



Meeting: Northwest Straits Commission
Date: February 24, 2023
Time: 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
Location: Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, Natural Resources
22712 6th Ave NE, Arlington

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. A special thanks to the Stillaguamish tribe, without them we would not have access to this gathering and dialogue.

10:00 – 10:15	Welcome and introductions Tribal acknowledgement Approval of January 27 meeting minutes	Elsa Schwartz, chair
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10:15 – 10:30	Committee reports Executive Committee Science Advisory Committee External Relations Committee	Tom Cowan Julia Parrish Nan McKay
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10:30 – 11:00	MRC Presentation – Snohomish / Island Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area	Elisa Dawson, Snohomish MRC
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11:00 – 11:50	Business items Derelict vessel removal Voluntary no-anchor zones Retreat – March 30-31, La Conner	Staff Dana Dana Caitlyn
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11:50 – 12:00	Public comment	
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**Northwest
Straits**
COMMISSION

agenda

12:00 – 12:45	Working lunch	
12:45 – 12:55	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission	Cecilia Gobin, NW Indian Fisheries Commission
12:55 – 1:05	Puget Sound Partnership update	Laura Blackmore, Puget Sound Partnership
1:05-1:40	MRC Reports	MRC Representatives
1:40-1:50	Meeting highlights and action items Identify key points and action items from this meeting for MRC reps to report back to their MRCs	All
1:50-2:00	Round Table	All
2:00	Adjourn	

Next meeting: Retreat – March 30-31, 2023



Minutes

January 27, 2023- 10:00AM-12:00PM

Zoom – Virtual Meeting

Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Elsa Schwartz (Island-Chair), Tom Cowan (Vice Chair), Tim Ellis (Snohomish), Christina Koons (San Juan), Alan Clark (Clallam), Diane Hennebert (Skagit), Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Cecilia Gobin (NWIFC), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Sarah Fiske (Jefferson-Alternate)

Commission Staff: Sasha Horst, Caitlyn Blair, Dana Oster, Lucas Hart, Jeff Whitty, Leah Robison, Allie Simpson

Others in Attendance: Brooke Friesen (NW Straits Foundation), Don Hunger (NW Straits Foundation), Monica Montgomery (Jefferson)

Absent: Julia Parrish, Nan McKay

Welcome and Introductions:

Chair Elsa Schwartz opened the meeting with introductions of attendees and the tribal acknowledgement. The Commission approved the minutes from the December 9 meeting as written by consensus.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Tom Cowan updated the Commission and attendees on the January 23 meeting. Tom Cowan reported that Nan McKay has been appointed to serve as chair of the External Relations Committee and will therefore now also be a member of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee discussed the proposed budget and recommended the three-year budget proposal for approval. Lucas Hart shared the three-year budget plan with the Commission for review. The third year of the proposal is uncertain as that falls in the next state budget cycle. The Commission moved and approved by consensus the proposed three-year budget plan with the delegation of any final revisions to be approved by the Executive Committee. Tom added that at the retreat, there will be discussion of MRC and regional projects.

Science Advisory Committee: Dana Oster presented on behalf of Julia Parrish. Dana outlined that the Committee is finalizing their 2023 work plan and schedule, inclusive of updated articles of association and the shifted roles for the Committee. The Committee will be considering how to support projects put forward by MRCs, giving input on linkages to other projects across the Puget Sound, as well as discussing ways to expand and support MRC projects. The Committee is also working on how to integrate their Committee into MRC conference planning, and Committee member Tom Mumford will serve on the conference planning committee. The Committee is looking to gradually expand to 7-12 members and have nominations for Committee members they are working to appoint.



Minutes

External Relations Committee: Lucas Hart presented for the Committee on behalf of Nan McKay. The Committee met with Senator Patty Murray about Northwest Straits Initiative reauthorization bill, and the Committee will begin the process of outreach to the Washington state federal delegation about the bill. Lucas gave a brief update on the MRC state funding proviso, which made it into the Governor's proposed budget which has not been passed. The Commission is also a partner on a kelp funding proviso in the state budget for the Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan, which would provide funding for kelp work by the Commission as well as continuing to serve as a fiscal agent to direct funding to other partners for additional kelp work.

Puget Sound Partnership Update: Laura Blackmore presented her updates, sharing that last month, Congress passed the PUGET SOS Bill, which creates a Puget Sound recovery program office at the EPA, and puts Puget Sound on the same level as other nationally significant water bodies, such as Chesapeake Bay. The bill also codifies the Puget Sound Task Force, which is made up of 13 federal agencies operating under a MOU, working together on the Puget Sound Action Agenda. Laura stated that Senator Murray supporting increased funding for the [Puget Sound Geographic Fund](#). The Partnership is working on finalizing dates for the Puget Sound Day on the Hill, likely to be the week of May 8.

Business Items:

Staff provided updates on the following business items:

- Caitlyn Blair, new Program Coordinator at the Commission introduced herself.
- Lucas reported some legislative updates on bills that need to pass the House of Origin by February 17. Some bills include HB 1085, HB 1131, HB 1215 and SB 5266 Companion bills, SB 5104, HB 1170 and SB 5093 Companion bills, and HB 1145 and SB 5371 Companion bills.
- The May 26 in-person Commission meeting was changed to a virtual meeting, and the virtual June 23 Commission meeting was changed to in-person with the location in San Juan County upon consensus.
- Allie shared updates from the Annual Kelp Monitoring Data Review Workshop. The workshop had over 50 attendees, and some statistics that were shared from last season for kelp monitoring, were that 50 volunteers surveyed 22 different kelp beds and 311 acres of kelp.
- Leah shared about the MRC Forage Fish data meeting. Site leads shared sampling updates from their MRCs, attendees heard from WDFW about the results from their sampling efforts and heard from the NW Straits Foundation about forage fish sampling at nearshore restoration sites.
- Sasha reminded members about the November 3-4 in person conference in Port Townsend. All MRC members are encouraged to attend.

Partner Updates:



Minutes

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission: Cecilia Gobin shared that they are keeping updated on the legislative season, reminding members that tribes made the request for standard riparian zone protection in 2019 at the Centennial Accord. Lucas, Dana, and Cecilia have been coordinating participation in derelict vessel removal with several tribes.

NW Straits Foundation Updates: Don Hunger shared staffing and board member updates, with Tom Mumford and Rachel Benbrook as new members of the Foundation Board. Don reported that the officer on the Board this year is Jerry Masters as the President, and Lee Whitford as the Vice President. Phil Salditt is the new Treasurer, and Nan McKay has been appointed to Secretary. Brooke Friesen updated members on the status of the Salish Sea Conservation Corps, they have ten members from Western Washington University and Bellingham Technical College. Their first community event is at the Fairhaven Library on February 8 from 4-5:30 PM.

MRC Updates:

Island County – Elsa Schwartz

- The MRC is continuing with forage fish monitoring and bull kelp surveys and invited 5th-8th graders to help with forage fish monitoring.
- Some Island County MRC members sat in on the Climate Action Panel and listened to high school students' ideas about climate change.
- Island County MRC has a few openings, and they are looking to target farming and Navy communities to represent on the MRC

Clallam – Alan Clark

- Clallam MRC was on the front page of the [Peninsula Daily News](#).
- Jefferson and Clallam County are partnering with Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe to restore oyster beds that were damaged during the heat dome this past summer.
- Forage fish sampling continues at Cline Spit as well as Ediz Hook.
- MRC members are planning a retreat at the Dungeness River Center in February.

Jefferson – Sarah Fiskien, MRC Alternate

- MRC voted to establish a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion subcommittee to better represent and engage the broader community in East Jefferson County.
- Storm surge monitoring continues, with recent surveys conducted on December 2 and 26, and a site assessment on January 23.
- Forage fish sampling and monitoring continues.



Minutes

Skagit – Diane Hennebert

- The MRC- Salish Sea School Intern and the Forage Fish STaRs student finished their research project in January. The Final Report is now available on the [Skagit MRC website](#) and the STaRs student presentations are available on [YouTube](#).
- The 2023 Salish Sea Stewards Training Program is now at full capacity (26), and we've started a waiting list. Classes start February 7 – April 25, 2023, Tuesdays from 1pm to 5pm at Padilla Bay NERR. The training schedule is available on the [Skagit MRC website](#).

San Juan County – Christina Koons

- A draft of the Marine Stewardship Area Plan is now complete. The MRC is now working on planning a Marine Managers Workshop in the spring to work on prioritizing actions in the MSA Plan.
- There are two open positions on the MRC, and four candidates have been interviewed. One candidate has a strong science background and is hoping they will be on the Science Advisory Committee.
- The MRC has decided to meet in person quarterly in the San Juan Islands.
- The Plastic Free Salish Sea Program is mentoring high school students to assist them in doing community projects.

Snohomish – Tim Ellis

- The Port Susan Subcommittee is reviewing the draft Communications Strategy. There was a subcommittee meeting on 29th with Island County and Snohomish County subcommittee members. Comments will be provided to ESA by early January, and a final Communications Strategy will be complete in late January.
- There are four openings on the MRC.
- 84 people showed up for the Edmonds starlight beach walk on January 18, which the MRC hosted in partnership with WSU Beach Watchers.
- The Marine Vegetation mapping project in partnership with WA Dept of Natural Resources (DNR) is complete. Snohomish County hired DNR to map the entire Snohomish County shoreline over the last 3 years. The report found that the shoreline of Snohomish County supports 912 hectares of eelgrass and 168 hectares of understory kelp. This was compared to an older dataset from 1999-2007 when there was approximately in Snohomish County. DNR will present their findings at the February 15 MRC Meeting.
- The Meadowdale beach restoration project is now complete and open to the public. The Snohomish MRC's Meadowdale webpage has been updated with the Story Map and information on Meadowdale: <https://www.snocomrc.org/projects/meadowdale-beach-and-estuary-restoration/>

Whatcom – Bob Cecile



Minutes

- The MRC Executive Committee wrote a recommendation to the County Executive for the appointments of Glen Alexander (Alex) to fulfill his second term in a Citizen-at-Large position, and Rick Beauregard to fill the Scientific Intern vacancy. Appointments are expected on January 24.
- A job announcement for an MRC extra staff person was posted on January 19. The announcement will close on February 12. For more information [CLICK HERE](#). This position is grant funded for an average of ~24hrs/week for the 2023 calendar year.
- The Committee discussed suggested amendments to their Policies and Procedures to address a clear protocol for MRC meetings now that most meetings are hosted virtually. Suggested amendments clarified the meaning of consensus when it comes to decision making, and protocols for voting and meeting summaries from a hybrid meeting.

Meeting Highlights and Action Items:

The Commission identified the following key highlights:

- The Commission has passed a budget plan for 2023-2025, which will include funding for MRCs in the next grant cycle in the amount of \$192,500 per MRC annually for the next two years if the proposed state budget passes.
- The Northwest Straits Commission conference will be held on November 3-4, 2023, at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. The Commission is seeking members interested in participating in the Conference Planning Committee. Contact Sasha (horst@nwstraits.org) for more information about the committee or to join the group.
- The PUGET SOS bill was passed by Congress as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. The bill creates a Puget Sound recovery program office at the EPA and puts Puget Sound on the same level as other nationally significant water bodies, such as Chesapeake Bay. The bill also codifies the Puget Sound Task Force, which is made up of 13 federal agencies operating under a Memorandum of Understanding, working together on the Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- The Northwest Straits Initiative retreat is scheduled for March 30-31 at the La Conner Country Inn for members of the Commission and Foundation board.

Round Table

- Tom mentioned that several MRCs have openings, or have just filled openings, and wants to know if there are any county commissioners or council that do not rely on the MRC for recommendations for new members.
- If members have not responded to the February invitation to the in-person Commission meeting, please do so.



