



## agenda

**Meeting:** Northwest Straits Commission

**Location:** Zoom Virtual Meeting

**Date:** August 26, 2022

**Time:** 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

To join the Zoom meeting, [CLICK HERE](#) Meeting ID: 867 6253 0624 Passcode: 892655

For audio conference, dial: 253-215-8782 or [click here](#) to find your local number.

*We acknowledge the lands we're on today are the ancestral and current homelands of Indigenous Nations who have stewarded them since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These Indigenous Nations include the Jamestown S'Klallam, Lower Elwha Klallam, Lummi, Makah, Nooksack, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Samish, Stillaguamish, Swinomish, and Tulalip Tribes.*

10:00 – 10:10	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> Tribal acknowledgement Approval of July 2022 meeting minutes	Elsa Schwartz
10:10 – 10:30	<b>Committee reports</b> Executive Committee Science Advisory Committee External Relations Committee	Tom Cowan Julia Parrish Chris Castner
10:30 – 10:40	<b>Business items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FY22 Congressionally Directed Spending update</li><li>• Green Crab update</li><li>• Derelict vessel removal planning</li><li>• Collaborative Conservation Workshop Sept. 16 update</li></ul>	Staff Sasha Jeff/Leah Lucas Nathan
10:40 – 11:10	<b>Yellow Island Intertidal Monitoring Project</b>	Chris Mantegna, University of Washington



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11:10 – 11:15	<b>Puget Sound Partnership update</b>	Jennifer Grimm, Puget Sound Partnership
11:15 – 11:20	<b>NWS Foundation update</b>	Don Hunger, NW Straits Foundation
11:20 – 11:50	<b>MRC Reports</b>	MRC Representatives
11:50 – 11:55	<b>Meeting highlights and action items</b> Identify key points and action items from this meeting for MRC reps to report back to their MRCs	All
11:55 – 12:00	<b>Public comment</b>	All

*30 minute post-meeting open discussion – join if you'd like.*



# Minutes

July 29, 2022 10:00 AM-12:00PM  
Zoom - Virtual meeting  
Northwest Straits Commission meeting

## **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Elsa Schwartz (Island-Chair), Tom Cowan (Vice Chair), Nan McKay, Chris Castner, Julia Parrish, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Tim Ellis (Snohomish), Christina Koons (San Juan), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

**Commission Staff:** Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst, Dana Oster, Jeff Whitty, Nathan Woods, Allie Simpson, Antonio Jones

**Others in Attendance:** Don Hunger (NW Straits Foundation), Austin Rose (Whatcom), Barbara Bennett (Island)

**Absent:** Alan Clark (Clallam), Dianne Hennebert (Skagit), Laura Blackmore

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Elsa Schwartz opened the meeting with introductions of attendees and the tribal acknowledgment. The Commission approved the minutes from the June 24 meeting as written by consensus.

## **Remembering Terry Williams**

The Commission noted the passing of Terry Williams, one of the founding members of the NW Straits Initiative and a tribal leader. Terry was instrumental in establishing the Initiative's strong tribal partnerships, and he made significant contributions to conservation locally, nationally, and internationally. Read an article in the Everett Herald about Terry [here](#).

## **Committee Reports**

**Executive Committee:** Tom Cowan reported that there was no Executive Committee meeting this month and as a result, there is nothing to report.

**Science Advisory Committee:** Julia Parrish reported that the Science Advisory Committee has been working on creating terms of reference and long term guidelines for what the Science Advisory Committee is and what they do. Julia predicts better involvement in the future following the completion of the guidelines.

**External Relations Committee:** Chris Castner reported the External Relations Committee is scheduled to meet soon, after a several month hiatus. The committee plans to discuss the NW Straits Initiative reauthorization bill that Senator Murray's staff shared with the Governor's office and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. Chris also noted that the Northwest Straits request for Congressionally Directed



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Spending for fiscal year 2023 made it into the Senate appropriations bill. Senator Murray was invited to attend the Collaborative Conservation Workshop on September 16 but has not confirmed.

### Business items

- Forage fish training report out – Nathan reported on behalf of Leah that WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, with the support of their Washington Conservation Corps crew, provided training to over 20 volunteers on how to conduct the forage fish spawn beach surveys. Volunteers were able to get hands-on practice collecting samples on the beach at the NW Maritime Center.
- Green crab catch update – Jeff reported Commission staff prepared and submitted the interim report required for the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife green crab funding. Commission staff also met with staff from DNR, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, WA Sea Grant, and Padilla Bay Reserve to discuss a collaborative effort to trap green crab in Fidalgo Bay. Commission staff are also planning collaborative trapping events with the Upper Skagit Tribe south of Larrabee State Park, and with the NW Straits Foundation at Larrabee State Park.
- Salish Sea eelgrass no-anchor zone meeting update – Allie reported that an eelgrass survey of North Chuckanut Bay is planned for this summer. Commission staff hosted a transboundary Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection Zone meeting with partners in WA and BC to coordinate on shared approaches and messaging for the voluntary no-anchor zones.
- Collaborative Conservation Workshop – Nathan reported that Commission staff are working on logistics and the planning group will share an agenda soon. Registration for the event is still open, please register if you have not done so already. The event is scheduled for September 16, from 11am-4pm at the Padilla Bay Reserve.
- Congressional funding update - Lucas reported Commission staff are awaiting feedback from NOAA on the application for fiscal year 2022 Congressional funds, which includes project proposals prioritized by MRCs. Funds are anticipated to begin January 1, 2023.

### Partner updates

**Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission:** Cecilia Gobin reported the NW Indian Fisheries Commission is working with tribes to compose a list of derelict vessels they would like to prioritize for removal through the NW Straits Commission derelict vessel removal project being planned with 2022 Congressional funds. Cecilia also said they are finalizing a review of the NW Straits Initiative reauthorization bill and she believes the NW Indian Fisheries Commission will support it, with a few recommendations for changes in word choice.

