, and sponsors the annual Americorps Individual Placement that serves as an MRC program assistant. Kathleen Herrmann noted that none of the agency or organizational overlap mentioned earlier includes interaction with citizen volunteers. That role is filled by MRCs and the restoration projects accomplished benefit

government. MRCs come to consensus and the citizen body is already behind the work to be done. The MRC budget of \$131K currently is leveraged into \$250K, with an additional \$380K + \$800K (if the MRC is successful in getting its ESRP grant).

Tony Wright commented that he wants to hear numbers that include what the high end would be, and also the more probable amounts to be spent. Jerry asked the MRCs to send those numbers to Ginny.

Ginny noted that Senator Ranker offered to support legislation that would provide state funding for Northwest Straits MRCs equal to the \$38.5K the state provides to the coastal MRCs. Jerry Masters emphasized that through recent efforts, state legislators are informed about the importance of local MRCs and the Northwest Straits Initiative. Jerry wants local MRC members to attend and support the funding requests to state legislators, to market the ask, and ensure the votes exist to support the funding. Tony Wright made it clear that funding for the Commission is not currently included in the Governor's budget; the budget request to the state must be coordinated with the Partnership's agenda. Ginny called attention to a spreadsheet being developed to fully include all the work being accomplished by the Northwest Straits Initiative.

Jerry introduced Robyn du Pre' as the new Northwest Straits Foundation Director. Robyn has set up meetings with each county MRC to become familiar with individual needs and will use meeting results to inform strategic planning. Joan Drinkwin reported that the current Foundation budget is about \$1.6 million and will be about \$1 million for the next year. Robyn will be looking at both private foundations and corporate funding sources for additional contributions.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:37. The next Commission meeting will be November 30 in Island County at Pacific Rim Institute (180 Parker Road, Coupeville).



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
November 30, 2012, 12:00pm-3pm
Pacific Rim Institute, Coupeville, Island County**

Attending: Terrie Klinger, Steve Revella, Tom Hoban, Jerry Masters, Shannon Davis, Rachel Benbrook, Lenny Corin

Absent: Ken Carrasco, Terry Williams, Tony Wright, Bob Vreeland

Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Andrea Hood, Sasha Horst

Support: Joan Drinkwin, Robyn du Pré

Other: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC staff), Frances Wood (Island MRC), Jeff Ward (Clallam MRC), Helen Price Johnson (Island County Commissioner)

Convene: Jerry Masters convened the meeting with informal discussions during a working lunch.

Welcome: Jerry Masters introduced Island County Commissioner Helen Price Johnson. Commissioner Price Johnson welcomed everyone and announced that in late November the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) recognized four Puget Sound Champions from Island County. Commissioner Price Johnson expressed appreciation for the roles of the Northwest Straits Commission and Northwest Straits Foundation in supporting local projects such as Cornet Bay restoration and phytoremediation. Ginny Broadhurst noted that Commissioner Price Johnson is the co-chair of the Washington Association of Counties Coastal Caucus and thanked her and the caucus for supporting the Northwest Straits Initiative.

Update from the Chair: Jerry Masters reviewed the past year of the Northwest Straits Initiative's funding and summarized his view on what current and future funding strategies should emphasize and consider. Commissioners discussed the original intent of the Northwest Straits Initiative and the value to government of a relatively small financial investment resulting in on-the-ground projects accomplished through the work of knowledgeable volunteers who form the Marine Resources Committees (MRCs).

Discussion included differences and overlap between MRCs and Local Integrating Organizations (LIOs), how projects are prioritized through LIOs and how state funding is expected to come through LIOs to implement priorities. Commissioner Price Johnson announced that she is chair elect for the Island County LIO, which is still learning about how LIOs function and align priorities with PSP's Action Agenda.

Conference debrief: Commission staff summarized data gathered from thirty responses received from a survey sent to annual MRC conference attendees. Feedback was positive overall. Conference video footage filmed by Al Bergstein and copies of presentations are posted on the Commission [web site](#).