Minutes


*The next Commission meeting will be held in person on Friday, February 24 at the Stillaguamish Natural Resources Center.

Revisiting the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area Conservation Action Plan


The Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area (MSA) Conservation Action Plan (CAP) was first developed in 2012 by a collaborative group of partners representing federal, state, tribal, and local governments and non-profit organizations with the goal of achieving a healthy marine and estuarine ecosystem in Port Susan with thriving biodiversity and strong recreational and resource-based industries.

Now, ten years after the CAP was initially developed, the Snohomish County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) partnered with the Island County MRC to reconvene partners, assess the current status of the CAP, and identify opportunities to support conservation activities in Port Susan for the next decade and beyond. The information gathering presented here is Phase 1; Phase 2 will build from this information and focus on partner engagement in 2023.


PORT SUSAN MSA CAP CONSERVATION TARGETS




River Delta




Beaches/Forage Fish




Embedded Invertebrates



Chinook Salmon



Dungeness Crab



Shorebirds

2022 Partner Engagement

Winter 2022

• One-on-one interviews
• Online survey

Spring 2022

• Introductory meeting with the Snohomish Watershed Council and other partners

Summer 2022

• Strategic Actions Workshop to gather input on progress to-date and new context
• Implementation Workshop to seek ideas on how to support partners in driving progress

2023

• Phase 2: Engage partners & celebrate 10 years of MSA

What We Heard

• Many of the same issues and challenges identified in 2012 still exist in Port Susan today.

• We’ve learned a lot over the past ten years, and it is important to incorporate new context for climate change, sea level rise, water chemistry, and human well-being.

• New planning efforts throughout the Puget Sound region include activities that align with the objectives for conservation in Port Susan.

• A renewed focus on supporting partners in implementing the CAP strategic Actions would help maintain momentum.

Ten Years of Progress

Since 2012, partners have been making strides in accomplishing many of the Strategic Actions outlined in the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area Conservation Action Plan.

Select projects and initiatives include:

Port Susan Bay Estuary Restoration Project The Nature Conservancy



[Learn more](#)

Leque Island Restoration Project WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited



[Learn more](#)

zis a ba Estuary Restoration Stillaguamish Tribe



Port Susan Shellfish Dinners Snohomish County



Shore Friendly Workshops WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, other partners



[Learn more](#)

Derelict Crab Pot Removal Stillaguamish Tribe



Crabber Education Programs Sound Water Stewards, Northwest Straits Commission, Island County MRC



Visit our website for more information about the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area Conservation Action Plan and opportunities to engage with conservation activities in Port Susan.

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under Assistance Agreement CE01J97401 to Puget Sound Partnership. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.





Commission staff highlights - [February 2023]

MRC Support

2021-23 MRC Grants: Commission staff completed review and approval of deliverables and payment requests for the October-December 2022 period.

2023 MRC Grants (NOAA CDS funded): Grant agreements to MRCs funded by the fiscal year 2022 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) via NOAA started as of January 1, 2023 and will end at the end of calendar year 2023. Agreements are either executed or in the process of being executed by each county.

2023-25 MRC Grant planning: Commission staff is working on preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the next round of funding, which will result in two separate grant agreements to each MRC. The RFP will be issued by early March and will be sent directly to MRC staff to share with members.

Regional Projects

Kelp Plan: NW Straits Commission staff are finalizing details on the in-person Kelp Plan Action Workshop, which will be held on March 1 and 2. Participants will review the 65 actions of the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan to determine their status and how to move each action forward. Nearly 50 participants have registered for the event.

Kelp Monitoring: NW Straits Commission staff have continued to work with DNR on establishing updates to the monitoring protocol and to create a new storyboard to highlight the MRCs' monitoring work and data. Staff are also working to update the Kelp Monitoring QAPP to accommodate the new additions to the protocol.

Green Crab: NW Straits Commission staff attended the WA Department of Fish & Wildlife Green Crab Co-Managers meeting in person and presented on the green crab volunteer opportunities at the Salish Sea Stewards training. Staff have also begun prep work for the upcoming field season and have updated the North Sound Green Crab Trapping QAPP to reflect changes in trapping efforts.

Derelict Vessels: Staff led the second NW Straits Commission/MRC derelict vessel workgroup meeting on February 6 with MRCs and tribal partners to review and prioritize the proposed vessel list to provide WA Dept of Natural Resources. Additional meetings were held to discuss opportunities to leverage funds with other partners to remove additional vessels and illegal dock structures as part of a joint effort.



Commission staff highlights - [February 2023]

Operations

Staff: The Communications Consultant position is still open. Apply at https://bit.ly/NWS22_CC. The position is open until filled.

Budget: The NW Straits Commission approved a two-year budget at the January meeting. Commission staff are working on preparing materials for submittal to NOAA for the agreement to use fiscal year 2022 Congressionally Directed Spending. Senator Murray's staff have invited the Commission to apply for 2024 Congressional Directed Spending. Commission staff are also preparing an application to Senator Murray, due on February 28.

Meetings Attended

Allie attended: Washington Green Crab Co-Manager's Meeting 2/1; DEI Discussion with NWSC and Ecology 2/2; Grant Writing Course 2/3, 2/10, 2/17; Skagit MRC meeting 2/9; Salish Sea Stewards training on green crab 2/28

Dana attended: Washington Green Crab Co-Manager's Meeting 2/1; PSP Science Panel 2/1; San Juan MRC meeting 2/2; MRC Derelict vessels workgroup 2/6; Island MRC meeting 2/7; Snohomish MRC meeting 2/15; DNR Kelp and Eelgrass Health plan workgroup 2/16; Kelp canopy Vital Sign project team meeting 2/24

Jeff attended: Whatcom MRC meeting 2/2; Overcoming insufficient data – joint meeting with DNR and Skagit MRC 2/15; Snohomish MRC meeting 2/13; Presented at the Salish Sea Stewards Meeting 2/28;

Leah attended: Washington Green Crab Co-Manager's Meeting 2/1; Green Crab Data App meeting 2/3, 2/17; Facilitation Training 2/13-2/16; Salish Sea Stewards presentation 2/28

Lucas attended: Green crab strategy meeting with WDFW 1/30; Seattle Aquarium Conservation Honors Awards 1/31; Green crab project planning debrief 2/2; DEI planning meeting 2/2; Puget Sound Partnership legislative update 2/3; Ecology Shorelands Program Management Team meeting 2/6; Salish Sea Stewards presentation 2/7; NWSC/NWSF staff meeting 2/8; Reauthorization planning meeting 2/9

Sasha attended: San Juan MRC meeting 2/2; Whatcom MRC meeting 2/2; Derelict Vessel Workgroup 2/6; Island MRC meeting 2/7; Retreat Planning Committee 2/14; Snohomish MRC meeting 2/15



Northwest Straits Voluntary No-Anchor Zones – Anchor out for eelgrass

Project summary

Voluntary No-Anchor Zones will protect existing habitat and promote habitat recovery and resilience by preventing reoccurring physical damage from vessel anchors to eelgrass beds.

Revised Project Approach

Project sites are located in Puget Sound, an estuary of national significance designated by the EPA National Estuary Program, and target eelgrass beds in areas of high boating activity often used for anchoring. The approach to reducing physical damage from recreational vessels on eelgrass habitat uses a tiered strategy (Figure 1) to determine a suitable protection approach that is site-specific.

This tiered approach begins with the largest areas and the lightest touch for protection and funnels down to a select number of sites that will need the most targeted communication tools and visual aids to protect eelgrass habitat. Each tier's objective and general strategy are outlined below.

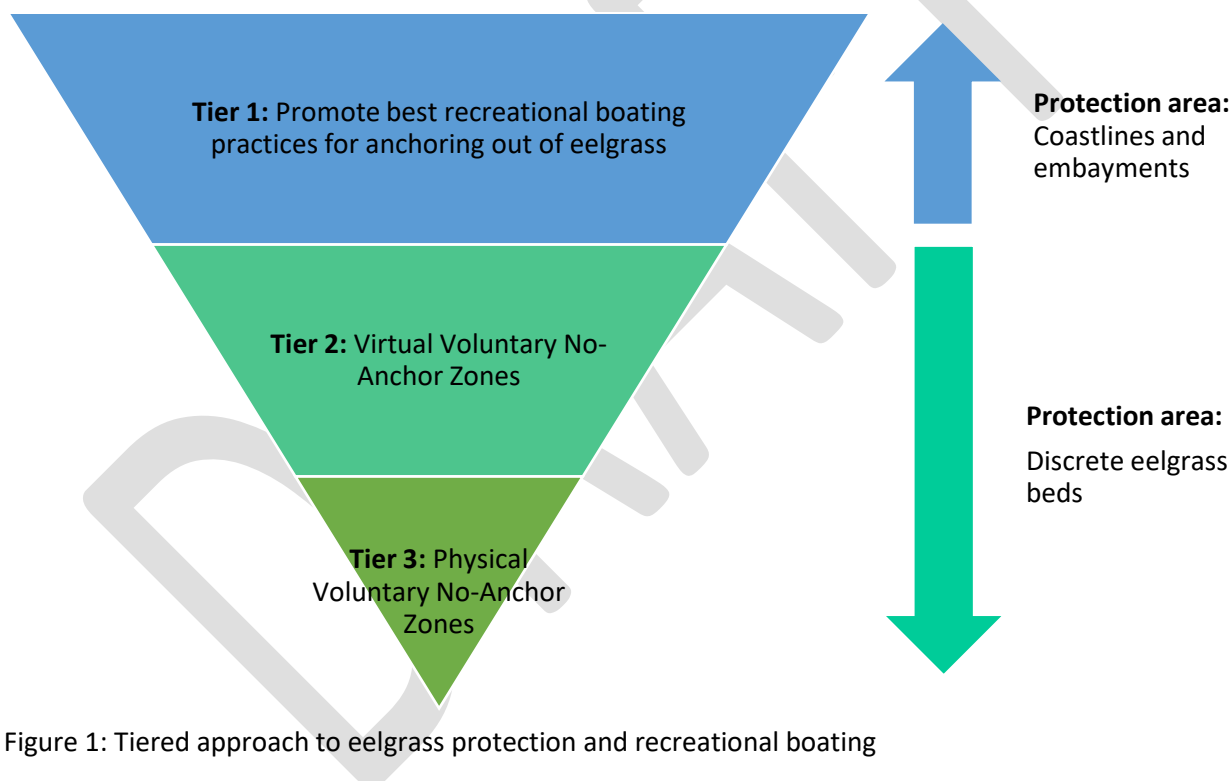


Figure 1: Tiered approach to eelgrass protection and recreational boating

Tier 1: Promote best recreational boating practices for anchoring out of eelgrass

The objective of Tier 1 is to create a concise strategy to promote best recreational boating practices when anchoring near eelgrass habitat. This strategy will include defining key messages, identifying communication tools, creating maps of eelgrass habitat where data are available, and sharing these resources with recreational boaters. This tier aims to increase general knowledge of best anchoring practices near eelgrass habitat across the Salish Sea and will not always be site-specific.