**Puget Sound Partnership:** No report from the Partnership.

**Northwest Straits Foundation:** Don Hunger reported the NW Straits Foundation is recruiting for new board members. Don also stated there is strong support for the Salish Sea Conservation Corps program they are developing. Next year is the pilot year for the program and they intend to build structure for it as a formal



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AmeriCorps program in support of the NW Straits Initiative. Don wants the program to maintain flexibility to support marine conservation in diverse ways year-round.

## **MRC Updates**

MRCs provided full written reports that are available in the [pre-meeting materials](#). Highlights are included below:

### **Clallam**

- Continued Forage Fish sampling on three beaches.
- Pigeon Guillemot surveys are in full swing.

### **Island – Elsa Schwartz**

- Cornet Bay Stewardship event took place on July 8.
- Bull kelp surveys began mid-June and will continue through to the fall.

### **Jefferson – Jeff Taylor**

- Sea Dragons team continues with ROV surveys. Jefferson MRC hopes to continue to work with the Sea Dragons to locate and recover derelict crab pots in East Jefferson County.
- Jefferson MRC partnered with Port Townsend Marine Science Center and co-hosted a virtual panel on Dungeness crab research and management efforts featuring Emily Buckner from Puget Sound Restoration Fund and Pacific Crab Research Group, Liz Tobin with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Katelyn Bosley of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- Jefferson MRC tabled the Forever Streamfest event in Port Angeles on June 25.

### **San Juan – Christina Koons**

- New Marine Program staffing structure has been implemented by San Juan MRC, which is designed to make better use of staff time and skill sets.
- 45 visitor assessments completed at False Bay and Ulva Sp. sampling is now well underway.

### **Skagit**

- Salish Sea Stewards picnic was held at Padilla Bay on Saturday, July 16.
- Forage fish survey volunteers hosted an educational forage fish survey station at the Fidalgo Bay Resort for several small groups of Latinx kids from the Washington State's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP).

### **Snohomish – Tim Ellis**



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- Stakeholder meetings for the Port Susan Conservation Action Plan (CAP) Update Project on June 30 and July 6. These meetings focused on plan implementation and discussing the Objectives & Strategic Actions of the CAP with focus on areas such as climate change, invasive species, and human, social, and cultural wellbeing.
- Derelict vessel contractor has removed two derelict vessels from the Snohomish Estuary.
- Crabber Education subcommittee conducted in-person outreach at the 10th Street Boat Launch in Everett on July 1, 2, 8, and 9.

## **Whatcom – Bob Cecile**

- Whatcom MRC has a vacancy for an Economic interest position.
- SW Lummi Island Beach Cleanup successfully removed 452lbs of trash from the beach.

## **Meeting highlights and action steps for MRCs**

The Commission identified the following key highlights, which staff will share as a separate document to MRC staff and the Commission:

- **Northwest Straits Initiative Collaborative Conservation Workshop** will be held at Padilla Bay Reserve September 16; from 11 AM to 4 PM. The event is planned for MRC members, MRC Staff, NWS Commission Board and Staff, and NWS Foundation Board and staff. Registration for the event is still open, MRC members and staff should have received a direct email invite. Please register by August 8, if you have not done so already. Contact [Nathan Woods](#) with questions.
- **Derelict Vessel Removal:** NW Straits Commission staff are working with WA Department of Natural Resources, tribal partners, and MRCs to plan derelict vessel removals and pilot a derelict vessel turn-in event using Congressionally Directed Funds. MRC members interested in joining the project workgroup should reach out to Lucas Hart.
- **San Juan MRC:** San Juan County recently restructured staffing to better coordinate staff support for the Marine Resources Committee, the Citizen Advisory Group for Salmon Recovery, and the Local Integrating Organization.
- **Terry Williams:** The Commission noted the passing of Terry Williams, one of the founding members of the NW Straits Initiative and a tribal leader. Terry was instrumental in establishing the Initiative's strong tribal partnerships, and he made significant contributions to conservation locally, nationally, and internationally. Read an article in the Everett Herald about Terry [here](#).

## **Public comment**

There was no public comment.



# Minutes

August 26, 2022 - The next Northwest Straits Commission meeting: 10am-12pm via Zoom. More information can be found [on our website](#).

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## Commission staff highlights - [August 2022]

### MRC Support

**Congressionally directed spending:** Commission staff distributed a memo, timeline, and project form for the NW Straits Congressionally Directed Spending to MRCs for one-time funding for 2023

**2021-23 MRC Grants:** April-June payment requests and deliverables from MRCs have been processed by NW Straits Commission and Ecology staff. Year one state funds have now expired and the state fiscal year closed.

### Regional Projects

**Kelp Plan:** NW Straits Commission held an advisory committee meeting and workshop-planning meeting to continue to engage partners in actively implementing the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan. Additionally, NW Straits Commission staff are planning multiple small group discussions around information and guidance needs to support strengthening science-informed decisions for site-scale review of permits and proposals.

**Kelp Monitoring:** Volunteers continue to monitor kelp beds in their respective counties. Surveys are likely to continue through September but August has been especially busy as it is peak kelp season. Staff from WA Department of Natural Resources joined survey teams in multiple counties to better understand the kelp kayak monitoring project.