Approval of minutes: Commission members unanimously approved the [November 2, 2012 Commission meeting minutes](#) as written.

2013 Commission meeting dates: Ginny Broadhurst discussed the proposed 2013 Northwest Straits Commission meeting dates. Future information will clarify which dates will also include a separate meeting of the Northwest Straits Foundation Board.

Commission budget update: Sasha Horst circulated a handout summarizing the Commission budget status, with current funds coming from the Puget Sound Partnership (EPA and NOAA funds) and a USGS Cooperative Agreement Program (CAP) grant. Caroline Gibson summarized the CAP grant purpose and progress and offered to follow up with those interested.

Rachel Benbrook volunteered to fill one vacancy on the Commission's executive committee.

A meeting of MRC staff and chairs and Commission staff is scheduled for January 7, 2013 at Padilla Bay. An agenda will be circulated.

Blue Ribbon Panel update: Terrie Klinger summarized the formation and function of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Ocean Acidification. Dr. Klinger described the final science summary as a place-based document specific to Puget Sound and Washington's coastal waters. The Panel's final recommendations report is a consensus document, though not everything everyone wanted is included. The report contains 42 recommendations arranged into six categories. Information about ocean acidification in Washington State and the Blue Ribbon Panel's report are available on the Department of Ecology's web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/water/marine/oceanacidification.html>.

Several Commission members attended the November 27 event to release the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations. Commissioners discussed the event and the Governor's Executive Order outlining Washington's response to ocean acidification (OA). Ginny Broadhurst called attention to Appendix 1 of the Panel's report, which contains several references to the Northwest Straits Commission as an implementation partner. Caroline Gibson introduced for review a one-page fact sheet she produced to help inform elected officials and agency personnel of current actions being taken by the Northwest Straits Initiative to address OA. The fact sheet will be posted on the Northwest Straits Initiative web site and is available for MRCs to use.

MRC reports:

San Juan - Steve Revella reported that San Juan County is now part of the Mussel Watch monitoring program. A few cages are in place, with the hope for more in the future. Steve summarized the community's concerns about NOAA's proposed orca protection area requirements, and the MRC's concerns about reduced buffers proposed in the recent version of the county's Critical Areas Ordinance.

Island - Lenny Corin thanked all who attended the morning field trip led by Joe Hillers to view two Island County phytoremediation project sites. Two planting sessions were held at Cornet Bay in late November as part of the shoreline restoration project.

Skagit – Rachel Benbrook reported that MRC member Kurt Buchanan is retiring and leaving the MRC; a replacement is needed. Skagit MRC is in a strategic planning process. Rachel noted that the local Beach Watchers program is not funded and is, therefore, without staff. Skagit MRC submitted an ESRP application in partnership with the NWS Foundation for Bowman Bay restoration.

Jefferson – Shannon Davis reported that Pat Pearson is retiring and will no longer be attending MRC meetings. Efforts to find financial support for the MRC are ongoing, but not successful thus far. MRC members plan to seek funding from local businesses and partners.

Clallam – Jeff Ward reported that MRC staff and members helped coordinate a tsunami marine debris response meeting in November; 35 people attended. The state's Marine Debris Response Plan is available online. The MRC is working on its own strategic plan, is struggling with not achieving a quorum at meetings, and may have to shift meeting dates to accommodate county furlough days. Some MRC members will meet with county commissioners to brief them on the MRC's actions related to ocean acidification response.

Snohomish – Tom Hoban reported that the MRC made a presentation at the local LIO meeting. The Port Susan Stewardship Area is a big project; Snohomish MRC is working with Island MRC and Northwest Straits Foundation. The MRC is participating in Mussel Watch monitoring and a forage fish spawning survey. The MRC submitted an ESRP grant application with the county as the lead. Kathleen Herrmann added that she and Simon Geerlofs are working with Commission staff to plan a workshop to share information about how to effectively reduce regional demand for shoreline armoring and learn about the latest technical information on shoreline processes.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:10pm. The next Commission meeting will be January 25, 2013 in Whatcom County.