

Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the January 14, 2010 meeting held at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center

Members Attending: Tracy Alker, Neil Borman, Kurt Buchanan, Ivar Dolph, Polly Fischer, John Giboney, Lori Kyle, Charles O'Hara, Kari Odden, Erica Pickett, Jim Ramaglia, Mike Sato, Rebecca Spurling, Betsy Stevenson

Members Absent: Kevin Bright, Paul Dinnel, Lawrence Joseph, Connie Thoman, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward

Others Attending: Bret Andrigh, citizen; Rachel Benbrook, PPS; Chris Betchley, WSU; Kara Bloch, Padilla Bay NERR; Joan Drinkwin, NWSF; Lisa Kaufman, WADNR; Dean Maxwell, Mayor of Anacortes; Eric Mickelson, SRSC; Connie Price, NWS; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:03.

Minutes: Approved

Public Comments: Addition made to the agenda by Eric Mickelson for a report on the West March's Point Project.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

The proposal is on its way to Ecology and Kimberley Clark. All deadlines were met. The next step for the subcommittee is to begin looking at the next year and potential projects.

Update on the Fidalgo Bay Tommy Thompson Trail Trestle Fire, presented by Anacortes Mayor Dean Maxwell

The trail is one of the most popular pieces in the Anacortes park system. The trail had helped to promote stewardship for the Bay and surrounding area. The fire is a loss and a setback for the City.

The fire is suspected to be the result of arson. Authorities do not know yet. Over 400' of the trail was damaged. Not all of the support columns were destroyed, so new pilings are not necessary.

Currently the City and partners are clearing debris. Andy Culbertson of Culbertson Marine Construction is donating part of the cost of equipment and crew for demolition and debris removal. Some pilings that were not part of the trail structure will also be removed. The Port of Anacortes will dispose of the creosote pilings. The DNR is also working with the creosote removal. No creosote timbers will be used for repairs.

The trail was not insured. Cost for rebuilding it will be 500,000. So far, 120K in pledges and cash has been raised in the community. There will be a fundraiser event in February. The City gave a 25' pole from the Heart Lake area to Bill Bailey. He will carve it, then offer it up for auction, with the funds raised going toward supporting the trail.

Volunteer help and donations will be used whenever possible to rebuild the trail. If necessary, it may be possible to use banks and the Community Reinvestment Act to get the money necessary to rebuild before all funds have been raised. The Mayor hopes to have the trestle repaired and back in use by the end of April, with a security system.

NWSC Report

No report. There had not been another NWSC meeting since our December report.

Administrative Report

- Tracy sent out a budget update.
- Please remember to submit all volunteer hours. Include time spent planning projects, meetings, training, etcetera.
- The Clean Samish Initiative Story will air on KSVR 91.7FM today at 5pm and 11pm. It will also air on Sunday at 8:30. It can also be accessed online through the station's website.

MRC Chair/Vice Chair & NWSC Rep Nominations

Positions on the MRC can be held for two years.

Neil agreed to stay on as Chair, Christine as Vice-chair, Charlie as the NWS Representative, Ivar as the alternate NWS Rep and Kari as Secretary.

John moved that the nominations be closed. Erica seconded. There was consensus that the above people would stay in their current positions.

New MRC members will be needed in all positions next year.

MRC Bylaws/Membership Discussion

MRC members were reminded that when an alternate comes to the meeting, it is counted as an attended meeting. Alternates are able to vote.

The Board of Skagit County Commissioners appoints members for four years. Tracy sends the current list of members to the Commissioners every year.

There was a discussion about keeping on members who do not attend meetings. Mike commented that early on, during the formation of the MRC, there was a concern that all entities and tribes were represented. There was a feeling among the MRC that it is important to keep "slots open along the table" for the different groups on the occasion that they want to come. One member mentioned a concern that a non-active member could come and vote no on an issue, preventing consensus. This has not yet happened. A few members were concerned that contributing members could be dropped from the Committee if they missed a set number of meetings. Members can be contributing to the MRC even when unable to attend the monthly meetings.

The main concern with active membership stemmed from the issue of quorum, which has been a problem in past years. Lowering the percentage of or number of votes necessary for quorum was discussed. No decision was reached. Capping the number

of members was also suggested, but some members were concerned about excluding potentially valuable future members.

Betsy suggested contacting the non-participating members and asking if they would consider being an ex-officio, or non-voting, member with the understanding that they can become a voting member again in the future. A phone call from Tracy was the preferred contact method. The existence of non-voting members would need to be written into our bylaws. Connie Price noted that some other MRC's have ex-officio members. She will send us examples of the language in their bylaws. There was a motion to table the discussion until next month.

Project Status & Discussion:

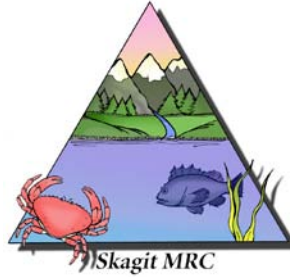
- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** No report.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Discussed with the City two construction possibilities. One possibility is to provide MRC funds for the construction to the City via a contract. The City would then complete the project. If the timing does not work for the first option, the second option is that the City will identify a location for the rain garden and the MRC will independently complete the project.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** It has been difficult finalizing the contract for the graduate student, but the issue should be resolved soon. The graduate school approved the student's thesis proposal. She has begun researching the historical use of the pond. Sampling will begin in January.
- **LID Brochures:** Have started research.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Erica compiled a report, complete with photos, on FBD 2009. One copy will stay with the SCMRC.
- **Shannon Point Research Exc.:** Discussed with Shannon Point facilities staff the timing and logistics for the four training excursions and the methods of billing. Two or more training cruises will take place during spring/summer 2010. Remaining cruises will occur in spring 2011.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** The Young Beach Stewards, a group of at-risk MVHS 9th graders, have completed two swale clean-ups, quantified what they found and contributed to nature mapping with the data. A class of marine biology students will start with the program this spring. Padilla Bay will encourage these students to do a related senior project. SFEG will do upriver planting with the groups. Shore stewards now total 158. Beach Watcher trainings continue and a new class is scheduled to begin in April. Chris' position will be finished late February. WSU has guaranteed a coordinator and the position will be advertised. Chris submitted the July-Dec '09 BW report.
- **Native Oyster Project:** Monitoring of oyster survival, growth and new recruitment will continue during spring and summer 2010.
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** CGS is doing the background work. Will begin the analysis in late January or February. The project should be completed in June.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Rachel submitted the final report from 2009. In Skagit County, 44 miles of coastline were surveyed, 59 m² of spartina were controlled and there was a small dig day at Kiket lagoon.
- **Smart Sponge:** Have had discussions with Terry Stevens and staff at Padilla Bay Research Reserve regarding funding and timing of the Reserve boat ramp/outfall project with which the SWAT unit construction will be synchronized. Conversations with Skagit County Public Health about processing samples for bacterial counts. Conversations with Beach Watchers about collecting routine

water samples before and after SWAT treatment. Discussions with AbTech Industries regarding cost and availability.