Tier 1 is modeled after a two-step approach taken by Friends of the San Juans:

1. Create and share maps and information on best recreational boating practices when anchoring around eelgrass
2. Create maps and materials outlining critical eelgrass habitat extent and depths to avoid anchoring directly in eelgrass

Existing resources are readily available to include in a cohesive communications strategy, including but not limited to the following examples:

- Friends of the San Juans green boating materials, videos, and maps: <https://sanjuans.org/program/green-boating/>
- Waggoner Cruise Guide demonstration of using a fish finder to anchor out of sensitive habitat: <https://waggonerguide.com/anchoring-using-a-fishfinder/>
 - Addition of maps depicting popular anchorages with eelgrass locations in Waggoner Cruise Guide: <https://waggonerguide.com/2022-waggoner-cruising-guide-available-for-pre-order/>
- Georgia Strait Alliance green boating guide: <https://georgiastrait.org/work/cleanmarinebc-3/greenboatingguide/>

Tier 2: Establish virtual Voluntary No-Anchor Zones

The objective of Tier 2 is to protect critical eelgrass habitat in areas of moderate to high vessel use for anchoring by establishing virtual Voluntary No-Anchor Zones for select locations through online applications, charts, platforms, and Virtual Aids to Navigation (VATONS). These virtual Voluntary No-Anchor Zones will use a concise strategy, key messages, and key communication tools and platforms paired with onshore signage and other tools without installing physical buoys to delineate the protection zones. This approach eliminates the constraints that come with physical informational buoys such as: permitting, ongoing buoy maintenance, and impacts to fishing access.

Focus groups and input from the boating community will help to target the most relevant resources to communicate no-anchor zone locations. Examples of boating applications and platforms include:

1. Virtual Aids to Navigation (VATONS) (through [Nobeltec](#))- these are currently used to demarcate the two Interim Sanctuary Zones where vessel traffic is prohibited to protect Southern Resident Killer Whales in Southern British Columbia.
2. Navionics
3. C-Map Embark
4. iNavX
5. SeaPilot
6. Maptech iPlot
7. KnowWake
8. Waterway Guide Marinas
9. TZ iBoat



Tier 3: Establish physical Voluntary No-Anchor Zones

The objective of Tier 3 is to protect critical eelgrass habitat in areas of moderate to high vessel anchoring by establishing Voluntary No-Anchor Zones with physical marker buoys as a visual cue to direct boaters to anchor at depths seaward of eelgrass habitat and implementing targeted communication tools and resources described in Tier 2.

Establishing physical Voluntary No-Anchor Zones is recommended to be considered a component of a more comprehensive approach to harbor or regional management. Physical no-anchor zones can be taken into consideration along with other available public and private facilities for recreational boating. Virtual Voluntary No Anchor Zones are encouraged to be a first step to assess effectiveness with physical buoys being considered if increased voluntary compliance is necessary. Tribal treaty right impacts should be discussed with tribal partners before considering physical buoys.

List of potential Voluntary No-Anchor Sites from 2022 feasibility assessment and new sites to be assessed

Site (County)	Potential Acreage of Eelgrass Protected	Tier 1 - Best Recreational Boating Practices	Tier 2 – Voluntary No-Anchor Zone (Virtual buoys)	Tier 3 - Voluntary No-Anchor Zone (Physical buoys)
Drayton Harbor (Whatcom County)	300-915		Evaluate as an option	
North Chuckanut Bay (Whatcom County)	8.6		Recommended	
Taylor Dock (Whatcom County)	0.97		Evaluate as an option	
Aiston Preserve (Whatcom County)	1.5			Permits in progress (NWSF)
Seafarers' Park (Skagit County)	115-340		Recommended	Evaluate as an option – pending efficacy of Tier 2
Shallow Bay (San Juan County)	4		Recommended	Evaluate as an option – pending efficacy of Tier 2
Watmough Bay (San Juan County)	5		Recommended	
Parks Bay Reserve (San Juan County)	26	Recommended		
Cornet Bay (Island County)	45		Evaluate as an option	
Port Susan (Snohomish & Island County)	?	Evaluate as an option		



Funding Acknowledgement



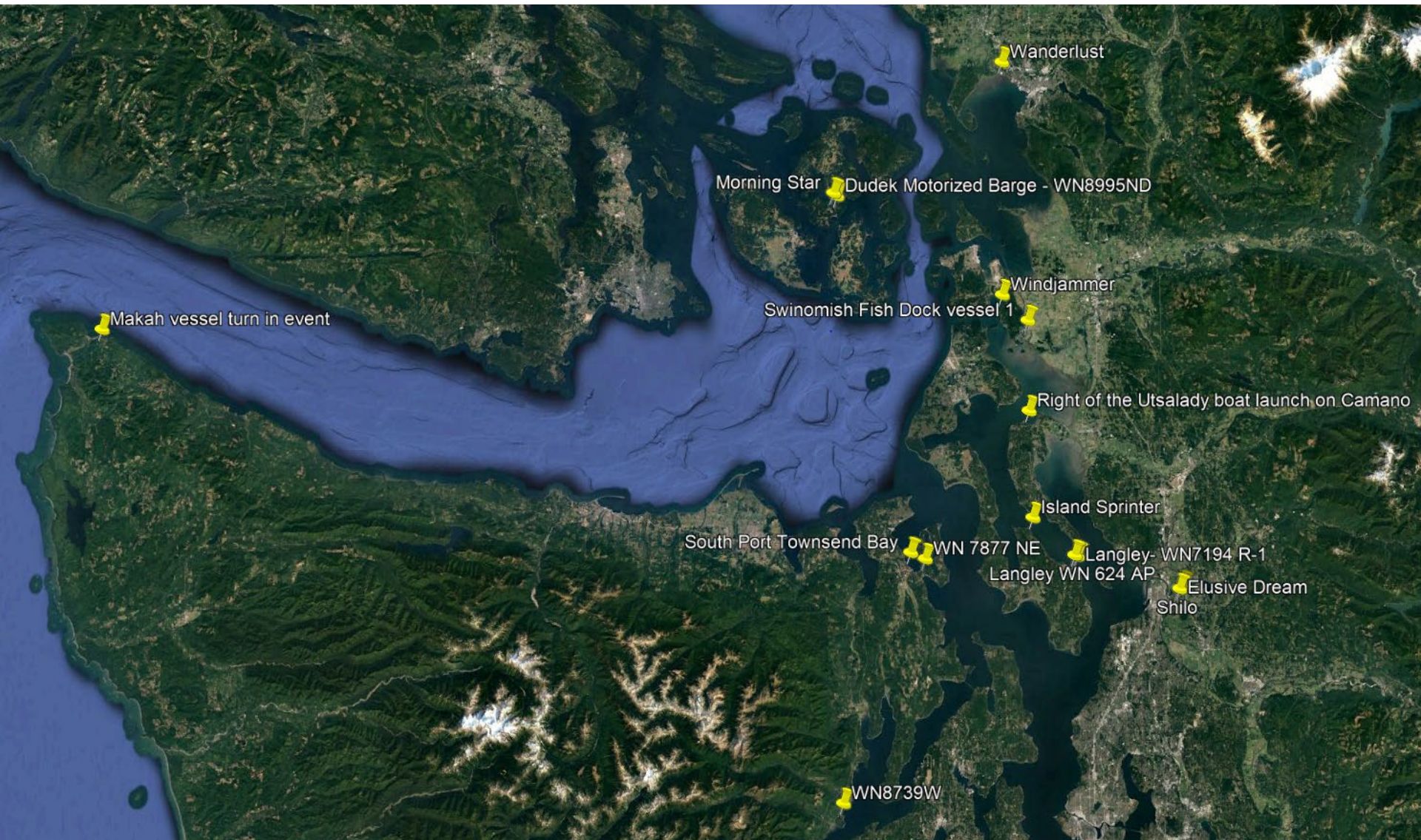
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The Grant Agreement produced under this award will acknowledge the Ecological Service's Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and their contributions to the project in any outreach products, news stories, presentations, publications, and reports. All materials must also include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife symbol.

This project outline was prepared by Northwest Straits Commission using Federal funds under award NA22NMF4690358 from NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

NWSC 2023 Derelict Vessel List



This project will be carried out by the Northwest Straits Commission using Federal funds under award NA22NMF4690358 from NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Funding summary

- Total estimated funding available: \$1,375,000 (includes MRC funds below). Waiting on an estimate from DNR on budget breakdown between costs for vessel removals and staff time.
- Specific MRC funds for vessels in their county:
 - Island: \$37,389
 - Jefferson: \$81,200
 - Snohomish: \$200,000
 - Whatcom: \$57,500
- Remaining general funds available: \$998,911

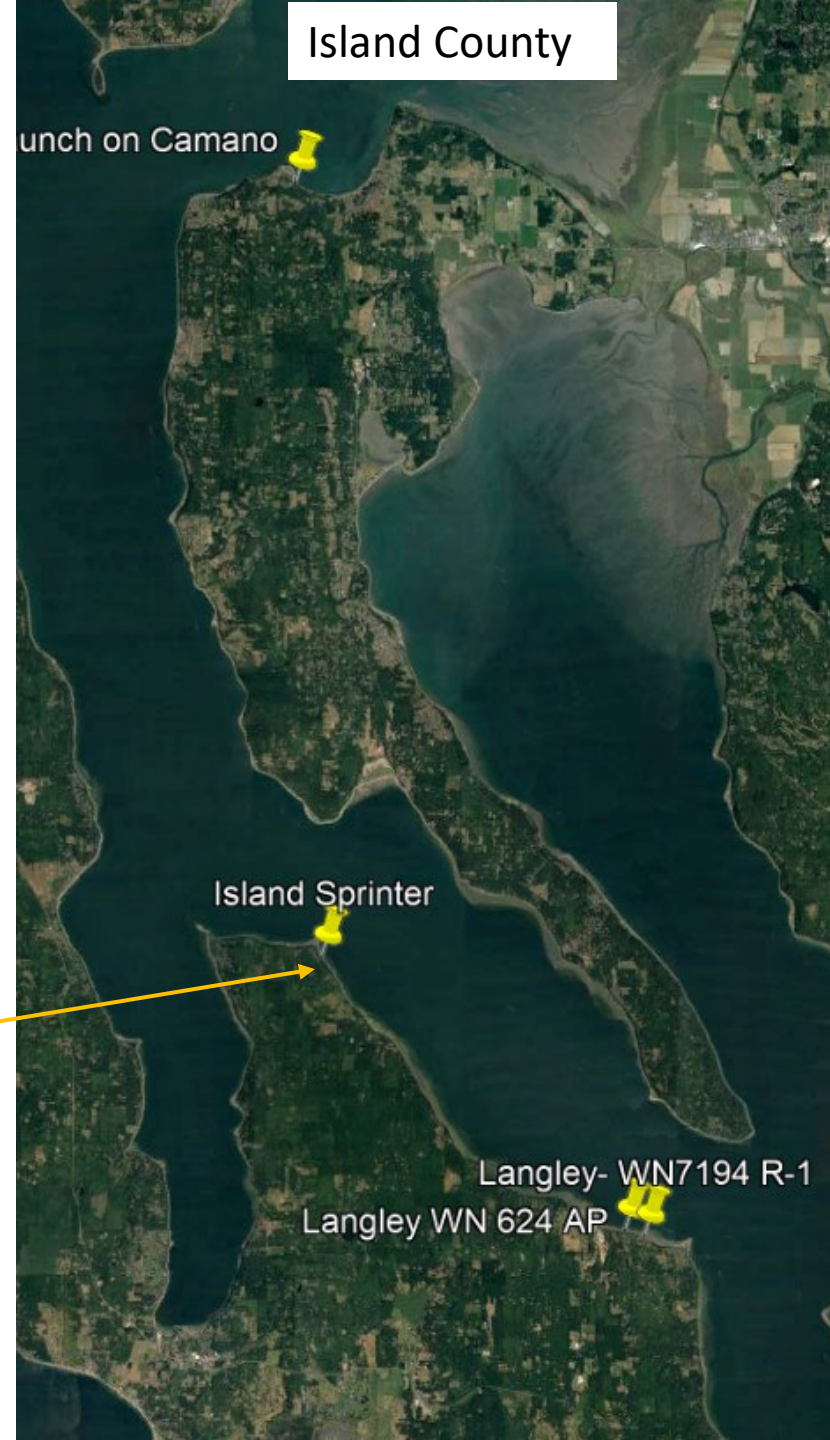
Tier 1: Prioritized with MRC designated funds

Vessel ID #1

Island Sprinter

- Jurisdiction: private, willing to grant access
- Ecologic value: Sandlance habitat adjacent, Salmon priority area 2
- Estimated removal cost: ~\$60,000
- Landowner access: vessel located on private tidelands willing to grant DNR access
- Urgency: vessel is breaking apart. A log went through the hull.