**Green Crab:** Fieldwork continues for green crab removal in both Drayton Harbor and Samish Bay. In a collaborative effort, NW Straits Commission staff, Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC), volunteers, Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) members, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) technicians, and Drayton Harbor Oyster Company have removed 106 green crabs from Drayton Harbor as of mid-August. Taylor Shellfish and the hardworking WCC crew have removed 45 green crabs from Samish Bay. The WCC crew is finishing their last week trapping on August 25. Jeff and Leah are continuing to recruit volunteers to help with trapping and outreach. NW Straits Commission staff collaborated with Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, NW Straits Foundation, and VCC to sample Clayton Beach and neighboring Upper Skagit areas. Additionally, NW Straits Commission staff collaborated with WDFW, Dept. of Natural Resources, Samish Indian Nation, VCC, Puget Sound Corps, Washington Sea Grant, and Padilla Bay Reserve to conduct a green crab-sampling blitz in Fidalgo Bay.





## Commission staff highlights - [August 2022]

**Forage Fish:** NW Straits Commission staff are coordinating with WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), NWS Foundation (Foundation), and MRCs to update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that acts as a permit for MRCs and the Foundation to collect forage fish spawning samples and outlines WDFW's support for sample processing. NW Straits Commission staff is also coordinating a supplies purchase order for MRCs for forage fish sample processing.

**Derelict Vessels:** NW Straits Commission staff held a meeting with Dept. of Natural Resources and tribal partners to strategize on options for removing derelict vessels from tribally owned tidelands.

### Operations

**Collaborative Conservation Workshop update:** NW Straits Commission staff are pleased to announce that Sen. Lovelett has agreed to speak at the Sept. 16 Collaborative Conservation Workshop.

### Meetings Attended

Lucas attended: Derelict vessel removal meeting 8/2; External relations 8/3; ECB meeting 8/10; Derelict vessel removal meeting with tribal partners 8/11; Kelp funding strategy meeting 8/12; Green crab funding strategy meeting 8/22

Sasha attended: Derelict vessel removal meeting 8/2; External relations 8/3; Skagit MRC meeting 8/11; Derelict vessel removal meeting with tribal partners 8/11

Dana attended: Derelict Vessel removal with tribes meeting 8/11; Kelp Plan workshop 1 planning meeting 8/12; Kelp Plan Coordination Advisory Committee 8/19; Green Crab funding strategy meeting 8/22

Allie attended: Whatcom MRC meeting 8/4; Environmental Facilitation Workshop 8/15-8/18

Jeff attended: Kelp Plan workshop 1 planning meeting 8/12; Fidalgo Bay multiagency green crab sampling meeting 8/18; Kelp Plan Coordination Advisory Committee 8/19

Nathan attended: Derelict Vessel Removal meeting 8/2; Ecology all staff: Actions to reduce and respond to climate change 8/16



## Northwest Straits Foundation August 2022 Program Updates

**Mission Statement** - *To protect and restore the health of the marine ecosystem by promoting and implementing science-based restoration and stewardship, enhancing collaboration and attracting resources for the work of the Northwest Straits Initiative*

### Derelict Gear:

Jason Morgan, Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) Marine Program Manager, authored a guest blog for NOAA's Marine Debris Program titled *Eliminating Threats of Derelict Crab Pots in Washington's Salish Sea*. Read about the Foundation's 20-year effort removing derelict gear in partnership with Marine Resources Committees (MRCs), and state and federal agencies: [Eliminating Threats of Derelict Crab Pots in Washington's Salish Sea | OR&R's Marine Debris Program \(noaa.gov\)](#)

### Catch More Crab:

NWSF is tabling at Skagit MRC's Fidalgo Bay Day event 11:00AM to 3:00 PM, Saturday, August 20, at Fidalgo Bay RV Resort (4701 Fidalgo Bay Rd, Anacortes, WA 98221). Along with the MRC and NWSF, the event includes a number of environmental organizations. Join us to learn about our Derelict Gear Program, Catch More Crab campaign, and the Passport to Marine Adventure. Jason and Haley Sherman, NWSF Environmental Technician, along with Matt Castle, Samish Department of Natural Resources, and NWSF volunteers are hosting a community seining at 1:00 PM. Come learn about the monitoring we do at restoration sites and the marine life living in intertidal waters!

### Mt. Erie Elementary Rain Garden Work Party

Join the Northwest Straits Foundation for a "back-to-school" rain garden work party 10 am – noon, Saturday, September 3, at Mt. Erie Elementary School 1313 41<sup>st</sup> St. Anacortes, WA. We'll be sprucing up the rain garden and get it ready for the 2022 school year. We are going to do some erosion control, define the pathways, and install a new interpretive sign. [RSVP by clicking here!](#)

### Shore Friendly:

NWSF mailed outreach packets for the Shore Friendly program to new shoreline homeowners in Clallam and Skagit County who bought a shoreline home between January, 2021 and August, 2022. The packets provide information on the Shore Friendly program that encourages them to apply for a site visit if they have concerns about protecting their homes from shoreline erosion. This year the packets also included Catch More Crab materials, an informational flyer on how to spot European Green Crabs, and a rack card with information about the new Passport to Marine Adventure App. Packets are also being sent to new shoreline homeowners in Whatcom, Snohomish, and Island Counties. San Juan County will have similar packets delivered by Friends of the San Juans.



Northwest Straits Commission's Antonio Jones and Northwest Straits Foundation's Brooke Friesen empty a minnow trap while surveying for the European Green Crab

### **Monitoring:**

The field season is still in full swing! Possibly the most notable event of the season has been the beginning of pre-restoration monitoring at Clayton Beach. Profile, beach wrack, and large woody debris surveys were conducted during the last week of July. Invasive European Green Crab traps were set last week. NWSF collaborated with the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) and Upper Skagit Indian Tribe to do these trappings. This was a collaborative effort among NWSF and NWSC Foundation staff. NWSF staff members Brooke Friesen, Jessie Page, and Haley Sherman worked with NWSC staff members Jeff Whitty, Allie Simpson, and Antonio Jones on how to set traps, and identify habitat and crabs.