Announcements and Additions

- Eric Mickelson gave an update on the West March's Point Restoration Project. Permits are ready to go. They are waiting for a few comments, especially input on timing from Dan Pentilla. The first phase of the project will be to move riprap back up on the beach. The second phase will be adding material. There will be shade plantings done, but there is a limited space in which to plant and the environment is challenging. Kurt suggested getting agreement from the road department to leave the plantings alone.
- Charlie thanked Kurt for his valuable Samish River Storm Sampling report. Kurt will continue adding sampling information to the report. Kurt mentioned the large number of volunteers that make the study possible.
- The State Board of Puget Sound Anglers has re-appointed Polly to her second year as president.
- Christine announced that Samish Tribe's soft shore restoration project continues to fare well with some new logs washed up on the beach. They will be planting in March or April. Volunteers?
- Mike announced Environmental Lobby Day in Olympia on January 26th. The bus runs through Mount Vernon. One focus will be clean water. Register at the PPS website.
- John announced that he is going off of the MRC. Thank you for your service, John. You will be missed!
- Lori mentioned a 6th grade tour at the Pomona Grange on Hwy 99. It is an annual two-day event with activity stations. She asked if the MRC would want to host a station. The event is held in late May/early June.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 am. The next meeting will be held on February 11th.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the February 11, 2010 meeting held at the Skagit Conservation District

Members Attending: Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Lori Kyle, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Ivar Dolph, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling

Others Attending: Erik Newman, Tesoro (alternate for Rebecca Spurling); Rebecca Ponzio, Puget Sound Partnership; Susan Madsen, SFEG; Bret Andrich, citizen

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:00am

Minutes: The minutes were approved with one correction. Christine Woodward was present, not absent, at the January meeting.

Public Comments: none

Local integration in the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) Whidbey Basin Action Area

Rebecca Ponzio of PSP invited the Skagit MRC to participate in a decision group that will decide the scale of project implementation for the Whidbey Basin. She requested one representative from the Skagit MRC. The question the integration group will be deciding on is, "Should PSP be funding/implementing projects on the Whidbey Basin scale or on a more local scale?" There will be one to three meetings held in March and early April.

Betsy commented on the importance of having the MRC represented. There was no disagreement. After a discussion, it was decided that Betsy is the representative, pending approval from her employer. Neil is the primary and Tracy the secondary alternates. Betsy would like to receive input from fellow MRC members on the scale decision and will send out the necessary information when the time comes. According to Rebecca, local integration teams (at the chosen scale) will eventually be advising the partnership on funding and legislative priorities, among other duties.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

Appreciation for the NWSF:

Neil thanked Joan Drinkwin for her help in obtaining a commitment from Ecology to put \$30 K toward the East March's Point Boat Ramp Groin Removal Project.

East March's Point Boat Ramp Groin Removal Project:

Erica asked MRC members for their input on asking Tesoro for a conservation easement on the boat ramp because it might be required by Ecology for permitting. This was a cause of concern for some members because the Tesoro headquarters in Texas could potentially cancel the project and take away the currently available public access. Connie noted that a shoreline permit should not be necessary because it is a restoration and not a development project. The decision was reached to not request an easement. Erica will note the historical use of the boat ramp and the public access. Betsy is presently waiting for the shoreline exemption permit application from Joan. She questioned whether the tree plantings are designed in the road right of way. Kurt asked about a portion of the beach being public right of way.

Project Proposal for the Fidalgo Bay Causeway Inspection/Underwater Survey:

Christine submitted a request for \$5,000 to the MRC to fund an underwater survey of the causeway. MRC funds would match the amount donated by the Nisqually tribe. The Nisqually tribe will do the inspection and take a video. They will also remove debris under 100 lbs. The Samish tribe will dispose of all garbage. The Nisqually tribe did the previous underwater survey of the causeway. The trestle fire has been cleaned up well on the surface. The Samish tribe hopes to find out about any problems the fire may have caused, or debris left behind, below the water.

There were no objections. The request was approved. The 5K will be taken from the 30K that had been set aside from the first year's funds.

Request for new projects:

Neil requested members to start thinking about projects for next year. A member asked about the plywood mill site cleanup. The group felt that the MRC should not be involved at this clean-up stage of the project and should instead wait to help with the restoration.

MRC Chair/Lead Staff Meeting Report (Neil and Tracy)

- Ginny made a request for regional MRC projects. There was a discussion of potential projects that are relevant to all MRC's. Some of the ideas were: abalone restoration, forage fish research, Mussel Watch, shoreline assessment on restoration project success and marine plastics. Ideas will be discussed in more detail at the NWS commission retreat.
- There was a discussion of how to continue funding for the Beach Watchers program. It can't be a regional project because not all MRC's use them.
- There will be three communications workshops sponsored by the NWS. Each will be held in a different region and is open to any MRC member. The workshops will be administered by COMPASS and be geared toward how to communicate with the press and other key audiences. Please contact Sasha with questions. More information to come.
- The NWS has issued a RFP to conduct research on the Pacific sand lance. Go to <http://www.nwstraits.org/uploads/File/rfp1016sea.pdf> for the request.
- There is currently a bill in the House on crab pots, which would allow WDFW to issue permits for the removal pots during the off-season. This would occur only if the fisherman is witnessed actually utilizing the non-compliant pot.

NWSC Report:

Charlie provided a report from the last NWSC meeting with the following highlights:

- There was a discussion of current WA State legislation related to marine issues, including the crab pots.
- John Piatt gave a presentation on forage fish/seabird interactions in Alaska and the Puget Sound. He feels there is a need for more data, especially on forage fish in Puget Sound. It would be helpful to beach seine the entire region. Protocols have been established. It is possible to use volunteers. Someone needs to compile the data. Kurt commented on bringing together different groups with experience seining to coordinate with and learn from each other.
- The NWSC retreat will be held at the end of March.

Administrative Report

- Invoices and the budget are on track.
- Tracy began sending around a volunteer hours record log for the month. She will do so at each meeting. Other MRC's are doing the same. Paul requested an electronic copy.
- MRC members contributed 450 volunteer hours in 2009.
- There is a grant available to counties for shoreline restoration projects. The Coastal Counties Restoration Initiative (CCRI) is funded through NOAA. Joan could help us apply. The proposed grant would go to the Wild Fish Conservancy for a rapid nearshore fish assessment on Cypress Island. The focus would be on juvenile salmon smolts. In addition, the grant could possibly support the DNR's project at Secret Harbor.
- The Coastal Training Program is offering a climate change class to be held at Padilla Bay on March 25. Deadline for sign-up is March 18th. Please contact Sasha before you register.

Project Status & Discussion:

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** No report.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Paul had a meeting with the City's contractor. The City instructed the contractor to put in the rain garden. Currently, the plan is being fine-tuned. Some matching funds are coming from the City for the design work.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** The graduate student is working. The SRSC came out with staff, boat and net to train the Shannon Point student and others in beach seining. Shannon Point will continue the seining at monthly intervals in order to assess what species might use the pocket estuary if it were re-established. The student is also starting water quality and temperature monitoring.
- **LID Brochures:** Project is in the information gathering phase. It will include a description and location of local LID projects. Someone gave the idea of including where to find the necessary specs. These can be downloaded from the Ecology website.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** It is planned for September 18 and will be held at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. There was some discussion about growing or changing FBD. One model is the Sound Waters one-day university. Another idea was to have a more technical marine research conference. Several members preferred a one-day conference to a two-day. There may be the possibility of funding through ECO Net or private sources.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** Planned for later this spring and summer.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** No report. Chris sent a thank you through Tracy to Todd Woodard of the Samish Department of Natural Resources for his presentation on coastal processes to the Young Beach Stewards.
- **Native Oyster Project:** On hold for now. The first workable low tide is in April.