<https://mycoast.org/reports/91952>

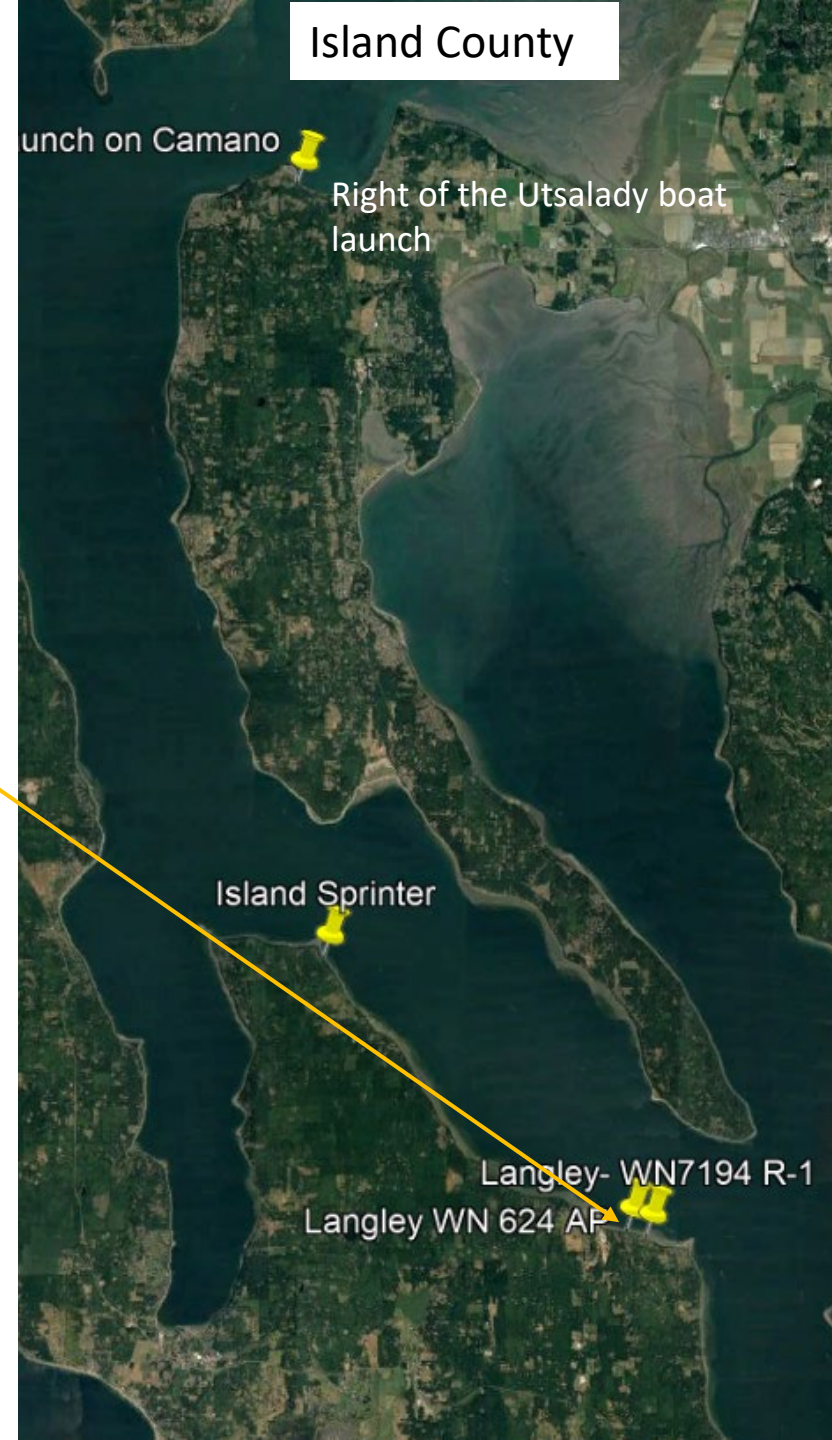


Vessel ID #2

Langley Boat launch - WN 624 AP

- Jurisdiction: private
- Ecologic value: Sandlance habitat adjacent, Salmon priority area 2
- Estimated removal cost: ~\$20,000 - \$60,000
- Landowner access: landowner willing to grant access

<https://mycoast.org/reports/86900>

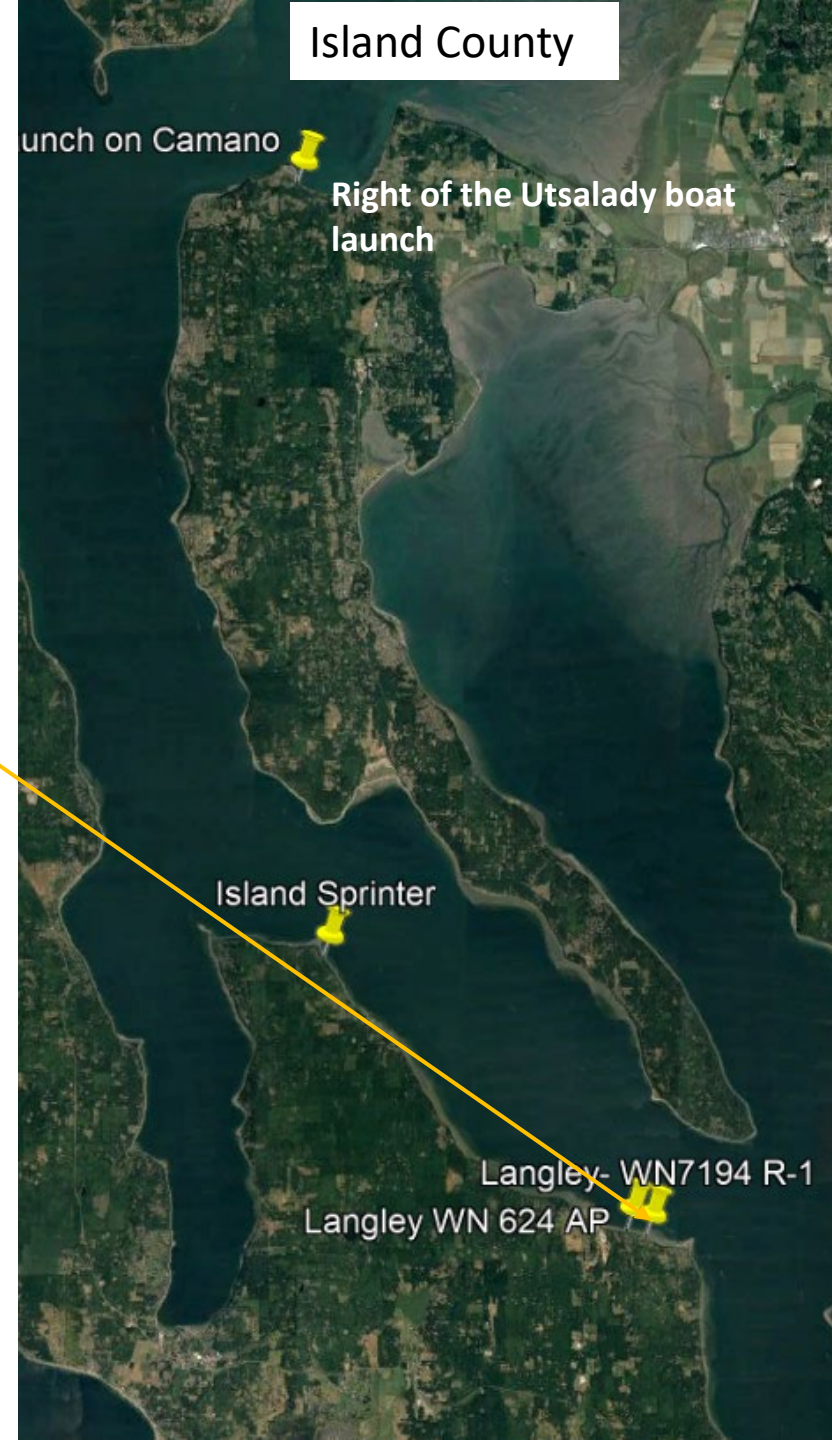


Vessel ID #3

Langley Boat launch - WN 7194 R-1

- Jurisdiction: unknown
- Ecologic value: Sandlance habitat adjacent, Salmon priority area 2
- Estimated removal cost: ~\$20,000 - \$60,000
- Landowner access: access unknown

<https://mycoast.org/reports/88180>



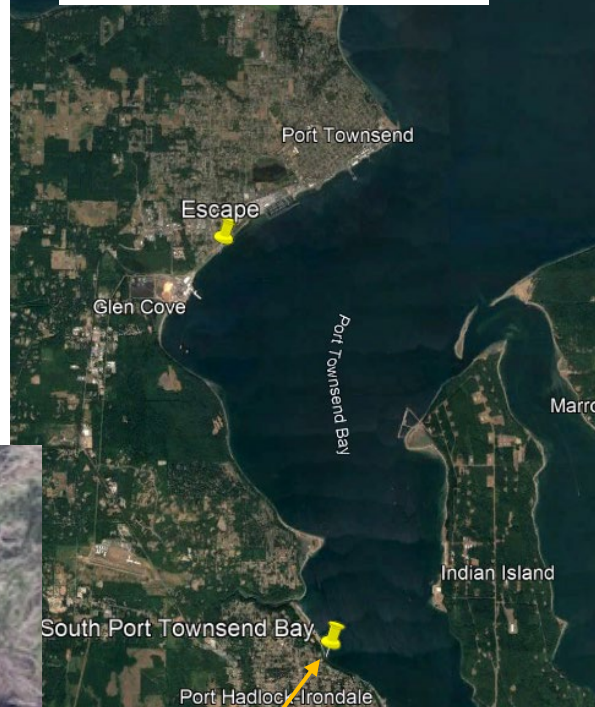
Vessel ID #4

South Port Townsend Bay

- Jurisdiction: likely private, contact information from Jefferson MRC, no initial contact with property owner
- Description: near South Chimacum Creek (halfway between Chimacum Creek mouth and dock that Wooden Boat School owns)
- Ecologic value: If fiberglass, will break up over time
- Estimated removal cost: ~ \$15,000-\$30,000
- Landowner access: unknown

<https://mycoast.org/reports/62864>

Jefferson County





Vessel ID #5

Wanderlust

- Jurisdiction: County, Aquatic/Conservancy shoreline jurisdiction, unknown access
- Description: 14 ft landward of high tide water line, sitting upright, 1413 Olympic Way Bellingham, WA
- Estimated removal cost: \$37,000 (with tax) - quote from Culbertson Marine Construction
- Backstory: see notes

<https://mycoast.org/reports/47666>



Vessel ID #6

Shilo

- Jurisdiction: Owner has been contacted, boat appears to be on SOAL. We don't have much successful communication with landowner. same landowner for Shilo and Elusive Dream
- Description: Sunk in Steamboat Slough
- Estimated removal cost: \$100,000-\$250,000
- Ecologic value: vessel is blocking light as an overwater structure, also sits on the bottom at low tide. Unknown chemicals and contaminants onboard.
- Cultural value: Located in the Snohomish Estuary, an important area for salmon.
- Recreation: vessels is in a public waterway often travels by the public and is a navigational hazard
- If private, landowner willingness to grant access: unknown, site owner has been contacted by DNR and in the past has insisted he is fixing up the boats. There has been years of issues.