### **Monitoring cont.**

The Northwest Straits Foundation has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from The Boeing Company to expand our nearshore restoration monitoring program. Their support enables us to expand our monitoring work to include sites that would otherwise be neglected. NWSF staff and volunteers will conduct physical and biological surveys at restoration sites throughout Puget Sound providing data needed to evaluate changes in nearshore habitat and habitat usage over time. The results will be a valuable tool for restoring and protecting our shorelines through public education, adapting restoration practices, engaging shoreline landowners, and informing resource managers for permitting and land use considerations.

For the past seven years the NWSF has partnered with Marine Resources Committees, Sound Water Stewards, Salish Sea Stewards, University of Washington, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, and Friends of San Juans conducting a long-term study of the ecological differences between armored, natural and restored shorelines. Boeing's support enables us to amplify and continue that work.



Red Rock Crab caught at Clayton. Re-growing an arm!





### **Passport to Marine Adventure:**

We are gathering educational content, information about site conservation projects, and pictures for 22 new Passport exploration sites to be added to the app. Huge thanks to MRC members for sharing their local expertise (and beautiful pictures) of the exploration sites within their counties. We are visiting current sites and evaluating new ones to make sure each location is ADA accessible, and the app correctly lists its amenities. We're also conducting outreach to local businesses, in the seven counties, to inform them about the Passport. We're learning they're excited about getting involved as business sponsors. Our goal is to use the Passport to increase public awareness of the Northwest Straits Initiative, get people out visiting our stewardship sites, and help people learn and have fun on the Salish Sea. Please contact Brooke Friesen ([friesen@nwsfoundation.org](mailto:friesen@nwsfoundation.org)) if you want to suggest a site, provide site information or share your photos! [Click here to download the Passport to Marine Adventure](#)

### **Caroline Gibson Scholarship in Marine Studies:**

You're invited! On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, the Northwest Straits Foundation is hosting a reception honoring the first recipients of the Caroline Gibson Scholarship in Marine Conservation. This year's scholars are giving short presentations on their graduate research, passion for marine conservation and inspiring hope for the Salish Sea. The reception is 4 pm – 6 pm, Friday, October 23, at the Maritime Center 431 Water Street, Port Townsend, WA. Please join the Northwest Straits Foundation in welcoming scholars Mary Margaret Stoll, UW School of Oceanography graduate student; Michael Sadler, UW School of Oceanography doctoral student; and Sarah Gutzmann, Simon Fraser Marine Science graduate student. [Click here to RSVP!](#)

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Clallam

**Month/Year:** August 2022

**Submitted by:** Rebecca Mahan

### Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- Freshwater Bay Kayak survey July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Continued monthly Forage Fish sampling on three beaches.
- Monthly shellfish biotoxins sampling at Pillar Point and Freshwater Bay.

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): None to report.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

August Clallam MRC meeting is August 15<sup>th</sup> 2022.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): none to report.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified): Forage Fish sampling is going well. Clallam MRC continued to collect the monthly samples at Cline Spit and Ediz Hook and Elwha beaches East and West. Pigeon Guillemot project is near completion.

Shellfish Biotoxin monitoring: CMRC member Bob Vreeland and Coleman Byrnes volunteer are sampling Freshwater Bay and Pillar Point on a monthly basis. Both beaches have been closed due to high toxin levels.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Island

**Month/Year:** August/ 2022

**Submitted by:** Kelly Zupich

### Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- Cornet Bay Stewardship – Weeding for Whales
- Atlantis Steam ROV Camp

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff)

- The Executive Committee is targeting members of the farming and Navy communities to try and get more diverse representation to serve as members.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

- July 21: MRC Executive Committee
- July 29: Atlantis Steam ROV Camp
- Aug 2: MRC Meeting 3:00-5:00pm Deception Pass West Beach Shelter – In person! 😊
- Aug 6: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-2:00

#### Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- Aug 17: MRC Picnic
- Aug 19: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-2:00
- Aug 20: Family Outdoor Discovery Day
- Aug 25: MRC Executive Committee
- Sept 2: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-2:00
- Sept 6: MRC Committee Meeting

**Funding updates** (newly awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): None

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

Cornet Bay Stewardship: We held another event on August 6th to continue spreading the giant pile of hog fuel to help smother the weeds and provide a moisture barrier for the plants and trees. Our plan is to continue hosting events to keep on top of the weeds and continue spreading the mulch! Additionally, we have been going out and watering the site every other week.

Monitoring – Forage Fish: Our work monitoring for Forage fish eggs continues at most of our sites year-round. Teams continue to monitor monthly at Hoypus Point, Cornet Bay, Sunlight Shores, Maple Grove, Hidden Beach, Glendale.

Bull Kelp Surveys: Surveys on both islands began mid-June and will continue through to the Fall.

Outreach – Atlantis Steam Camp: We partnered with the Sound Water Stewards and Atlantis Steam to work with a group of students who designed and built their own underwater ROV to use for exploring the underwater environments around Whidbey’s shores. We met at the Coupeville wharf where they explored the habitats near the facility. We talked about all the species they came across and talked about what they might eat and their adaptations. There will be a video made from these recordings that will be used at the Sound Water Steward Wharf Interpretive Display.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

- July 18 and 20 - An MRC member participated on the team to evaluate Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) applications with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Meetings were on zoom and in person in Olympia. ESRP funding is key to some of the MRC projects, but there had never been an MRC representative as part of the scoring process. In an effort to be more inclusive of stakeholders, the WDFW held a training program and invited an MRC member to listen to the presentations, read the applications, and evaluate the projects along with other State department representatives. The experience was valuable in terms of understanding what all the reviewers look for in a good application. The applicants, in turn, learn a lot from the reviewer’s questions, and can refine their applications in the future.