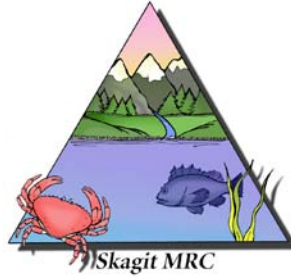
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** Fieldwork has been started.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Project will begin in spring. Have met with Canadian partners, making connections across borders within the Salish Sea. Go to www.spartina.ca to see data from 2009.
- **Smart Sponge:** Storm drain monitoring in Anacortes continues. Paul will prepare a report this spring with a year's worth of data. Contractors will be working on redoing the boat ramp at Bayview. It will include LID features such as pervious paving. Found an ideal location for the SWAT unit at Bayview.

Kids Activities for the MRC display

Kari presented different children's activities as possibilities for the display table. Options included: puppets and books (creative play), water and fish activities (science), sea life stamping (art) and brittle stars (art). She gave the advantages, disadvantages and cost of each activity. MRC members gave their input and chose both the stamping activity and the brittle stars. Materials purchase may come out of the administrative budget. Total cost is under \$140 and annual materials cost in subsequent years will be approximately \$40. Members also liked the idea of a reading basket. Donated marine related children's books would be appreciated.

Announcements: None.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am. The next meeting will be held on March 11 at the Port of Anacortes.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the March 11, 2010 meeting held at the Port of Anacortes

Members Attending: Ivar Dolph, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Charles O'Hara, Kurt Buchanan, Rebecca Spurling, Mike Sato

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Jim Ramaglia, Kevin Bright, Lori Kyle

Others Attending: Bob Hyde, Port of Anacortes; Chris Betchley, WSU; Denise Crowe, Shannon Point Marine Center (SPMC); Dr. Jude Apple, SPMC; Rae Kozloff; Doug Stark, Whatcom MRC Alternate; Rachel Benbrook, PPS

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:00.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: None.

Shannon Point Marine Center (SPMC) Outreach Program, presented by Dr. Jude Apple

SPMC has received funding to start the Shannon Point Public Education Initiative. It will be an education and outreach program with two main targets: community colleges and Kindergarten through 12th grade. The initiative is aimed at closing some of the communication gap between local communities and marine research. Denise Crowe of SPMC has already been working with K-12 classes and will continue to do so on an expanded basis.

SPMC is taking part in the Centers of Ocean Science Education Excellence (COSEE) Pacific Partnership. This partnership consists of five marine labs, one each in California and Hawaii, two in Oregon and Shannon Point. The community college outreach will be a pilot project with the goal of increasing ocean literacy. A series of weeklong workshops will be held for community college faculty from around Washington State. The workshops will be geared toward helping the attending professors fit marine science and research into their curriculums.

As part of the Public Education Initiative, SPMC will increase the presence of Shannon Point at community festivals and other public settings. Researchers from the Center will also give presentations on marine topics to the public with the hope of promoting stewardship.

Another COSEE program that promotes research in marine science is PRIME. This is a competitive program for community college students, apart from their school curriculum. It brings students from community colleges throughout the state into research opportunities at Shannon Point.

Port's Beach Enhancement/LID Project Site Visit

The O Avenue mitigation project has been completed. This project included a beach clean up and re-grading, bulkhead removal and shoreline restoration. Softshore armoring was not possible due to the dynamic nature of the shoreline; instead, rock was used to protect the road. There is now public access with benches and a terrace where people can watch boat and industrial activity. The Skagit MRC funded the LID components of the project. These included porous pavers to filter water from the parking area, rain gardens to capture storm water from a warehouse roof and an educational display sign. Large, colorful watering cans were used at the warehouse downspouts to draw attention to the rain gardens. Riparian landscaping was also funded by the MRC.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

Grant funding has been approved for this year's projects, which are getting underway. There was some discussion of potential future projects. Paul suggested that if the Port purchases the Scott site, the MRC could help support restoration efforts. Clean-up funds could potentially come from Ecology. The Port is uncertain at this point if they will purchase the property. While it has some commercial and public park potential, the cost of clean up is unknown and potentially too great.

NWSC Report:

Ivar provided a report from the annual retreat with the following highlights:

- There was a discussion about the role of the MRC in the community. The various MRC's communicate differently. One MRC assigns a different member to each councilperson or commissioner. Another MRC provides quarterly reports. Ivar urged the Skagit MRC to look into the different approaches. Erica suggested making another presentation to the Commissioners. Tracy has most of the information from the last presentation.
- The NWSC continues to look at regional project ideas. So far, no ideas are as compelling as the successful derelict gear project. One idea was for each MRC to put together a book similar to Getting to the Water's Edge, a field guide to shoreline public access, activities, wildlife and stewardship in Island County.
- During the April NWSC meeting, each MRC will give a 20-minute presentation of current projects.
- COMPASS communication workshops are coming up. The nearest will be held on at Padilla Bay on May 12.
- The National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration will be held Nov 13-20 in Galveston, TX. The NWSC will have a poster and is encouraging MRC members to attend. Funding support may be available.
- A representative from Patty Murray's office, Shawn Bills, attended one day of the retreat.

Administrative Report

- Tracy asked which projects should be presented at the April NWSC meeting and who would present them. Connie is willing to present the Port's beach enhancement project. Neil was willing to present the March's Point project. Chris Betchley suggesting including pictures from the Beach Watcher's education project with at-risk high school students. It was suggested that Christine present the Samish beach restoration project.
- Betsy will attend the PSP local integration meeting in April or May. Tracy asked for input. Erica suggested keeping it at the Whidbey Basin scale. Mike suggested that since it is a funding funnel, the MRC should look at what scale gives the best advantage to MRC priorities. Three members commented that the County scale was not effective. Many members felt that either a watershed or basin-wide scale could be the most effective because it would encompass natural/ecological borders. Several members commented that it was important that the MRC stay at the table for whatever scale was chosen.

Project Status & Discussion:

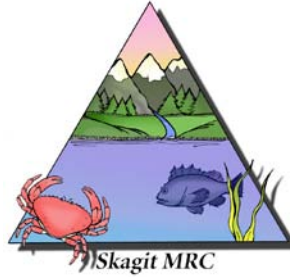
- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** no report
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Proceeding. The project includes a demonstration rain garden and integrating LID and signage.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** There have been two beach seinings to determine which species might use Cannery Pond if it were to become a pocket beach. The first was a training session by SRSC. The second was problematic due to the many rocks. The site may be changed to a less rocky area, possibly a location under Port management. Connie gave her approval. There are temperature monitors in the pond. The student is also looking into history and geology of the site. Historical photos would be helpful.
- **LID Brochures:** Gathering information.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The 2009 report has been disseminated to almost everyone who will receive it. This year's event will be held on September 18 at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. The street banner has been reserved and paid for.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** The trips will take place in early June and in the fall. Attendees will have the opportunity to see the tools and methods used by the researchers.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** The April training program has been set up. The application deadline was extended due to a poor response: only two applications have been received. The BW Coordinator position has not been advertised yet.
- **Native Oyster Project:** The first low tide will be in April. Information will be gathered then and over the remaining months.
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** On target. There will be a presentation in June.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** There will be a meeting next month with the Department of Ag Spartina Control Program. Volunteers have paddled much of Skagit County in the past two years. Some areas will be revisited this year.
- **Smart Sponge:** One of Paul's students is using bioassays in the lab to test a smart sponge's effectiveness in removing toxicity from the water. The NSF is funding the study. The SWAT unit in Bayview will be located 1½ blocks from the shore and Boatworks, in an open field under County right-of-way. It is necessary to check with the County to see if they are willing to dig the hole for the unit. It will be in place only during summer low flows as the unit is not large enough to

handle winter high flows. Kurt asked about the possibility of looking at where contamination is coming from in Bayview, as has been done in the Samish.