<https://mycoast.org/reports/66917>

Shilo is sunk vessel in front of Elusive Dream



Tier 2: General NWSC funds

Vessel ID #7

Morning Star

- Jurisdiction: public, vessel has now sunk in Blind Bay
- Estimated removal cost: \$70,000-\$80,000
- Ecologic value: Blind Bay features extensive beach spawning forage fish as well as Pacific herring that spawn offshore in eelgrass. Removal of this vessel will eliminate the threat of pollution or marine debris that could be caused by further deterioration of the vessel.
- Recreation: The vessel recently broke loose from an unauthorized mooring buoy and drifted across the bay and has now sunk.



Vessel ID #8

Windjammer

- Jurisdiction and landowner access: Swinomish would can formally allow access. Swinomish would provide all necessary tribal permits. This vessel is a number 1 priority for Swinomish
- Estimated removal cost: ?- likely fairly high (place holder of \$250k)
- Ecologic value: Eelgrass bed, forage fish spawning beach, impacting shoreline processes (sediment drift)
- Cultural: Location is under consideration as a clam garden site. Identified as an impedance to the establishment of a clam garden.
- Recreation: This vessel is located along tribal tidelands open to the public for recreation and subsistence shellfish gathering
- Other: Anecdotal notes from previous staff state that the vessel is concrete.

<https://mycoast.org/reports/46871>



Swinomish Tribe



Vessel ID #9

Swinomish Fish Dock

- Jurisdiction and landowner access: Swinomish would can formally allow access. Swinomish would provide all necessary tribal permits. This vessel is a number 2 priority for Swinomish
- Estimated removal cost: ? (place holder of \$60k)
- Ecologic value: While the site is primary an ingress/egress to the tribal fishing vessel dock, there is some eelgrass in the vicinity of the sunken vessel.
- Cultural & Recreation: this vessel is blocking access to the tribal fishing fleet moorage. During low tides, the vessel prohibits ingress/egress to the dock.
- Other: Length approx 21 ft or less. The vessel is sunken and partially buried in sediment. Tide level at this time of year (January) prohibits us from seeing any registration numbers, if any exist. It has been abandoned for many years. Low tide photos are from July 29, 2019.

Swinomish Tribe



Vessel ID #10

- Tentative Derelict Vessel Turn In Event – co hosted with DNR, Makah Tribe, WA SeaGrant, and developing additional partnership with Clallam MRC, and Clallam Board of County Commissioners
- Turn in event hosted onsite by Makah Tribe (pending permits and tribal council approval)
- Transport all vessels listed below and advertise event to tribal community to bring to staging site.
- DNR will coordinate with tribe to break down vessels and put into recycling bins with DTG recycling (dtgrecycle.com)
- Currently budgeted \$50k

Makah Tribe Vessels



Vessel coordinates (preferred)	Description of location (if coordinates are not available)	Vessel name	Vessel registration number	Jurisdiction (tideland ownership)	Vessel length
BIA HILL	WHITE TROPHY		WN602RJ	Makah	20'
WINDFALL	WHITE W/GREEN TRIM	ALLISON ANN		Makah	23'
CEDAR DR	YELLOW			Makah	16'
ALDER RD	WHITE			Makah	16'
FISHER DR	WHITE W/ BLUE STRIPS	SHIRLLY ANN		Makah	28'
FISHER DR	BLUE	MISERY	WN 6345 GA	Makah	14'
FISHER DR	WHITE W/ GOLD STRIP		WN 7779 JB	Makah	27'
HUCKLEBERRY DR	BLUE		WN 4233 KD	Makah	18'
BAADA VILLAGE LOOP	WHITE W/ BLUE STRIP		WN 7769 NT	Makah	15'
BAADA VILLAGE LOOP	WHITE		WN 118 MKH	Makah	14'
BAADA VILLAGE LOOP	WHITE FIBERGLASS	NO NAME	NO NUMBER	Makah	18'
BAADA VILLAGE LOOP	WHITE BLUE STRIP		WN 7256 R	Makah	22'
WAADA VIEW	WHITE		WN 6368 MD	Makah	12'
WAADA VIEW	RED, WHITE, AND BLUE		WN 4408 KR	Makah	12'
WAADA VIEW	ALUMINUM		WN 162 MKH	Makah	10'
WAADA VIEW	GOLD		WN 1393 NA	Makah	12'
WAADA VIEW	WHITE W/RED STRIP BAYLINER		WN 183 MKH	Makah	18'
PINE ST	WHITE W/BLUE STRIP		WN 5404 RB	Makah	16'

Vessel ID #11

Placeholder for second vessel turn in event?

Location: TBD

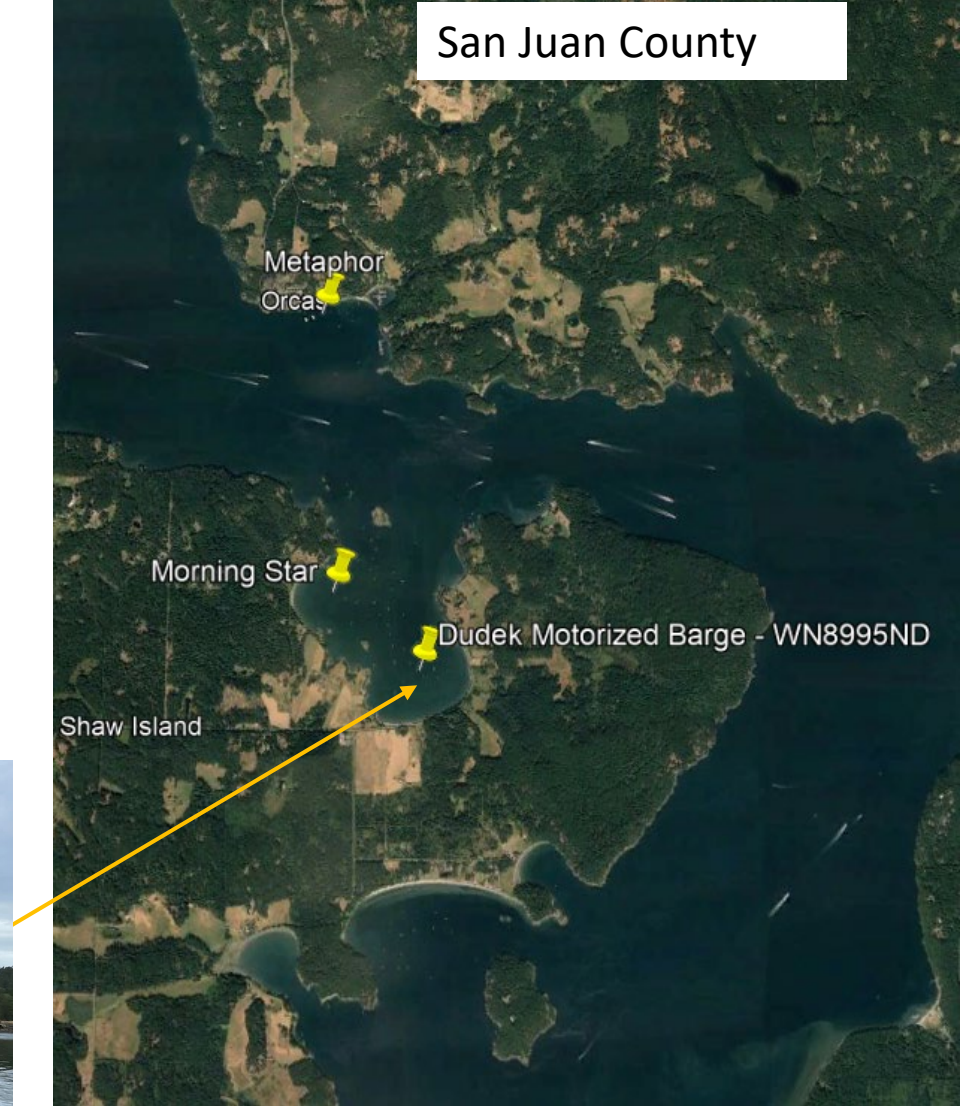
Estimated Cost: \$50-\$100k

Tier 3: If funds remain

Vessel ID #12

Unnamed (Dudek Motorized Barge)

- Jurisdiction: public, anchored in Blind Bay
- Estimated removal cost: \$45,000
- Ecologic value: Blind Bay features extensive beach spawning forage fish as well as Pacific herring that spawn offshore in eelgrass. Removal of this vessel will eliminate the threat of pollution or marine debris that could be caused by further deterioration of the vessel.
- Recreation: Blind Bay is an important mooring area that is accessed by thousands of boaters each year. Presence of this derelict vessel could have impacts to recreational boaters
- Landowner access: on public DNR aquatic lands
- Other: The owner of the vessel has left San Juan County and has stated that he has no intention of doing any future business using the barge in San Juan County. He was provided information on the vessel turn-in program and has taken no action that we know of to pursue that.

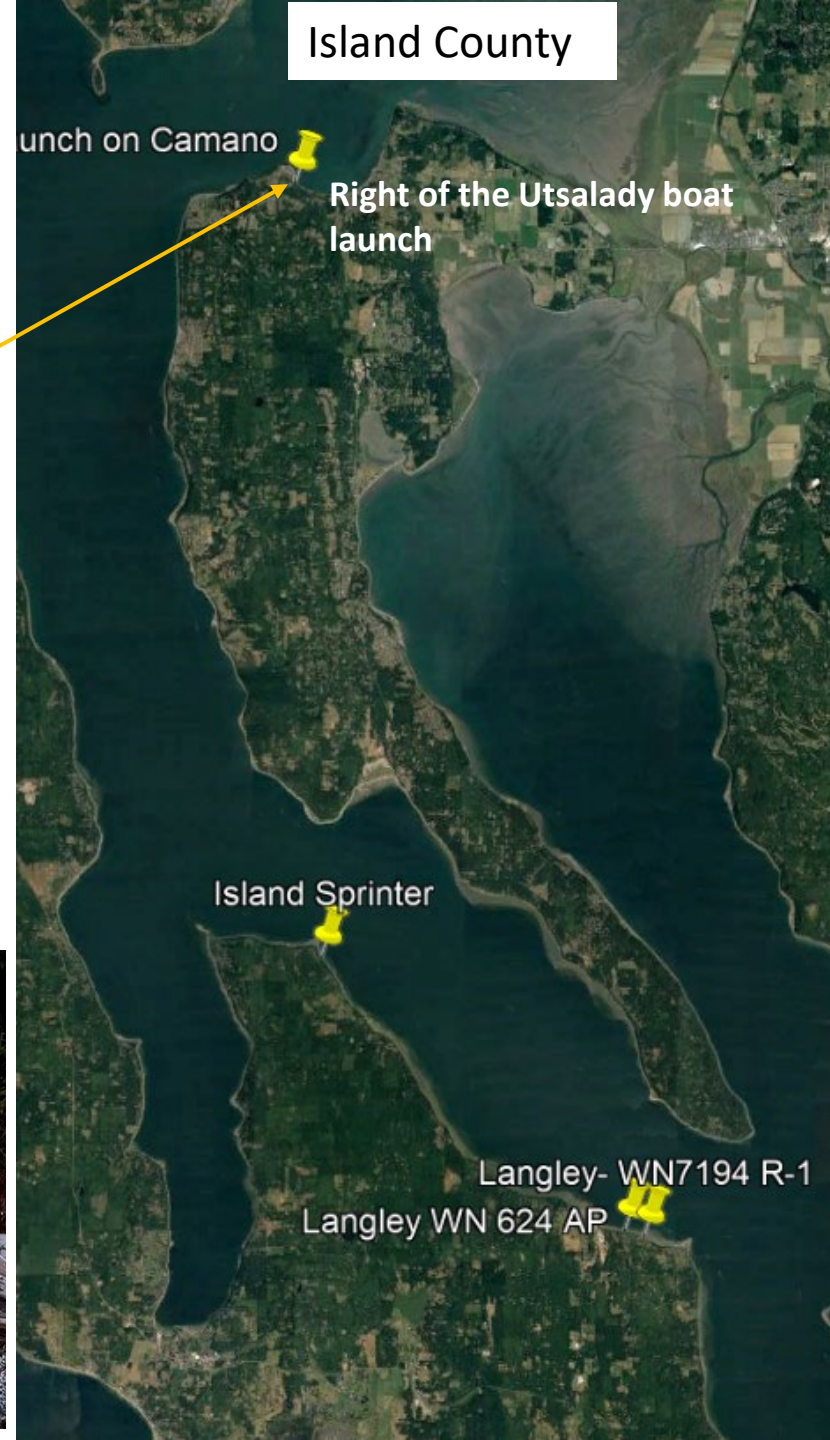
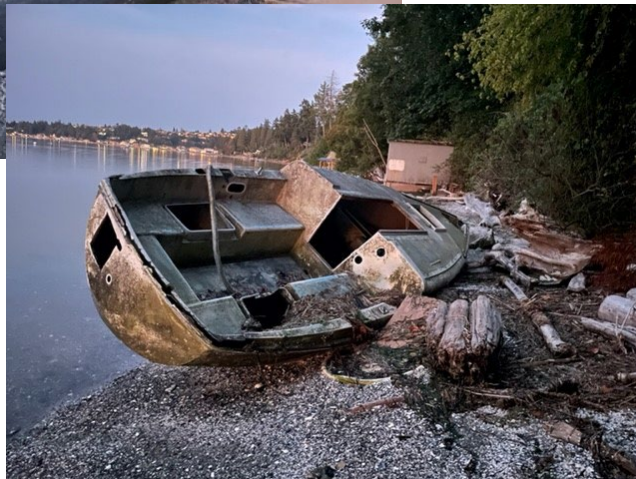