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):



Atlantis Steam Camp ROV

photo by Kelly Zupich





MRC Meeting - Water Quality Demo

photo by Kelly Zupich

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Jefferson

**Month/Year:** August 2022

**Submitted by:** Monica Montgomery

### **Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:**

- The MRC organized two rain garden work parties on Jul 29 and Aug 17, engaging two MRC members and eleven community volunteers, and will be installing a new rain garden next month.
- The MRC contracted an eelgrass survey along the Port Townsend waterfront, which took place the week of July 25.
- The MRC supported the local PT Maritime Discovery Schools Teacher Training program, providing presentations to teachers from Jefferson and Clallam counties on the nearshore ecosystem (what it is, local issues, and restoration and caretaking efforts) as well as the MRC's Olympia oyster restoration work.

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Nothing to report.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

### Past Events/Meetings

July 22 – Forage fish survey at Dabob

Week of July 25 – Contracted PT eelgrass surveys completed

July 27 – Second kelp survey

July 29 – NWSC monthly meeting

July 29 – Rain garden work party at Franklin & Adams Sts and Benton & Clay Sts

July 31 – Forage fish survey at Adelma

July 31 – No-Anchor Zones buoy maintenance at Port Hadlock

August 2 – NWSI derelict vessel removal meeting

August 2 – MRC monthly meeting

August 12 – Olympia oyster population survey @ Indian Island

August 15 – Education & Outreach: presentation on Olympia oyster restoration for PT Maritime Discovery Schools Teacher Training program

August 16 – Education & Outreach: presentation on nearshore ecosystems for PT Maritime Discovery Schools Teacher Training program

August 16 – Executive Committee meeting

August 17 – Rain garden work party at Lincoln & Adams Sts and Garfield & Adams Sts

### Upcoming Events/Meetings

August – Forage fish survey at Adelma & Dabob

August 26 – Third kelp survey

August 26 – NWSC monthly meeting

September 6 – MRC monthly meeting

September 8 – Salish Sea No-Anchor Zones meeting

September 8-11 – Education & Outreach: tabling Wooden Boat Festival

September 9 – Strait ERN LIO quarterly meeting  
September 16 – NWSI Collaborative Conservation Workshop  
September 19 – Executive Committee meeting  
September 21-23 – Coast MRC Summit  
September 22-24 – New rain garden installation in Port Hadlock  
September 30 – NWSC monthly meeting  
September – Forage fish survey at Adelma & Dabob

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): Nothing to report.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

1. Monitoring:

- **Forage fish - Fort Townsend:** Nothing to report.
- **Forage fish - Adelma Beach (Index):** The Project Lead (Jeff) and one volunteer (Cindy) surveyed on July 31.
- **Forage fish - Dabob Bay (Index):** The Project Lead (Sarah) surveyed on July 22 with the MRC Coordinator and one MRC member (Troy).
- **Kelp:** Two MRC members (Solenne, Brenda), the MRC Coordinator, and two community volunteers (Yewah, Emily) conducted the second survey of 2022 on July 27, alongside Julia Ledbetter with DNR. Though feather boa no longer dominated the water, bull kelp appeared sparsely. The third survey is planned for August 26.

2. Rain Gardens:

- The MRC organized a work party on July 29 with Bob (WSU), the MRC Coordinator, two MRC members (Janette, Troy), and five community volunteers to weed and mulch the gardens at Franklin/Adams and Benton/Clay.
- The MRC organized a work party on August 17 with Bob (WSU), the MRC Coordinator, one MRC member (Troy), and six community volunteers (Ann, Ellery, Lauren, Robert, Vern, Lisa) to weed and mulch the gardens at Lincoln/Adams and Garfield/Adams.
- The MRC is prepping for a new rain garden installation on September 22-24 behind the WSU Extension office in Port Hadlock, to capture stormwater flowing into South Port Townsend Bay.

3. Education & Outreach:

- The MRC Coordinator, alongside one MRC member (Sarah) and the previous Coordinator (Cheryl), gave a presentation on Olympia oysters and restoration efforts for the PT Maritime Discovery Schools Teacher Training program on August 15.
- The MRC Coordinator gave a presentation on nearshore ecosystems for the PT Maritime Discovery Schools Teacher Training program on August 16, alongside Bob (WSU Extension).
- The MRC is featuring water quality ads through the local theatre's on-screen advertising programs and a boater targeted to anchor outside of eelgrass in the September issue of 48 Degrees North.
- The subcommittee will be meeting soon to prep for tabling the Wooden Boat Festival.

4. Olympia Oysters:

- The MRC Coordinator joined project partners, WDFW and PSRF, to conduct an Olympia oyster population survey on Indian Island on August 12.

5. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones:

- Marine Resources Consultants surveyed the Port Townsend waterfront for submerged aquatic vegetation (namely *Zostera marina*) the week of July 25. A field report will be due before September 30 and more in-depth analysis of the videos will be contracted through DNR in 2023.
- The team (Gordon, Troy, Bryan) serviced the Port Hadlock buoys on July 31, alongside Adam from Hama Hama Oyster Co.
- The team is planning to service the Mystery Bay buoys in early September.

6. Mapping Lost Crab Pots:

- Ella of the Sea Dragons team gave a presentation on the ROV survey efforts at the Aug 2 MRC monthly meeting. The MRC plans to continue this collaboration to remove derelict crab pots near Adelma Beach and other areas around East Jefferson County.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

- The MRC Coordinator and three MRC members (Jeff, Janette, Heidi) attended the NWSI meeting re: derelict vessel removal interagency agreement on August 2.