Announcements:

- There is a tour of the former Scott paper mill site the first Monday of every month at 4pm. Paul reported that it is worthwhile.
- Polly was invited by NOAA to participate in the 2010 Recreational Saltwater Fishing Summit, to be held in April in Virginia. This summit will be the initial foray into an ongoing exchange.
- The Fidalgo Chapter of Puget Sound Anglers offers scholarships at two levels for students going into the field of fisheries. These scholarships are funded through the donations of club members and the Anacortes Salmon Derby.
- Ivar reported that the NWS derelict gear project had removed 1,064 derelict nets as of January 31.
- Kurt will be sending an updated Samish storm sampling report soon.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be held on April 8th at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center from 9-11.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the April 8, 2010 meeting held at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center

Members Attending: Ivar Dolph, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Lori Kyle, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Jim Ramaglia, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara, Rebecca Spurling

Others Attending: Chris Betchley, WSU; Rachel Benbrook, PSP; Brandon Jensen; Connie Price, NWSC; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:00 am.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: none

Washington Sea Grant's Citizen Science Program, presentation by Kate Litle, Citizen Science Specialist

Washington Sea Grant (WSG) was contracted by the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) to develop recommendations for advancing citizen science (CS) projects. Kate Litle from WSG and Don Meehan of WSU worked with an advisory panel and held a COSEE workshop about citizen science. These efforts led to information about the challenges of CS. Some of the challenges are: a lack of communication and partnerships among scientists and CS groups, access to scientific expertise, translating and disseminating study results, data quality, and volunteer management and liability.

Washington Sea Grant has made four recommendations. The first is to develop a Citizen Science Resource Center to help facilitate connections and provide resources. Additional recommendations include promoting CS as an effective tool, developing an approach to allow for and secure funding for CS studies and evaluating the contributions of CS in the Puget Sound.

Kate is currently working on developing a clearinghouse of projects and would like to facilitate more workshops and small working groups on specific projects.

Comments from Skagit MRC members included the need for a feedback loop between scientists and the CS volunteers who are collecting the data. Volunteers need to understand the big picture and appreciate receiving study results. In addition, there is a need for “bridge” scientists who can communicate effectively with citizens. For more information, contact Kate at kalittle@u.washington.edu or 206-616-0151.

Macro-Invertebrate Game Demonstration, presented by Lori Kyle

Each year, there is a 6th grade tour at the Pomona Grange. It is a two-day event with stations manned by different organizations. This year it will be held on May 11 & 12 from 10 to 3. The Skagit Conservation District sponsors a water quality station with an interactive game. Students have fun learning with the rattail maggot and sewer Susie. This year the Skagit MRC has been invited to be a co-sponsor. Volunteers are needed. Helpers can be there one or two days and for a couple of hours to the full day. Please contact Lori.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

The County will help remove the rocks from the groin and recycle or reuse them. The MRC will pay for equipment rental and the County will donate staff time. (Thank you, Betsy). Joan Drinkwin submitted a proposal to the USFS for matching funds for the East March’s Point boat launch project. It was turned down because the whole groin was not being removed and there was not sufficient space for backshore restoration.

Administrative Report

- It will be necessary to do an amendment for the MRC booth children’s activities supplies.
- The NWS meeting will be April 23rd. Several Skagit MRC projects will be presented.
- The COMPASS workshop will be held May 12th. Respond to Sasha or Connie if you want to register.

NWSC Report:

Ivar provided a report from the last NWSC meeting with the following highlights:

- The Benchmark Account was discussed, as additional funds are now available. It was suggested that when individual MRC’s present projects at the April NWS meeting, 20 minutes is spent on current projects and the next 20 minutes on Benchmark ideas. Budget of over \$50K are preferred. Kurt suggested creating a “short list” of project ideas for when additional funds became available. Erica will send out a list of possible projects from the list for Fidalgo and Padilla Bays.
- Retreat highlights. There was a discussion of increasing communication among the MRC’s, getting more young people involved and increasing public awareness.
- The derelict gear project is employing a new technology for finding nets called side-scanning radar. With the radar, the teams are finding a lot more nets than before. Some nets are too deep to remove with divers.
- Jenna Norman of WADFW gave an update on the Outer Coast MRCs.
- Connie brought copies of the NWS annual report.

Project Status & Discussion:

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** no report

- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** In the works. Still unsure if City will do the work, or if the MRC will contract it separately.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Ongoing. There will be another beach seining later this month and a few volunteers will be needed. The new seining site is a sandy area at Ship Harbor. More volunteers will be needed when the project is more established. Sediment sampling and other studies will take place this summer.
- **LID Brochures:** no report
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** In process. Scheduled for September 18th. The facility is reserved and the banner paid for.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** The initial trip(s) will be held the first week of June. Exact dates are not available yet.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** Beach Watcher training has started. The new “modular” training format allows trainees to take one month of training in the spring and the second month in the fall. There are 17 students in the young beach watcher program. It is a 12 hr. course with two field trips. Students are choosing projects for their volunteer hours.
- **Native Oyster Project:** Low tides this month will allow for the first surveys this year. Most of the work will take place in June and/or July.
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** Surveys complete. In process of writing up the report. Will be completed by June.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Preparing for the survey season. This year there is only partial funding available. Submitted an article to Paddling magazine, a free publication in B.C. There will be spartina surveys north of the border this year, an important step due to the high likelihood of reinfestations from the Strait of Georgia.
- **Smart Sponge:** Wrapping up the work on storm drains in Anacortes. One of Paul’s students is using bioassays in the lab to test a smart sponge’s effectiveness in removing toxicity from the water. The Bayview project may need to be done without a partnership with the Padilla Bay Reserve due to the unit’s site change. The site will be moved one block uphill, 2½ blocks from the shoreline, due to tidal influences at the lower site. The MRC may need to work with the County. Connections with the health department need to be reestablished concerning water samples.