Vessel ID #13

Right of the Utsalady boat launch

- Jurisdiction: private, willing to grant access
- Ecologic value: Sandlance habitat adjacent, Salmon priority area 1
- Estimated removal cost: ~\$20,000 - \$60,000
- Landowner access: vessel located on public, private, or tribal tidelands willing to grant DNR access

<https://mycoast.org/reports/49470>



Vessel ID #14

Elusive Dream

- Jurisdiction: at least partially on private land. We don't have much successful communication with landowner. same landowner for Shilo and Elusive Dream, who DNR has talked to a bit
- Description: Floating and secure in Steamboat Slough
- Estimated removal cost: \$100,000-\$250,000
- Ecologic value: vessel is blocking light as an overwater structure, also sits on the bottom at low tide. Unknown chemicals and contaminants onboard.
- Cultural value: Located in the Snohomish Estuary, an important area for salmon.
- Recreation: vessels is in a public waterway often travels by the public and is a navigational hazard
- If private, landowner willingness to grant access: unknown, site owner has been contacted by DNR and in the past has insisted he is fixing up the boats. There has been years of issues.

<https://mycoast.org/reports/32536>



Vessel ID #15

Western Marine Construction

- Jurisdiction: At least partially on private land. no one has talked with Western Marine yet.
- Description: Aground in Steamboat Slough
- Estimated removal cost: ~\$1,000,000 - \$1,500,000
- Ecologic value: vessel is located on marsh habitat. Unknown chemicals and contaminants onboard.
- Cultural value: Located in the Snohomish Estuary, an important area for salmon.
- Recreation: vessels is in a public waterway often travels by the public and is a navigational hazard
- If private, landowner willingness to grant access: unknown, landowner has not been contacted.

<https://mycoast.org/reports/50835>

<https://mycoast.org/reports/32545>



Northwest Straits Foundation February 2023 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*



Shore Friendly Workshops

The Shore Friendly program of the Northwest Straits Foundation and the Snohomish, Island, and Clallam County Marine Resources Committees are hosting in-person workshops for shoreline landowners to learn about the drivers and impacts of coastal erosion, how sea level rise can intensify coastal erosion, and strategies and adaptations to prepare for future conditions.

Join Rachel Johnson, Andrea MacLennan, and Jonathan Waggoner of Herrera Environmental to learn about Shore Friendly Living.

Workshop topics include:

- Signs of change on the shoreline
- Shoreline responses to climate change
- Adaptations to protect your shoreline property
- Home relocation and its benefits

Two workshops are announced so far, and more are on the way.

WAITLIST - Saturday, February 25th from 10am - 12:30pm at Village Community Services in Arlington, WA. [Click here to learn more and to get on the waitlist.](#)

Saturday, March 11th from 10am - 12:30pm and 1-2pm at the Dungeness River Center in Sequim, WA. [Click here to learn more and to sign up!](#)

Crab Pot Escapement Study: Newly published manuscript available [here](#).



In 2015, the Northwest Straits Foundation completed a study to understand why lost crab pots with broken escape cord continue to capture and kill Dungeness crab rather than allowing them to escape as designed. The Crab Pot Escapement Study determined whether different crab pot designs were effective at allowing crab to escape once escape cord had deteriorated and broken, releasing an escapement path which should allow crab to escape. Many of the commonly used pot designs allowed only 5 – 10% of crab to escape. The good news is this study identified a simple modification which can be made to recreational crabs allowing all crab to escape from lost pots once the rot cord has broken. The results from this study are now available in a published manuscript which is available for free download until March 23rd and can be found [here](#).

2023 Derelict Crab Pot Removals

We have a busy season ahead for this year's derelict crab pot removal operations. We recently finished surveying the Port Gardner Study Area, a popular crabbing area where derelict crab pot removal operations have been completed nine times since 2005 in partnership with the Snohomish County Marine Resources Committee. Work completed in the study area over time has allowed us to evaluate long-term trends such as pot loss rates, escape cord compliance, and reasons for pot loss. We identified 242 derelict crab pot targets in our recent survey and will conduct dive removal efforts later this month.

In March we will be surveying north Fidalgo Bay, west Padilla Bay, and south Samish Bay in Skagit County and the Leo Bank area off NE Lopez Island in San Juan County. Dive removal operations are expected to occur April – June. The Skagit County sites are part of a two-year project in partnership with the Skagit County Marine Resources Committee to clean up the area of derelict crab pots, evaluate annual pot loss rates, and work with the commercial crabbing industry to reduce the high rate of commercial pot loss in the area. The NE Lopez Island area was identified as high priority in analyzing results from past years' derelict net removal operations which documented high densities of crab pots in the area. This will be the first derelict crab pot removal project completed in San Juan County.

Salish Sea Conservation Corps Monthly Social Event



Salish Sea Conservation Corps members, mentors, and community members watch Lisa Kaufman's presentation on Nearshore Restoration.



Salish Sea Conservation Corps members meet with their mentors.

The Northwest Straits Foundation's Salish Sea Conservation Corps (SSCC) held their first meet-up this month, where SSCC members were paired with a mentor. The event also featured a presentation on Nearshore Restoration from the Foundation's Director of Programs, Lisa Kaufman.

Huge thank you to the mentors who volunteered for the program's duration: Whatcom MRC members Mike MacKay and Glen "Alex" Alexander, Ginny Broadhurst (Salish Sea Institute), Eleanor Hines (RE Sources), Don Hunger and Jason Morgan (Foundation staff), and Foundation board members Adam Lorio, Phil Salditt, and Lee Whitford.

[Click here to read about the 2023 Salish Sea Conservation Corps members!](#)

Join us on March 6th, 2023 from 6:15-8PM at Western Washington University's Viking Union Room 567 for our second social event!

Forage Fish Presentation

Haley Sherman gave a presentation to MRC forage fish volunteers about long-term monitoring and forage fish surveys at Northwest Straits Foundation's nearshore restoration sites. The meeting was held virtually on January 24th, 2023, and was hosted by Leah Robison (Northwest Straits Commission), and Kate Olson (Department of Fish and Wildlife). A recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Clallam

Month/Year: February 2023

Submitted by: Rebecca Mahan

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

- Continued Forage Fish sampling on three beaches.
- Shore Friendly will be hosting a workshop *Living with Sea Level Rise* March 11, 2023

Membership/Leadership changes (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Helle Andersen has been appointed as the Marine Related Recreation and Tourism alternate.

Events/Meetings (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events): Clallam MRC will be holding a special meeting February 23rd at the Dungeness River Nature Center. This special meeting will be a retreat for MRC members, staff and any general public that will like to come. We will be discussing current projects and ideas for future projects.

February MRC meeting will be 2/27/23.

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): The MRC Olympia oyster shell placement project in collaboration with Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe is moving along nicely. We are working on permits and MOU.

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.

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):

JOIN OUR FREE
WORKSHOP
AND BEACH WALK

LIVING WITH SEA LEVEL RISE:
A SHORE FRIENDLY WORKSHOP

MARCH 11TH, SEQUIM, WA

**Workshop 10am-12:30
Beachwalk 1-2pm**

Workshop topics include:

- Signs of change on the shoreline
- Shoreline responses to climate change
- Adaptations to protect your shoreline property
- Home relocation and its benefits

**REGISTER & LEARN MORE AT
NWSTRAITSFOUNDATION.ORG
OR BY CLICKING HERE**

Funded wholly or in part by the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program



MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Island

Month/Year: January/ 2023

Submitted by: Barbara Bennett

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

-

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):

Previous Meetings/Events:

- Jan 26: Executive Committee Meeting
- Feb 7: MRC Committee Meeting

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- Mar 7: MRC Meeting
- Apr 4: MRC 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):

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, Glendale, Seahorse Siesta. Hidden Beach is on hold currently until we make some decisions with the NWSF about which site is best for us to continue at.

Bull Kelp Surveys: We are still working to get all the data from the volunteers.

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: Jefferson

Month/Year: February 2023

Submitted by: Monica Montgomery

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

- The Fort Townsend forage fish monitoring team surveyed a second time in January to collect samples from all five sample sites, as tides were higher than predicted the first attempt and blocked off beach access.
- The no-anchor zones team is planning to head out to Mystery Bay this weekend, on Feb 11th (the first time since the pandemic began), to do some much-needed maintenance.
- The storm surge monitoring team went out to the Salmon Club (Port Townsend waterfront) and Chetzemoka Park sites with Ian Miller on Jan 23rd to assess survey elevation control points and discuss methods for measuring water elevation.

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

District 3 Representative, Heather Burns, resigned from the MRC.

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

Past Events/Meetings

January 19 – NWSI kelp data review workshop
January 24 – MRC Executive Committee meeting
January 24 – Dabob forage fish survey
January 24 – WDFW forage fish index site data review meeting
January 25 – Education & outreach meeting
January 27 – NWSC monthly meeting
January 27 – Shoreline landowner outreach meeting w/ NWSF
January 27 – Fort Townsend forage fish survey
February 7 – MRC monthly meeting
February

Upcoming Events/Meetings

February 21 – MRC Executive Committee meeting
February 24 – NWSC monthly meeting
March 7 – MRC monthly meeting
March – Forage fish survey at Adelma, Dabob and Fort Townsend

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:** The Fort Townsend team (Janette, Sarah, Gregg, Jonathan, Joanie) along with the MRC Coordinator, surveyed a second time last month, on January 27, to ensure we collected samples from all 5 sites.
- **Forage fish - Adelma Beach (Index):** The Project Lead (Jeff) surveyed on January 13 with one volunteer, Cindy.
- **Forage fish - Dabob Bay (Index):** The Project Lead (Sarah) along with 2 MRC members (Janette, Troy) and 2 community volunteers (Anne, Gregg) surveyed on January 24.
- **Kelp:** Project lead Solenne and MRC Coordinator attended the January 19 NWSI kelp data review.
- **Storm surge monitoring:** Project Lead Jeff and two community volunteers (Dave, Jonathan) went out on January 23 with Ian Miller to assess the new potential monitoring site near Chetzemoka Park, survey elevation control points for the established Salmon Club site and new site, and to discuss the appropriate method for measuring elevation of the water.