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):

July 27 Second kelp survey – Photos by Monica Montgomery







July 29 Rain garden work party at Benton & Clay Sts – Photos by Monica Montgomery







July 29 Rain garden work party at Franklin & Adams Sts – Photo by Monica Montgomery





July 31 No-anchor zones buoy maintenance at Port Hadlock – Photos of Gordon & Bryan by Troy McKelvey





August 16 Education and outreach: K-12 teachers enrolled in the PT Maritime Discovery Schools Teacher Training program, learning about the nearshore ecosystem and the MRC's nearshore restoration project at Fort Townsend State Park – Photo by Bob Simmons



August 17 Rain garden work party at Garfield & Adams Sts – Photos by Monica Montgomery







August 17 Rain garden work party: Vern, a dedicated community volunteer with the MRC's rain garden work, here at Lincoln & Adams Sts – Photo by Monica Montgomery





## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** San Juan County

**Month/Year:** Aug 2022

**Submitted by:** Tyler Davis

### Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- Successful elections of MRC Chair and Vice-chair and NWSC Rep and Alternate
- Sinking of Aleutian Isle continues to be of critical concern and MRC is providing support as called upon
- Projects such as visitor surveys and *Ulva* sampling at False Bay, and vessel surveys throughout the county, are on target

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

In August we held elections for MRC Chair, MRC Vice-chair, NWSC Rep, and NWSC alternate. Incumbents Christina Koons and Karin Roemers-Kleven were nominated to retain their positions as Chair and Vice-chair, respectively. Christina also remains the MRC's representative to the NWSC, and Karin will replace Phil Green as the alternate, as Phil looks towards the end of his term limit next year.

We also discussed the position of MRC representative to the LIO, and how our restructured meetings involving simultaneous participation by MRC and LIO members has removed the need to have an individual representative from the MRC to the LIO, and rather the MRC *as a body* satisfies this role. We checked with Matt Colston, our Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator at PSP, for consideration about whether this approach is satisfactory for PSP.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

- Plastic Free Salish Sea subcommittee meeting – Aug 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Monthly MRC meeting – Aug 4<sup>th</sup>
- San Juan County Fair – Aug 17-20<sup>th</sup>
- Next MRC meeting: **\*\*In person\*\*** Sept 1<sup>st</sup> @ San Juan Island Grange

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

Nothing new to report this month.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

The MRC, fulfilling its role as the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) for the 2022 Salmon Recovery Grant Round, finalized adoption of a ranked project list, funding seven of the ten projects to the tune of more than \$2.2M towards salmon recovery in our county.

Visitor outreach at False Bay concluded at the end of July, just surpassing our deliverable of 50 surveys. We are now in the process of tabulating the survey data for assessment and comparison to previous years. Also at False Bay, *Ulva spp.* surveys continued through July, and will conclude at the end of this month.

MRC members continue vessel surveys at several specific anchor out sites and eelgrass restoration sites across San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez Islands. These will continue through September.

The MSA Plan Strategic Action Review is complete and in draft format. There are currently 72 strategic actions spanning 10 different categories. The MRC is currently reviewing strategic actions and will be providing feedback by the next meeting.

The SeaBin, while installed at Friday Harbor, remains not operational while waiting for a pump. The MRC is of the opinion that while the SeaBin is a great mechanism for marine garbage removal in theory, in practice it has proven that the challenges outweigh the positive impact.

Plastic Free Salish Sea will be organizing the fall Great Island Clean-Up, scheduled for September 24<sup>th</sup>. We had more than 200 people involved in the April clean-up, and look forward to maintaining this momentum and impact cleaning up our shorelines and marine environments.

The MRC is in the process of redesigning its logo and has a subcommittee identifying the desired elements and aesthetic. We are currently searching for local artists, ideally with Coast Salish artwork experience, to partner with on this project.

On August 17<sup>th</sup>, MRC members met with Representative Rick Larsen (WA-02) at False Bay to discuss environmental stewardship projects in the county and learn how federal funding is supporting these efforts. A press release of this visit can be found [here](#).

Finally, the long-awaited and much celebrated return of the San Juan County Fair occurred this month from August 17-20<sup>th</sup>. San Juan County's Department of Environmental Stewardship hosted a booth in the Green Village, highlighting the work of the MRC and the county's Marine Program. Several members of the MRC volunteered to host the booth over the course of the four days, interacting with and providing education and outreach to hundreds of visitors and residents alike.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

The sinking of fishing vessel Aleutian Isle off the west side of San Juan Island has been of critical concern in the county and beyond. The MRC and staff have been staying abreast of the situation as it develops, and stand by ready to play a support role when called upon by the federally-led response. MRC staff have helped with multiple shoreline surveys for pollution impacts, are helping house some of the response team, and continue to attend daily updates.

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):





17 Aug: Representative Rick Larsen visits False Bay and meets with MRC representatives Kendra Smith, Phil Green, and Megan Dethier, and Marine Program staff Frances Robertson. Photos courtesy of Frances Robertson.



17-20 Aug: SJC Department of Environmental Stewardship booth at the San Juan County Fair, highlighting the MRC and the department's Marine Program. Photo courtesy of Katie Fleming.

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Skagit

**Month/Year:** August/2022

**Submitted by:** Tracy/ Diane

### Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- The final Bowman Bay Plant Maintenance work party took place August 8<sup>th</sup>. Over 18 volunteers participated including 8 or 9 volunteers from Crane Aerospace and several new and veteran Salish Sea Stewards. Plant maintenance included weeding, watering, and spreading 7 cubic yards of bark with buckets.
- Fidalgo Bay Day was held Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. More to report next month.

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): No changes.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

- **August 8-** Bowman Bay Plant Maintenance Work Party.
- **August 9-** Fidalgo Bay Day Planning Committee Meeting (11am-12:pm via Microsoft Teams.
- **August 11-** Skagit MRC Monthly Meeting (9am-11am).
- **August 20-** Fidalgo Bay Day, 11am-3pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort.