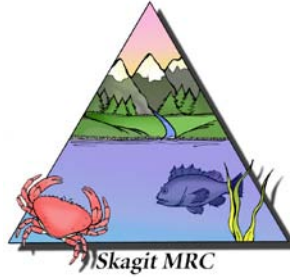
Announcements and Miscellaneous:

- Rachel handed out a project proposal. The proposal includes a Spartina survey program and European Green Crab volunteer monitoring. The spartina program would include supporting the B.C. Spartina working group and web page mapping. PPS is interested in submitting the project idea for the NWS Benchmark Account funds if it receives Skagit MRC approval.
- Christine gave an update on the Samish bank stabilization project. Bigger trees have been planted. She is hoping to have the project finished up by the end of April. In addition, Jennifer Weeks has written a grant for knotweed removal along the Samish.
- There are informative tours of the former Scott Paper Mill site at 4pm on the 2nd Monday of every month. Meet at Dakota Creek on Commercial and 4th. The two new breakwaters are in place.
- Car Wash Kits. The SCD is supporting the development of city ordinances that will make it a requirement to use the kits for fund-raising car washes. Other counties developing their own programs will use the Skagit MRC / SCD video.

The Soroptomists are considering supporting the Car Wash Kit program. The organization may donate \$25 to each group that uses the kits and keeps track of how many cars were washed.

- Betsy attended the PSP meeting on local integration. No decisions were made; however, based on the discussion, the final outcome may be a mix of projects implemented on different scales: local, basin wide and Puget Sound wide. The MRC's were well represented. Betsy will send out an email with feedback from attendees and from PSP.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be held on May 13th.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the May 13, 2010 meeting held at the Padilla Bay Reserve

Members Attending: Ivar Dolph, Tracy Alker, Jim Ramaglia, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara, Neil Borman, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Paul Dinnel, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Rebecca Spurling, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Lori Kyle

Others Attending: Chris Betchley, WSU; Rachel Benbrook, PSP; Kara Bloch, Padilla Bay; Elizabeth Kilanowski, Whatcom Citizen; Bert Rubash, Whatcom MRC; Denise Crowe, Shannon Point Marine Center

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:05 am.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: none

Puget Sound Dissolved Oxygen Study: presentation by Andrew Kolosseus, Washington State Department of Ecology- Water Quality Program

The Department of Ecology is working collaboratively with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and advisory groups to collect water quality data and develop a computerized model to evaluate the impacts of current and potential future nutrient loads on dissolved oxygen levels in Puget Sound and assess alternative management scenarios. The Puget Sound model will help answer the following questions:

Are human sources of nutrients in and around Puget Sound significantly impacting water quality?

How much do we need to reduce human sources of nutrients to protect water quality in Puget Sound?

This model will also help determine where additional study or action is necessary. The model will be available for others to use and incorporate their own data. The consulting

group, Battelle, is helping with the modeling and TetraTech will audit the model to make sure it is working right. In addition, Ecology formed an advisory committee who meets periodically to review the progress of the project. MRC members are welcome to join the advisory committee.

The Puget Sound dissolved oxygen model originally focused on south Puget Sound and Hood Canal where there were more severe low dissolved oxygen problems. The EPA recently provided additional funding to look at other areas of low dissolved oxygen levels in Puget Sound including the waters of Skagit County. This work is part of the mandate under the federal Clean Water Act to manage pollution to meet Washington State water quality standards.

Nitrogen is the primary nutrient responsible for causing low dissolved oxygen levels in Puget Sound. Nitrogen acts as a fertilizer causing excess algae growth. As algae die and decay, dissolved oxygen is depleted from the water resulting in the loss of fish and other marine life. Nitrogen enters Puget Sound from many different human and natural sources including: animal waste, agricultural fertilizers, discharge from waste water treatment plants, leaking septic systems, and atmospheric deposition. Nitrogen moves around and may cause low dissolved oxygen levels many miles away, while some nitrogen is lost in sediment, atmosphere, etc.

An ambient monitoring program for dissolved oxygen in Puget Sound has been in place for a few decades now. Water quality data collection for the Puget Sound model is 95% complete. Water samples are taken monthly from various depths (30 cells) throughout Puget Sound. Violations of low dissolved oxygen levels typically occur at the bottom of the water column. Low levels of dissolved oxygen are also typically found in inlets with poor circulation. GPS coordinates are used for taking water quality samples from the same locations. However, foul weather will cause some drifting. River monitoring occurs near the mouth and includes all upstream point, non point, and natural sources of nitrogen. In general, the larger the river the greater the nitrogen load. The nitrogen loads in rivers tend to be higher during the wetter winter months. But what happens to the nitrogen loads during the winter months? Does the nitrogen get flushed out during rain events or does it stick around until the warmer summer months? Nitrogen loading during the summer months is of greater concern because the warmer weather typically increases algae blooms and lowers levels of dissolved oxygen. The water discharged into Puget Sound from waste water treatment plants is of concern because most waste water treatment plants are not designed to treat nitrogen. Some even convert ammonia to nitrates. Concentrations of nitrogen from waste water treatment plants stay consistent year around.

The draft Puget Sound Dissolved Oxygen Model report can be found on Ecology's website: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/Puget_Sound/DOModel.html
The final report will be complete December 2010.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

- Permits are currently waiting for approval for this year's projects. We need to come up with a list of new projects and work plan for 2011. A subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 24th at 10:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at City Hall.

NWSC Report:

Charlie provided a report from the last NWSC meeting with the following highlights:

- Individual MRC's presented projects at the April NWS meeting. Erica gave a great presentation on the O Ave Restoration and LID project for Skagit MRC.

- The Benchmark Account was discussed and a number of potential regional projects were identified by the MRC's. Proposals are due June 10th.

Benchmark Account Discussion

- MRC members discussed several regional project ideas. Rachel Benbrook with People for Puget Sound proposed a regional Spartina survey & removal project. There was some concern about approaching the other MRCs with this proposal. Rachel agreed that she would contact the other MRCs to find out what their interest might be. If there is enough interest from the other MRCs, we will move forward and submit the Spartina proposal for the Benchmark Account.

Administrative Report

- The project budget update was emailed to MRC members. We still have a little over 80k left in our budget for the first year of our grant cycle which ends June 30, 2010. Please submit your invoices as soon as possible.
- Project leads, please let Tracy know if the money budgeted for your project for year 1 will be spent by June 30th or if you will not be able to complete some of the grant deliverables or requirements. If the project scope or budget changes we will need to amend the grant.
- A big thank you goes out to the following MRC members: Erica for giving an excellent presentation on the "O Ave Restoration & LID project at the NWSC meeting in April; Charlie for helping with the MRC display at the Swinomish Earth Day Celebration; and Betsy for hosting the MRC display at Mt. Vernon HS Science Night. Thank you all for volunteering your time to help the Skagit MRC!
- We will have a booth for our MRC display at the Anacortes Waterfront Festival May 15-16th Next to the County's Zero Waste Event program trailer. Tracy will set up the display Saturday morning but will need another volunteer for Saturday afternoon. Ivar volunteered to help with the display Saturday. Connie and Erica will help with the display Sunday. Thank you volunteers!
- The La Conner Schools Science Summit will be held May 26th at the Middle School. They are currently seeking local scientists or college students who can talk to middle school students about their research and science of their jobs (25 minutes). Dr. Jude Apple with Shannon Point Marine Center plans to attend the summit and provide a presentation.