2. Rain Gardens:

- Bob (WSU Extension partner) is working on assessing a few potential rain garden installation sites this year – one near Port Ludlow and two in Port Townsend.

3. Education & Outreach:

- The team (Brenda, Brent, Judy, etc.) met on January 25 to discuss 2023 outreach events and efforts.
- The shoreline landowner outreach project lead, Sarah, and the MRC Coordinator met with Clallam MRC, Lisa and other NWSF staff on January 27 to discuss plans for this year's shoreline landowner outreach workshop.

4. Olympia Oysters:

- [The Peninsula Daily News wrote an article](#) (unfortunately with some incorrect facts) on the Olympia oyster project in Discovery Bay (as well as Clallam MRC's work in Sequim Bay).
- The MRC Coordinator submitted the JARPA and other materials for renewing the 5-year Right of Entry with DNR for South Discovery Bay.

5. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones:

- The team received a buoy monitoring update on January 21 from former MRC member Dale Moses – there are just 2 buoys remaining in Mystery Bay. The team is planning a maintenance dive on February 11.

6. Mapping Lost Crab Pots:

- We are working on finalizing site selection for side scan sonar surveys and ROV removals of derelict crab pots for 2023. Once the site(s) are selected, the MRC Coordinator will be working on submitting permit materials and developing contracts.

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):

January 23 Storm surge monitoring team with Ian Miller, surveying elevation control points for the established Salmon Club monitoring site in Port Townsend.



Photo by Jeff Taylor



Photo by Jeff Taylor

January 27 Fort Townsend forage fish survey



Photo by Monica Montgomery

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: San Juan County

Month/Year: Feb 2023

Submitted by: Tyler Davis

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

- Two new members have been elected to the MRC.
- The Marine Managers Workshop is scheduled for April 4-5, 2023, at the UW Friday Harbor Labs

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

After a thorough advertising and interview process, two recommendations were made to San Juan County Council for filling the MRC positions that have been vacant since the beginning of the year. Council approved these recommendations, and we are pleased to welcome our two newest MRC members: Craig Smith, Professor Emeritus of Oceanography at the University of Hawaii, and Aaron Boyles, marine and shoreline ecologist at Jen-Jay Consulting. We are thrilled about these two new MRC members and will look forward to officially welcoming them aboard at our March 2nd meeting.

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

- Stewardship Network meeting – Feb 1st
- Monthly MRC meeting – Feb 2nd (with LIO/CAG)
- Seattle Boat Show (Be Whale Wise) – Feb 3-11th
- Great Islands Clean-up planning meeting – Feb 14th
- Next MRC meeting: Mar 2nd (in person)

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

No new funding updates this month.

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

Plastic Free Salish Sea (PFSS) mentoring of Friday Harbor High School students continues, with good progress being made with the Adopt-a-Road community project, which is on track to finish by the end of the school year. Unfortunately, the student who was interested in the ecobrick project has gone silent and seems to have prioritized other aspects of her curriculum. Hopefully there will be another student in the coming year interested in picking this project up.

Also related to PFSS, the Great Islands Clean-up planning committee had their first meeting ahead of the spring event, which is scheduled for Earth Day, April 22nd. Organizers from San Juan, Orcas, Lopez, and Shaw Islands were all present and full of enthusiasm and energy to plan another successful GICU.

The county mooring buoy assessment via aerial photos was completed by intern Yuki Wilmerding, with results of the assessment shared with NWSC by Marine Project Manager Frances Robertson.

The Marine Managers Workshop has been scheduled for April 4-5, 2023, at the University of Washington Friday Harbor Labs. Save the Date invitations have been distributed and a website with registration details will be sent out to invitees by the end of the month. One of the primary outputs of the MMW will be a final review of the Marine Stewardship Area Plan ahead of presentation to the San Juan County council.

Permit applications have been submitted for the Jackson Beach piling removal and restoration project by Frances Robertson.

A derelict vessel patrol was carried out on February 16th in the Friday Harbor area. MRC member and DV subcommittee lead, Adam Parrott, joined the patrol. Adam's position and experience as Assistant Harbormaster at the Port of Friday Harbor is extremely valuable during these patrols. 4 boats were tagged in Shipyard Cove, Friday Harbor, before the patrol had to be cut short to allow the SJC Sherriff's vessel to attend to an incident on another island. Elsewhere in the county, several other high priority vessels of concern continue to be monitored and dealt with accordingly, including registration confirmation and tracking down and communicating with registered owners. The Morning Star remains submerged in Blind Bay, awaiting salvage.

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.):

Several representatives from San Juan County traveled to Seattle for the Seattle Boat Show from February 3-11th to co-host the Be Whale Wise booth with representatives from the Whale Museum, US Coast Guard, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, NOAA, WDFW, and Killer Whale Tales. Final numbers have yet to be tallied, but early estimates suggest upwards of 1,000 people stopped by the booth and that more than 500 Be Whale Wise flags were handed out alongside other educational materials.

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



New MRC members Craig Smith (left) and Aaron Boyles (right), both enjoying various forms of marine recreation in the San Juan Islands.



The Be Whale Wise booth at the Seattle Boat Show, from Feb 3rd-11th.

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Skagit

Month/Year: February /2023

Submitted by: Tracy/ Diane

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

- Planning is underway for the spring Kids on the Beach program. 75 6th graders from Sedro-Woolley will be participating, with 3 field days at Bayview State Park and an in-class visit.
- The Shore Friendly Workshop in partnership with the NWS Foundation and Swinomish Tribe has tentatively been set for Saturday April 29th. We are working on agenda topics, reserving a facility, and confirming speakers.
- There was a great article on Pinto abalone in the [Skagit Valley Herald](#). Field work is now underway.

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):

- **February 9-** Skagit MRC's monthly meeting via Microsoft Teams (9am-11am). Jason Morgan presented on the derelict crab pot removal project in Skagit County waters.
- **February 9-** Shore-Friendly Landowner Workshop planning meeting (1pm-2pm). The workshop is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 29. We are working on agenda topics, reserving a facility, and confirming speakers.
- **February 23-** Fidalgo Bay Day Planning Committee meeting via Microsoft Teams (9am-11am).

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: 2023 SSS training started **February 7th through April 25th**. Classes are held Tuesdays from 1pm to 5pm at Padilla Bay. The [speaker schedule](#) is available on the Skagit MRC website. On the first day of class MRC Members of the SSS Advisory Committee presented an overview of the Salish Sea Stewards program and Lucas Hart gave a presentation on the Northwest Straits Initiative. The SSS Advisory Committee developed a new 'Volunteer Buddy System' to help support the new Salish Sea Stewards volunteers after they complete the training and introduce them to some amazing volunteer opportunities. Erin Merklein was recently hired by PBNERR as their Education / Outreach coordinator for 3 days a week and the new PT Volunteer Coordinator for the Salish Sea Stewards program for 2 days a week starting in March.
- Fidalgo Bay Day: The date for the 2023 Fidalgo Bay Day event has been tentatively set for **Saturday, August 26, 2023**, from 11am to 3pm. The Fidalgo Bay Resort facility has been reserved. The Shannon Point Marine Center confirmed their participation with the portable Touch Tank. MRC member Darla Gay Smith and the County intern, Cindy Elston, will co-lead the event this year. The County recently hired a new Education/Outreach person who will help develop new promotional materials for FBD. A planning meeting is scheduled for February 23.
- Forage Fish Surveys: Surveys continue at the 3 Index sites and two restoration sites.
- MRC- Salish Sea School Intern: Planning is underway for this year's program.
- Kids on the Beach: Planning is now underway for the spring program. So far there are 75 6th graders from Sedro-Wooley who will be participating in the spring program with 3 field days at

Bayview State Park paired with an in-class visit. Concrete has a new teacher and won't likely be able to participate this year like they have in the past. We continue exploring opportunities to get the Anacortes schools involved in the program. The challenge with Anacortes is if one class signs up to participate then all classes will have to participate in the program, and we don't currently have the capacity to handle that large of a group. We are working on different alternatives to involve the Anacortes schools such as working with the Salish Sea School.

- Kayak Kelp Surveys: We are gearing up for the 2023 kelp survey season. MRC Project Lead Lynne Wenberg-Davidson, attended the series of kelp workshops that were recently held in January. Skagit MRC's Shannon Point kelp bed monitoring sites are in one of WDNR's Puget Sound sub-basins that is listed as having insufficient data. The Skagit kelp monitoring team had a meeting with WDNR to discuss what the 'insufficient data' means and if there is anything we can do to change that status. Allie has been collecting historic data from the Shannon point kelp survey team. Lynne will be attending the 2-day kelp recovery workshop in Lacey in March. There are several experienced kayakers in the new Salish Sea Stewards class that might be interested in helping with the kelp project if we decide to take on any new kelp bed locations to monitor.
- Bowman Bay Restoration: No updates. Plant maintenance will start back up in the spring under the management of the Northwest Straits Foundation. A derelict vessel was recently observed at Bowman Bay.
- Pinto Abalone Recovery: Field work is underway. There was a recent article on Pinto abalone in the [Skagit Valley Herald](#). Pinto Abalone recovery efforts and collaboration will be well represented at the International Abalone Symposium (held once every three years) in Auckland, NZ in late February. Researchers from PSRF, UW, WWU and WDFW will be there to present talks across our research and restoration program!
- Olympia Oyster Restoration: Not much happening right now. We will be conducting a large bay-wide native oyster population survey with NOAA Congressional funding in partnership with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund starting in April or May 2023, depending on tides. Bay-wide surveys will only occur at 5-year intervals as funding allows. Paul Dinnel is working on the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the bay-wide oyster monitoring project which should be done in the next week or two.
- Green Crab Outreach: A meeting is planned next month to develop an outreach plan.
- School Rain Garden: There is potential for partnership with La Conner Schools and the Between Two Worlds program. Diane will start reaching out to the schools to talk about potential sites and aim for fall construction, which is the ideal time for planting.
- Fidalgo Bay Trestle: The Interlocal Agreement between the County and City of Anacortes has been drafted and is currently under review. A meeting to develop the education/outreach plan will be held after the Agreement gets signed.
- Shore-Friendly Workshop: The NWSF hosted a meeting February 9th to start planning the Shore-Friendly Workshop for shoreline landowners in Skagit County in partnership with Skagit MRC and the Swinomish Tribe. We discussed different possible workshop facility locations, agenda topics and speakers. The date has tentatively been set for Saturday April 29th.
- Clayton Beach Restoration: Clayton Beach access is currently closed due to pedestrian overpass construction. The NWSF is moving forward with the project design. WDNR will do an eelgrass survey there this summer.