**Funding updates** (newly - awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):  
No updates.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

- **Salish Sea Stewards:** The Salish Sea Stewards picnic was held at Padilla Bay on Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> with 54 attendees! The 5- member Advisory Committee meetings occur the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month from 11am to 1pm via Zoom. In September the AC will review feedback from the 2022 trainees and presenters to help start planning and refining the 2023 SSS training program. The Committee works continually to keep volunteers informed of current volunteer opportunities available through the SSS electronic news bulletin, "The Wave" and Facebook.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The event was held **Saturday, August 20, 2022**, 11am-3pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. 20 organizations participated this year. Opening Ceremonies were presented by Samish Elder Rosie Cayou James & Jay Lind of the Skagit MRC. Activities included the Friends of Skagit Beaches Passport Activity & Children's Art Contest, the Shannon Point Marine Center touch tank, beach seining demonstration, educational booths, kids craft activities, a no host-salmon BBQ, and Taylors Shellfish oysters & clams/blue mussels to grill. In addition, 4 local restaurants competed in a chowder tasting challenge (Adrift, Secret Cove, Bob's Chowder Bar & 13Moons). The last FBD Planning Committee meeting was held virtually on August 8<sup>th</sup> at 11am. The Committee consists of 4 MRC members, 3 veteran volunteers, and 4 Salish Sea Stewards recent graduates. A final report will be prepared in September.
- **Forage Fish Surveys:** Monthly forage fish surveys continue. Survey sites include: Fidalgo Bay, March Point, Bowman Bay, Kukatali Preserve, and our 3 index sites. The spawning has been less than what they typically see this time of year. Survival rate has also been low because of

the excessive heat, sun, and low tides. We will probably be cutting back on some of the survey activity towards the end of this year and next year for a couple of reasons. The samples are sent to WDFW for Quality Assurance, but they have limited staff capacity to process samples. We have also reached the 5-year post-construction monitoring requirement at our restoration sites so we will either stop sampling or reduce sampling at these sites. However, sampling at the Bowman Bay restoration site will continue each month because the Northwest Straits Foundation is interested in the data. The forage fish survey team has been asked to help with forage fish surveys on Skagit Land Trust's Samish Bay property and the Padilla Bay NERR.

- MRC- Salish Sea School Intern: The interns continue monthly forage fish surveys at various sites at March's Point.
- Kids on the Beach: The KOTB program is now done for the year. Four schools participated in the spring KOTB program this year with 360 students: Sedro-Wooley, Conway, Concrete, and Anacortes middle schools. A report will be finalized in September. Planning is now underway for the fall KOTB program.
- Kayak Kelp Surveys: Monthly kayak kelp surveys will continue through Sept. We currently survey three sites: Shannon Point, Bowman Bay - Coffin Rocks, and Biz Point. The Coffin Rocks survey was done on July 25 with Bob Weathers as the lead along with 4 new kayaker volunteers. The kelp was looking healthy with some new growth. John Freeto is the lead for the Biz Point survey which took place on July 17. The kelp bed has expanded a little in width compared to last month but is still far narrower than previous years. Lynne Wenberg-Davidson led the kelp surveys at Shannon Point (2 kelp beds) on August 12 along with 3 new kayakers and 3 veteran kayakers.
- Bowman Bay Restoration: The final Bowman Bay Plant Maintenance work party took place August 8<sup>th</sup>. Over 18 volunteers participated including 8 or 9 volunteers from Crane Aerospace and several Salish Sea Stewards. Plant maintenance included weeding, watering, and spreading 7 cubic yards of bark with buckets. They were only able to water some of the plants, but not all. Skagit County Public Works brought in a watering truck to water the remaining plants. Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG) will water two more times in September. September 30<sup>th</sup> is the final walkthrough with SFEG staff and the MRC Project Lead and MRC staff.
- Pinto Abalone Recovery: Field work is now complete. The data analysis and annual report will be finalized in September.
- Olympia Oyster Restoration: Most of the work is now complete. Data indicates 2021 had the second highest rate of oyster settlement recorded in Fidalgo Bay. The shell strings will be collected in a couple of weeks for Puget Sound Restoration Fund to monitor oyster larvae recruitment.
- Sharpes Corner Stormwater Sampling: No update

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.): NA

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Snohomish

**Month/Year:** August 2022

**Submitted by:** Elisa Dawson

### Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- Snohomish MRC is currently reviewing the draft of the Port Susan Phase 1 final report completed by ESA. Staff will meet on August 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss the draft before a final report is completed in early September.
- The Meadowdale Monitoring Plan is now complete. Next steps include the creation of a Meadowdale Monitoring webpage which will be hosted on the MRC webpage, and also the creation of a story map.
- The MRC is hosting a beach cleanup at Picnic Point Park on September 24<sup>th</sup> in partnership with WSU Snohomish County Beach Watchers and Zero Waste Washington

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

SWM Planner Joycelyn Blue is now supporting the MRC approximately half-time.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

Elisa Dawson attended a meeting with Snohomish County Parks staff on August 28.

Forage Fish monitoring for July occurred on July 28<sup>th</sup> at Howarth Park and Picnic Point.

Elisa Dawson and Traci Sanderson completed Meadowdale Kelp Monitoring on July 29.

Elisa Dawson and several MRC Members attended the webinar “Whidbey Basin Cumulative Effects Evaluation Study” on August 5.

Elisa Dawson completed Hat Island Kelp Monitoring on August 11.

MRC and Beach Watchers met on August 16<sup>th</sup> to plan for the September Beach Cleanup Event.