Project Status & Discussion:

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** Ivar and Jim plan to coordinate efforts in developing MRC Brochures. Money for printing the brochures will not be available until July 1, 2010.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** no report.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** no report.
- **LID Brochures:** no report
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Planning is underway. FBD is scheduled for September 18th and will be held at the Fidalgo Bay RV Park. The facility is reserved and the banner paid for.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** no report.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** The Beach Watcher coordinator position for Skagit County closed last Sunday. 12 volunteers completed the spring training for Beach Watchers. The second half of the training will occur in the fall. Recruitment for fall training will begin in August. 9 Young Beach

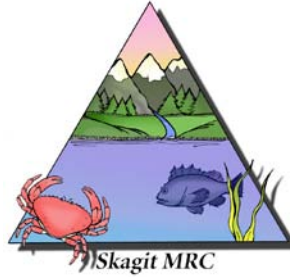
Stewards completed the winter training program and 17 completed the spring program. The training program is a 12 hr. course with two field trips. Students are now selecting projects for their volunteer hours. One student has already completed 12 hours of volunteer work.

- **March's Point Baseline Survey:** Christine Betchley is planning to meet with Aundrea McBride to discuss the protocol for monitoring the March's Point groin removal project site.
- **Native Oyster Project:** No report.
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** Work is complete. The draft report will be distributed to MRC members for review. CGS will present the report at the June MRC meeting.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Kayakers were recruited for the surveys from the Hole in the Wall Kayak club. The first training is scheduled for the first week of June. Trained volunteers will survey Fidalgo Bay, Samish Bay, and the west side of Cypress Island.
- **Smart Sponge:** no report

Announcements and Miscellaneous:

- Erica attended the Communications (COMPASS) Workshop sponsored by the NWSC. Erica said this was an excellent workshop and well worth while. In one of the exercises Erica used Fidalgo Bay Day as a model to figure out how to connect to a broader audience across the County. Erica plans to write a brief report on the workshop and distribute it to MRC members.
- As part of the Clean Samish Initiative, the Flying for Fish Habitat Program is providing four free educational flights over the Samish watershed at the end of the month. Contact Kurt Buchanan or SCEA for more details.
- Kurt Buchanan distributed a water quality update map on the Samish. The latest sampling data shows high levels of fecal coliform throughout the lower Samish watershed. To date we have had no public response. We will need to raise more public interest and response in order to get it cleaned up.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be held on June 10th at the Mount Vernon Senior Center.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the June 10, 2010 meeting held at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center

Members Attending: Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Ivar Dolph, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Erica Pickett, Lori Kyle, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Connie Thoman,

Others Attending: Chris Betchley, WSU; Rachel Benbrook, PSP; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR; Andrea MacLennan, Coastal Geologic Services

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:05 am.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: none

Deception Pass to Skagit River Delta Geomorphic Assessment and Restoration Prioritization, presented by Andrea MacLennan, Coastal Geologic Services (CGS)

The North Skagit Bay drift cell study mapped coastal drift sediment sources (drift cells), determining transport zones, accretion shoreforms (deposition beaches), modified segments, recent erosion, pocket beaches and no appreciable drift (NAD) areas. A second objective was to determine the historic conditions of the shoreline. The same methods were applied as the previous studies at March Point and North Fidalgo. CGS refined existing data sets, making some corrections and adding one new drift cell. There are nine drift cells and six NAD areas.

Results detailed information about drift cell direction, type of shorelines, modifications and historic and current sediment sources. Within the drift cells, 30% is modified. The elevation of shore modifications is important, with 86% of the armoring impacting all or part of forage fish spawning habitat. Using historic sediment source data, the total sediment source loss was found to be 26%, especially notable at heavily armored shorelines. Recommendations by CGS include: pairing study results with documented forage fish spawning data, landowner outreach and education about

bulkhead removal or modification, considering augmenting sediment supply in highly impacted areas, and conserving remaining sediment sources.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

A meeting was held May 24. Subcommittee members are investigating the opportunities to support a project at the Custom Plywood site, currently managed by the DNR. Other project proposals are needed. The next meeting will be held in late July.

NWSC Report

Ivar strongly encouraged MRC members to read the meeting highlights that are compiled by the NWSC and forwarded by Tracy. The morning meeting focused on the NWS Foundation, what it does and why it is important. Rich Childers of WDFW presented the complexities of crab fishery management in Washington. Jeff June of Natural Resource Consultants reported on a derelict crab pot survey.

Administrative Report

The grant cycle ends on June 30. Please submit project reports and volunteer hours. On Thursday, August 12 at 7pm there will be a screening of the movie *Beneath the Salish Sea*. More information will follow later.

NWS Benchmark Account

Charlie will be the reviewer from the Skagit MRC for the benchmark account. Rachel passed around a budget for the Salish Sea spartina survey proposal. Members made a few suggestions to refine the budget layout and proposal. A recommendation was made for PPS to submit the proposal to the Benchmark fund.

Project Status & Discussion:

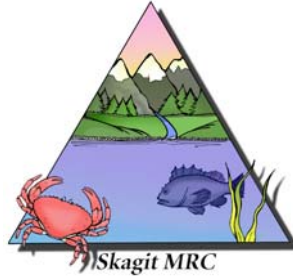
- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** no report
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Construction is starting on the first phase of the Depot reconstruction. It is still unclear if the MRC will sign funds over to the Parks Department for construction or contract it directly.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Have been active doing beach seining. Will do sediment coring this summer.
- **LID Brochures:** no new report
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Coming along. Have been in contact with people who have traditionally displayed. Shannon Point will attend again. A beach seining should be possible.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** Had two cruises on the research vessel this week. Attendees looked at research methods, saw fish farms on Cypress and had a discussion about feeder bluffs. There will be two more cruises in the fall or following spring.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** There will be a training session on July 11 at the Anacortes Library for the Beach Watchers who will do restoration monitoring at March Point. 23 Young Beach Stewards will receive certificates for completing 14 volunteer hours each. It was an enjoyable program. There are 12 new Beach Watchers. Currently compiling a new list of shoreline residents. Will schedule the shoreline landowner workshop after the list is complete. Escape cords will be handed out at boat ramps on opening day. They will also be made available at stores.
- **Native Oyster Project:** Will take place in July.

- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** Complete.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** The first paddles are scheduled for June 26. Two paddler training sessions are also scheduled. Wave Length magazine has a featured article of the project.
- **Smart Sponge:** Finished monitoring storm drain units in Anacortes. Will write up results in the next few months and attach the study done by a student on the reduction in water toxicity.

Announcements and Miscellaneous:

- Erica announced that there will be a new arched or cement culvert placed by the City of Anacortes on March Point Road east, where there is a wetland. The culvert had been noted by the MRC in the past as a recommended project.
- Polly announced that the annual kid's fishing day at Heart Lake was a success with 173 registered kids. The event began in 1993.
- Charlie announced that the purchase of Kiket Island should be complete within a few days. It will be co- owned and managed between the Swinomish Tribe and the Washington State Parks Department.
- Per Charlie, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and the Lieutenant Governor will have a naming ceremony for the Salish Sea on July 15th in Victoria.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be held on July 8 at Padilla Bay.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the July 8, 2010 meeting held at the Padilla Bay Research Reserve Center

Members Attending: Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Kurt Buchanan, Connie Thoman

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Ivar Dolph, Mike Sato, Lori Kyle, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Erica Pickett, Kari Odden

Others Attending: Rachel Benbrook, PSP; Ginger Phalen, USFWS; Paul Pratt, WWU SPMC; Kara Bloch, Padilla Bay; Joan Drinkwin, NWSF; Suzanne Shull PBNERR; Caroline Gibson, NWSC; Peter Haase, Local Citizen

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:05 am.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: Paul Dinnel introduced Paul Pratt, a graduate student from WWU who is currently conducting Pinto Abalone research with the Shannon Point Marine Center.