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: February 2022

Submitted by: Elisa Dawson and Joycelyn Blue

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

- The MRC and Snohomish County have drafted an Intergovernmental Services Agreement with ORCA (Ocean Research College Academy). ORCA is an early college program for high school juniors and seniors. The contract is for the calendar year of 2023 to collaborate on collecting water quality data in Possession Sound. Snohomish County is reviewing the scope of work and contract, which we hope will be signed in March 2023.
- DNR recently removed 290 creosote pilings from the Snohomish Estuary utilizing the MRC's pilings removal inventory from the 2019-2021 MRC Grant: [Toxic pollutants removed from Snohomish estuary fish habitat | king5.com](#)
- DNR presented their findings from the comprehensive eelgrass survey of the Snohomish County shoreline at the MRC February 15 meeting. At that meeting, the MRC also reviewed the online map being created by Snohomish County which compares the most recent data to a historic 1999-2007 survey of eelgrass that was done in Snohomish County. The MRC is in the early stages of brainstorming a scope of work for the 2023-2025 grant that will focus on marine vegetation.

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

MRC Elections for 2023 were held at the February 15th meeting.

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

Joycelyn Blue attended the forage fish check in with the Northwest Straits on January 24.

The MRC conducted forage fish monitoring on January 26.

Elisa Dawson met with ESA Consultants on January 31 to discuss the Port Susan project.

MRC staff and Members attend DNR's Kelp and Eelgrass Statewide Plan Kick off Workshop online on January 31.

The Meadowdale Monitoring Team met on February 2.

MRC Staff met with ORCA to discuss the scope of work for 2023 on February 2.

MRC Staff met with Snohomish County management on February 6 to seek approvals to move forward with the ORCA scope of work. They received approval.

Elisa Dawson attended the Northwest Strait's Derelict Vessel Workgroup meeting on February 6.

Joycelyn Blue presented to the Technical Committee for the Snohomish Basic Salmonid Recovery on her work to compile marine water quality data on February 7.

Elisa Dawson met with ORCA to finalize the scope of work on February 7.

Elisa Dawson and Joycelyn Blue attended a meeting to help update the Snohomish Basin Lead Entity 4-year workplan on February 7.

Elisa Dawson attended a meeting hosted by the NWSC to discuss derelict vessel removal in the Snohomish Estuary on Feb 8.

The Port Susan Subcommittee held a meeting on February 9.

MRC staff met with WSU Beach Watchers to discuss 2023 beach cleanup dates on February 14.

MRC Staff and Members attended Northwest straits 101 on February 15.

The MRC hosted their monthly meeting on February 15. The meeting had a presentation by DNR on marine vegetation, and the MRC had their 2023 elections.

Elisa Dawson attended the Kelp and Eelgrass State Executive Work Group meeting on February 16.

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): The Port Susan Subcommittee and ESA have completed the Communications Strategy document. There was a meeting on February 9th to discuss priorities for implementation. The members of the subcommittee present during the meeting determined that ESA should focus on web page updates and an associated StoryMap. Fact sheets will be pursued by Island County MRC under this contract. The former 'Keep Port Susan Healthy' logo should be used in new materials. Next

steps include MRC Members providing ESA with an inventory of Port Susan content the MRC already has, beyond what we can find on the website, to potentially use for web updates/StoryMap (video, images, existing materials, etc.).

Derelict Vessels (NWSF funds): Staff are planning an on-water inventory of derelict vessels in early March to determine boats for removal in 2023.

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 restarted in January 2023 as public access has been restored. February forage fish sampling is planned on February 22nd.

Nearshore Restoration: The Meadowdale Estuary Restoration Project monitoring has started. Year 0 was considered to be February 2023. Monitoring for year one will be ongoing throughout this calendar year, and a report for year one completed in January 2024.

DNR recently removed 290 creosote pilings from the Snohomish Estuary utilizing the MRC's pilings removal inventory from the 2019-2021 MRC Grant: [Toxic pollutants removed from Snohomish estuary fish habitat | king5.com](#)

Outreach: The MRC and WSU beach watchers are working on scheduling the beach cleanups for 2023. The next cleanup is planned for March 23.

Marine Water Quality: The MRC and Snohomish County have drafted an Intergovernmental Services Agreement with ORCA (Ocean Research College Academy). ORCA is an early college program for high school juniors and seniors. The contract is for the calendar year of 2023 to collaborate on collecting water quality data in Possession Sound. Snohomish County is reviewing the scope of work and contract, which we hope will be signed in March 2023.

Marine Vegetation Monitoring: DNR presented their findings from the comprehensive eelgrass survey of the Snohomish County shoreline at the MRC February 15 meeting. At that meeting, the MRC also reviewed the online map being created by Snohomish County which compares the most recent data to a historic 1999-2007 survey of eelgrass that was done in Snohomish County. The MRC is in the early stages of brainstorming a scope of work for the 2023-2025 grant that will focus on marine vegetation.

Oil Spill Preparedness and Prevention: The subcommittee has been working to make sure all subcommittee members are aware of what is happening in the region and reaching out and participating in planning and response efforts in the area. This includes attending meetings,

updating points of contact, and working on attending table-top drills and other drills in the area. The subcommittee members are pursuing working with Sea Grant and the Port of Everett to possibly include oil spill outreach education kits during crabber outreach. They are following up on the status of Ecology's volunteer response database, including vessels of opportunity; looking into the status of the "Don't Drip and Drive" program; and finally, of ways to reduce response time by vessels in order to protect the SWKWs. Upcoming drills in the area include one drill on February 27, 2023 and a second drill on March 7 and 8, 2023. As of now, no OSS members will directly be participating.

No updates for:

- Crabber 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:

- MRC Meeting March 15 at 6:30
- Forage Fish Sampling March 22
- Puget Sound Marine Vegetation Workshop March 23
- Beach Cleanup Event March 23

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: FEBRUARY 2023

Submitted by: Austin Rose

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

- The job announcement for the MRC's additional staff person closed on February 15. 29 applications were received. After review, 4 applicants rose to the top and will be interviewed the week on February 20.
- The MRC agreed to take a new project for the 2023-2025 grant round – Harmful Algae Bloom Monitoring in Drayton Harbor and Birch Bay. The goal of this work is to fill an important data gap considering the commercial oyster farm in Drayton Harbor, current concentration of HABs being found in the area, and the influence of the Fraser River (high nutrient load).
- Hannah Pittman is the new MRC Forage Fish Intern, hired to take the lead on the monthly surveys and volunteer coordination. Hannah currently works as the Aquatic Reserve Coordinator – Americorps, RE Sources and has experience organizing community science efforts such as forage fish surveys.

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

The job announcement for the MRC's additional staff person closed on February 15. 29 applications were received. After review, 4 applicants rose to the top and will be interviewed the week on February 20.

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

The MRC held their February meeting on March 2. Highlights included:

- MRC members used their meeting to discuss a list of projects to include in the 2023-2025 grant round. Projects include:
 - Bull Kelp Monitoring: expansion of survey sites, conducting a presence/absence survey via motor boat or aircraft, involving a student intern to help with project expansion.
 - Pilot Olympia Oyster Restoration: establish additional plots with a harder substrate, purchase of shell to help with larval recruitment and growth. Austin will check with WDFW regarding timing of distributing shell in relation to the timing of potential full-blown restoration efforts. Paul would like to continue with tile monitoring to assess for larvae recruitment.
 - Chuckanut PIC: continue water quality monitoring and communication with project partners (Whatcom County Public Works, Whatcom County Health, and WA Department of Health. A new project champion was identified (Beth Lorence, who is working as the Illness Prevention Coordinator, WA Department of Health).

- Voluntary No-Anchor Zone (new project): a more detailed survey on boat use is needed to consider the Chuckanut Bay location. Austin will follow up with Dana Oster, NWSC, and Lisa Kaufman, NWSF to inquire about the status of the regional project in addition to the needs for assessing Chuckanut Bay. There is interest in investigating Drayton Harbor as a location – not only to protect eelgrass, but water quality – due to an increase of boaters anchoring in that area, and staying for longer periods.
- Forage Fish Surveys: continue offering internship opportunity to lead the monthly surveys. Continue surveying 4 sites along the Squalicum shoreline within the beach nourishment areas of recent restoration projects led by the Port of Bellingham, and the City of Bellingham.
- Remote Beach Cleanup: The committee discussed expanding the project to other locations, or host multiple cleanups throughout the year – different locations should be considered. Mainland beach cleanups would be more accessible. Point Roberts would be another option for a remote beach. There is a possibility to coordinate with the Plover. Members could create a database to identify which beaches accumulate debris based on winds.
- Beach Seine with Kids: There is a desire to view plankton during the classroom session. The MRC needs to purchase a good display for macro and micro organism viewing. This will also be helpful for outreach events.
- *NEW PROJECT* Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs): Rick Beauregard mentioned this work at the January MRC meeting and is willing to champion. Rick is hoping to institutionalize the project, provide funding stability, increase volunteer participation, and have a forum to share data with the public. This would create the ability to expand the monitoring from Drayton Harbor and Birch Bay to other areas in the county. The goal of this work is to fill that data gap considering the commercial oyster farm in Drayton Harbor, current concentration of HABs being found in the area, and the influence of the Fraser River (high nutrient load).

The committee also discussed facilitating eelgrass mapping in Whatcom County to fill apparent data gaps.

- Garden of the Salish Sea Curriculum: Julie Hirsch, Garden of the Salish Sea Curriculum (GSSC), gave an overview of the GSSC - a shellfish-based curriculum being implemented in Whatcom County schools (K-12). Julie is looking to expand the GSSC, and continue to offer internships for high school students. Julie proposed that the MRC's adoption of the HABs program be accompanied by outreach and education programs, including the GSSC. Julie will provide a detailed proposal outlining the roles of partner organizations and budget allocations. After reviewing a revised proposal, the MRC will vote via e-mail about including the project in the upcoming MRC grant proposal. Further discussion may be needed at the March MRC meeting.

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

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

- Forage Fish
Hannah Pittman is the new MRC Forage Fish Intern, hired to take the lead on the monthly surveys and volunteer coordination. Hannah has been introduced to Kate Olsen, WDFW, and Leah Robison to understand their roles with the project and prepare for communication throughout her internship. Hannah currently works as the Aquatic Reserve Coordinator – Americorps, RE Sources and has experience organizing community science efforts such as forage fish surveys.
- Beach Seine with Kids (BSWK)
The BSWK planning team met on February 2 to continue planning for the 2023 school events. The group agreed on 3 seine events: **4/14, 4/28, 5/12**, 11am – 1pm at Boulevard Park,

Bellingham.

There will be a pre and post classroom session by Alex, SSCC members, and Mike. The pre-event session will be scheduled the day before and the post-event planned the week after seining.

Event #1 will have up to 30 students while events #2 & #3 will have up to 60 students. Events will have two stations, seining on the beach and another at the pavilion. The pavilion activities will be decided with the help of SSCC volunteers.

The classroom session will use a curriculum similar to last year. The new post-event session will go over the field data sheet and reinforce topics covered in the pre-event briefing and during the seining and the activity at the pavilion station.

Class selection will be made similar to last year with an in-person meeting of MRC participants to rank teacher responses and to select those who will participate in 2023 events. Invitations were sent to 4th grade teachers in the Bellingham school district in addition to the Lummi School. Deadline for teacher applications is February 21, and selection of successful candidates will be made in the first or second week in March.

- Kelp Monitoring

The new MRC Kelp Monitoring Champion, Heather Spore, attended the eelgrass and kelp conservation workshop on Jan 31. She will brief the committee at the March meeting. MRC staff registered for the Kelp Plan Action Workshop, March 1-2. Staff will work with Heather to provide input.

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.):

Alex shared information about the [National Marine Educators Association \(NMEA\)](#) conference being held in Bellingham July 23 – 27. The work of the NMEA aligns with MRC interests and projects. There is opportunity for MRC members to lead a field trip, or provide a presentation during a conference session. Alex participates on the conference planning team and asked the committee for approval to attend as a member of the MRC. A motion was made for the committee to approve Alex's participation in the NMEA planning efforts as a representative of the MRC. The motion was seconded and approved by consensus.