The MRC hosted their summer potluck on September 17 at Willis Tucker Park.  
Elisa Dawson met with DNR staff on August 18 to discuss collaboration opportunities.

Elisa Dawson and Joycelyn Blue met with consultants from ESA on August 18 to discuss the Port Susan Project.

**Funding updates** (newly awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments)

None.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

**Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area (MRC grant project for 2021-2022):** Snohomish MRC is currently reviewing the draft of the Port Susan Phase 1 final report completed by ESA. Staff will meet on August 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss the draft before a final report is completed in early September.

**Derelict Vessels (NWSF funds):** Snohomish County's derelict vessel contractor has removed 2 of the 4 derelict vessels in the Snohomish Estuary. The other two vessels will require additional work to be done for removal. Boats will be removed from the water by September 26.

**Below projects are other projects of the MRC funded by SWM fees:**

**Forage Fish Monitoring:** Forage fish samples continue to be taken once per month at Picnic Point and Howarth Park. Sampling at Meadowdale is now on hold with beach access closed on for construction of the Meadowdale Beach & Estuary Restoration Project. August sampling at Picnic Point and Howarth Park is scheduled for August 22.

**Nearshore Restoration:** The Meadowdale Monitoring Plan is now complete. Next steps include the creation of a Meadowdale Monitoring webpage which will be hosted on the MRC webpage, and also the creation of a story map.

**Marine Vegetation Monitoring:** Kelp Monitoring in July occurred on July 11 for Mukilteo, July 13 for Edmonds, and July 29 for Meadowdale. SWM Staff monitored Hat Island by boat on August 11. Edmonds will be monitored again in August and the date planned in August 26.

**No updates for:**

- Snohomish Estuary Pilings Project
- Crabber Outreach
- Oil Spills
- Stormwater (formerly Mussel Watch)
- Outreach

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

None.



**Upcoming Events:**

- Forage Fish Monitoring – August 22
- Beach Cleanup – September 24<sup>th</sup> at Picnic Point Beach
- Kelp Kayak Monitoring – August 25 with backup August 26
- MRC September meeting – September 21, virtual

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Whatcom

**Month/Year:** AUGUST 2022

**Submitted by:** Austin Rose

### Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- The MRC has a vacancy for an Economic interest position interest position. This vacancy is advertised on the MRC homepage <https://www.whatcomcountymrc.org/>

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

- The MRC held their August meeting on August 4. Highlights included:
  - Northwest Straits Foundation staff provided an overview of the Passport to Marine Adventure app. The Chuckanut Pocket Estuary, Locust Beach, and Jerry's Journey at Birch Bay State Park are the sites currently showcased for Whatcom County. Three more sites (Semiahmoo, Point Whitehorn, Clayton Beach) will be added within the next couple of months. The MRC was invited to provide environmental education info., pictures, and local tips on those additional sites.
  - [Brian Footen](#), co-founder of [EarthViews](#), provided an overview the online image mapping and data application that he built as a way to preserve waterways and allow collected data to be readily available to the public. Data is collected by kayaks and rafts. The application operates and functions similar to Google StreetView. The data is [ArcGIS](#) compatible and data can be extracted as well as added to (i.e.MRC data).
  - The committee discussed the option of removing the public comment period from their monthly meetings in order to no longer be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). The discussion stemmed from the recent amendment to the OPMA requiring a physical meeting location where the public can attend meetings. This law results in MRC staff and additional County staff hosting the MRC meeting in the Garden Room every month despite very few MRC members or public choosing to join the meeting in person. If the MRC chose to no longer be subject to OPMA, meeting could be held in person quarterly (as desired), with all the other meetings throughout the year being virtual. The committee discussed having a "general updates" agenda item to replace the public comment period. No formal vote was made. The topic will be readdressed in September.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

The CDS funding timeline was shared with the committee. MRC staff is currently working to develop more detailed project proposals for the Commission.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

Education and Outreach

- [Whatcom Water Week](#) is occurring September 10 – 18. There is an opportunity for the MRC to partner with ReSources, Surfrider Foundation, and the Ocean Conservancy on a beach cleanup event for International Coastal Cleanup on September 17. Water Week culminates with [Bellingham SeaFeast](#). Members expressed interest and availability to have a booth at the event. SeaFeast will feature a new event – [Plastic Matters](#) – to raise awareness of plastic use and impacts to waterways. This event includes a static plastic trash art display and a weeklong activity where participants pick up plastic and trash around the County that can be brought to the waterfront for weighing. Prizes are available for winners (highest volume of trash).
- The MRC made connection with an artist who could make an acrylic European Green Crab display. The artist is currently developing a proposal which would outline the cost. The MRC is considering how they may utilize this type of display (i.e male or female, adult or year of the young, etc.).

#### Monitoring

- Kelp surveys are underway. Surveys have been completed at the Aiston Preserve, Cherry Pt./Gulf Rd., and SW Lummi Island. All kelp is looking very healthy and beds appear larger than previous years. This project has been championed by Eleanor Hines who is terming off the MRC in January 2023. Eleanor has been encouraging member to join her on the water in order to hopefully find another MRC member to champion the work. Eleanor is still willing to volunteer her time to help in the future.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

**N. Chuckanut Bay No-Anchor Zone:** Northwest Straits staff are working on contracting an eelgrass survey of the bay for this summer. It will be towed underwater video with some opportunistic dive surveys. Staff are also working with the Clarks Point residents to gather images this summer of boat use in the bay, and have been in contact with the Lummi Fisheries manager about this project to learn if there are concerns of impacts to fishing access. There will be continued discussion with the MRC in September/October.

**Photos:** Photo credit: Eleanor Hines. Left: kelp with Mt. Baker in background. Right: kelp along shoreline after overwater structures were removed at Aiston Preserve.