Fish & Wildlife Service Restoration and Conservation Programs, presented by Ginger Phalen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service offers a variety of restoration and recovery programs to help private citizens, Tribes, State and Federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations restore and protect fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. Ginger handed out fact sheets that described the purpose, eligibility requirements, project types, locations, financial information, and contacts for all of the different programs. The different restoration and recovery programs that are managed out of the Washington State Fish and Wildlife office include: Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Puget Sound Coastal Program, Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program, National Fish Passage Program, Western Native Trout Initiative, Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act, Tribal Wildlife Grant Program, Recovery Program, Conservation Grants to States (Traditional Section 6), National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants, Habitat

Conservation Planning Assistance, Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition, and Recovery Land Acquisition. A notice of funding availability for each program is sent to a broad e-mail list and is also posted on the website. For more information about each of these programs, visit the website: <http://www.fws.gov/wafwo/landowners.html#FWP>. Joan pointed out that the Foundation is also available to help MRCs get grant funding through these programs.

The Puget Sound Coastal Program and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program should be of particular interest to the Skagit MRC. Funding, project planning, and technical assistance is offered through these programs. Most of these projects are small because they don't have a lot of money to spend on the ground. Funding is primarily to be used for habitat restoration work which limits the amount available for research, assessments, education and outreach. The projects will be closely monitored and held accountable for the number of on the ground habitat restoration work being produced.

Ginger Phalen and Rich Carlson are the USFWS contacts for the Puget Sound Coastal Program. They can provide technical assistance in planning, project design, environmental compliance and implementation. All government, non-government, and Tribal entities are eligible. Funded projects typically include coastal habitat restoration and protection; assessing threats and status of coastal resources and; conducting outreach and education activities to help promote the stewardship of Washington's coastal resources. The Coastal Program partners with several other programs including the Northwest Straits Foundation Derelict Fishing Gear Removal program, the Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant program, Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP), and the Puget Sound Partnership. Last year several local projects received funding through this program including the Wiley Slough restoration project on Fir Island, the derelict gear removal project, and the NWSC/MRC training conference. USFWS is currently working with the Island County MRC in Cornet Bay to remove a bulkhead and restore the habitat. The maximum funding for coast projects is \$52K, but projects are typically awarded closer to \$25K. The program requires a 50% or greater cost share in federal or nonfederal match. The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant has approximately \$15 million available for land acquisition and restoration projects. Funding for an individual project cannot exceed \$1 million. There is a 25% cost share requirement for WA State. Projects are selected based on their national importance. Last year Washington State was very competitive in this program and was awarded 43% of the funding that was available nationwide. The funding was primarily used for land acquisition including the purchase of Kiket Island. Projects aren't just restricted to coastal wetland areas. They can also reach further into the watershed of coastal counties. In order to be eligible for this grant, the project must be state agency sponsored. Projects are selected based on criteria outlined in the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. Higher scores are given to projects that benefit threatened and endangered species, involve multiple partnerships, and support other ongoing projects. The Notice of Funding Availability for this grant is posted one year in advance. If MRC members have ideas for coastal conservation projects, please contact Ginger.

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is geared toward restoration projects on private and tribal land or property owned by other conservation partners (not on State or Federal land). The funding availability notice is released in early summer. Projects will score higher if they have an equal match of cost share or in-kind services. Projects funded through this program focus on restoring habitat for migratory birds, anadromous fish, and declining plant and animal species. Project examples include invasive species removal and planting native species, livestock fencing and off-stream watering facility installation, fish passage restoration, and riparian and wetland restoration. The

restoration project site must be retained for at least 10 years. In Skagit County, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program provided funding and technical assistance to the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group for a habitat restoration project at Steelhead Park.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

We now have all of the permits in place for the groin removal project at East March's Point: Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance, Shoreline Exemption, and HPA. Chris Kowitz with the County will move the rock from the groins and is only charging for the rental equipment not labor. The groin removal work will begin after the July 15th fish window. The Coastal Protection Funds will be used to leverage this project, which means we will have money left over. The diver survey work in Fidalgo Bay at the trestle was completed last month. A lot of fencing material was found during the surveys including small pieces of boards, wire etc. However, there were too many small pieces of material to remove. Joan is currently working with NRSC to finalize the contract agreement for the beach nourishment project at west March's Point. The beach nourishment will occur after the construction work has been completed. The 2011 Work Plan is due January. The MRC should finalize the plan by December. Please let the MRC Subcommittee know if you have any project ideas or proposals. Joan would like to have a "heads-up" on projects so that she could start trying to leverage funding.

NWSC Report

Charlie provided highlights from the June 25th NWSC meeting. The Commission approved supporting three projects: Maynard Beach restoration, the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area, and the Salish Sea *Spartina* survey. However, the budget for the *Spartina* survey was reduced to \$30,000.

There was a discussion about an upcoming bill on coastal and marine spatial planning. Better communication will be required among management agencies and a plan must be developed to be prepared for future new uses of the marine environment. There is more pressure for better planning with global warming and sea level rise. Coastal & marine habitat data will be collected to identify and map key habitats and uses and identify potential conflicts with future proposed uses.

Friends of the San Juans inventoried and mapped all shoreline modifications in San Juan County in order to identify and prioritize nearshore restoration projects and inform policy makers. They also did a study to determine whether existing shoreline protections are preventing deterioration of shoreline habitat and whether or not bulkheads categorically impact beach substrate and elevations over time. They learned that regulators are not using forage fish data available to them and there is no legal authority or political will to protect marine habitat.

Jamey Selleck's sand lance research has been completed. Jamey was hired by the NWSC to collect and analyze existing sand lance data (between 1970 and 2009). Maps were created to show the presence/absence and abundance of sand lance for each of the 12 Counties in the Puget Sound region. There are 15,000 records of sand lance around Puget Sound. The largest percentage of recorded sand lance population is located in Skagit County. Jamey is currently writing a paper for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. Polly suggested asking Jamey to give his presentation on sand lance at the next Skagit MRC meeting in August. Jamey's position with the NWSC will expire at the end of July.

Administrative Report

Several of our projects were delayed during year one of the grant cycle so we were under budget by \$64,000. This money will roll over to year two of the grant cycle for a

total of \$184,000. All of our projects and deliverables must be completed by June 30, 2011, when this grant expires.

On Thursday, August 12 at 7pm there will be a screening of the film *Beneath the Salish Sea*. The Skagit MRC and NWSC will be co-sponsoring this event. Erica volunteered to give a brief introduction about the Skagit MRC prior to the film. The film is scheduled the same day as our regularly monthly MRC meeting. MRC members agreed to have the meeting at Padilla Bay instead of Mount Vernon. The meeting will be a potluck from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Tracy will e-mail a sign-up sheet for the potluck prior to the meeting.

NWS Benchmark Account

Skagit MRC proposal for *Spartina* surveys was approved for funding by the NWSC at a reduced budget of \$30k. Rachel handed out the revised budget for the Salish Sea *Spartina* survey proposal. The MRC decided to move forward with the project even though the budget was reduced. Tracy will work with Sasha to amend the grant and contract.

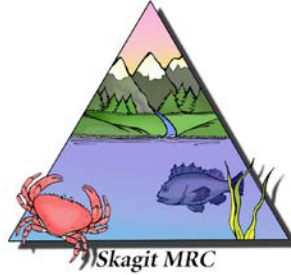
Project Status & Discussion:

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** no report
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Construction is starting on the first phase of the Depot reconstruction. It is still unclear if the MRC will sign funds over to the Parks Department for construction or contract it directly.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Have been actively conducting monthly beach seining. Will continue seining through December to get one year's worth of data. Taking sediment cores from Cannery pond this summer.
- **LID Brochures:** no report
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Coming along. Most of the same exhibitors who participated in the past will be back again this year. Michele Pope will be helping Erica with publicity this year. Beach seining will take place.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** Had two cruises on the research vessel in May. Attendees looked at research methods, saw fish farms on Cypress and had a discussion about feeder bluffs. There will be two more cruises in the fall or following spring.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** Brian Staski has been hired as the new Beach Watcher coordinator. Brian assumed his new position on Tuesday, and plans to be out with the Beach Watchers surveying East March's Point this weekend.
- **Native Oyster Project:** Several volunteers are in place to help with monitoring over the next few days in July.
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** Complete.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** 11 miles of surveying have been completed in Skagit County so far this year. The first paddles took place June 26 from O Ave to the Tommy Thompson Trail. They will be surveying Edison Slough this afternoon.
- **Smart Sponge:** Finished monitoring storm drain units. Currently gathering and analyzing the data. Will write up results and attach the study done by a student on the effectiveness of the smart sponge in reducing bacteria and chemicals in stormwater runoff. The Bay View site for the large smart sponge unit has moved uphill. This project may need to be downsized. Paul will try to work out the details after the oyster sampling is done.

Announcements and Miscellaneous:

- Joan announced that the Foundation hired a new staff person, Tracie Johannessen. Tracie's position is temporary through December. She will be helping with specific projects including replicating Island County MRC's book "Getting to the Waters Edge." The book will include the entire Northwest Straits region so Tracie is seeking volunteers to collect on-ground information for the book. Please contact Tracie or the Foundation if you are interested in participating.
- Connie announced that yesterday the 50 year old creosote breakwater was removed. Things are really moving quickly on the site. The park at the Seafarer's Memorial Building will be finished next summer. The completion date for the building is unknown at this point. There has been discussion about adding a 2nd floor.
- Charlie announced that the Canoe landing is tomorrow at the Swinomish. Some canoes will be landing today at Bay View. July 15th is the Salish Sea naming ceremony.
- Paul announced that Phase I of the aquarium at the Padilla Bay Reserve Center has just been completed. The Padilla Bay Foundation will help generate funds for scholarships. There is an annual meeting in November. Different events will be held throughout the year. They are always looking for new members and donations. Contact Paul if you would like to become a member or if you would like more information.
- Polly announced that the Fidalgo Puget Sound Anglers Scholarship was awarded to three people (Hersey, Hernandez, and Finney). The 3rd annual fishing derby held in March generated approximately \$25,000 for this year's scholarship. Almost \$100k in scholarships has been awarded from one chapter!

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be a Potluck held at 4:00 p.m. on August 12th at Padilla Bay. Following the meeting will be a showing of the film "Beneath the Salish Sea" at 7:00 p.m.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the August 12, 2010 meeting held at the Padilla Bay Research Reserve Center

Members Attending: Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Polly Fischer, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Erica Pickett, Ivar Dolph

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Mike Sato, Lori Kyle, Kari Odden, Kurt Buchanan, Connie Thoman, Neil Borman

Others Attending: Kara Bloch Cardinal, Padilla Bay; Kathy Van Alstyne, Shannon Pt. Marine Center; Lloyd Hoodleston, Citizen; Doug Stark, Whatcom MRC; Denise Crowe, Shannon Pt. Marine Center; Brian Stafki, WSU Beach Watchers; Brandon Jenson, Citizen; James Selleck, NWSC

Call to Order and Introductions: Christine Woodward called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: None

Pacific Sand Lance Research, *presented by Jamey Selleck, NWSC*

The Pacific sand lance is an important food source to many marine mammals, birds, and fish in the Puget Sound region. However, very little information is known about Pacific sand lance in comparison to other forage fish. The NWSC worked with the MRCs and WDFW to develop a series of forage fish habitat suitability maps for potential spawning areas. The NWSC hosted a Pacific sand lance workshop in 2009 which brought together local experts to get an idea of what we already know about Pacific sand lance so far. It was recognized that the only sampling data we have on sand lance was from incidental catch from salmonid studies. The two recommended actions that came from the workshop included: 1. compile and review all known existing data to clarify what we already know; and 2. support sub-tidal research that generates life history information.

Jamey was hired by the NWSC to collect 30-40 years of existing data to provide a regional snapshot of Pacific sand lance throughout Puget Sound region. This collection of descriptive data is not meant to be used as a statistical scientific study, but is meant to act as a guide for future studies using what we already know about sand lance. This study was designed to help answer a series of questions including: when do we see sand lance? Where do we see sand lance? What size of sand lance do we see? Data was collected from several sources including experts from federal, state, and county governments, tribal entities, non-profit organizations, consulting businesses, MRCs, and the NWSC. The data was merged into one large data set so the project can still continue to grow. Two maps were created for each of the 12 Counties in the Puget Sound Region: 1. Presence and absence; and 2. Size of catch. These maps will be available online by the end of the month.

There are 15,000 individual records (net samples) of sand lance throughout Puget Sound that were collected from 1,400 unique sites. The largest percentage of recorded sand lance data came from Skagit County (74%). The majority of data collected in Skagit County came from SRSC and NOAA's historical work and was based on salmonid studies in the Skagit River. Each county had some kind of sampling data except for Hood Canal. There are data gaps in several areas, but this is partly because some of that data is currently under review for publication so they were unable to share that information for this study. In the San Juans several net samples were completely absent of Pacific sand lance. However, the largest catches ever recorded in the 40 years of data collection occurred at the San Juan region. At Jones Cove they caught an estimated ~50,000 fish in one net! The next largest catch at Point George was ~16,000 fish. The largest catches occurred between the months of May through August with the highest peaks occurring in July. Most of the largest catches were collected right where it begins to drop off to deeper water. Underwater video cameras and sediment grabs were used to study sand lance in deeper water at ~250 feet. Very little information has been published about the size class distribution of Pacific sand lance for this region. Only 1% of all captured sand lance were measured. Fork length data was completely absent from three of the counties. Observations indicate that very few adult fish were caught in the nearshore region. We are primarily only seeing the first of the year Pacific sand lance (i.e. pelagic juvenile and sub-adults) in the spring and summer months in the Puget Sound region.

Jamey prepared a paper for publication that is currently being reviewed by several forage fish experts including: Eric Beamer, Kurt Fresh, and Dan Pentilla. After the paper has been reviewed, it will be made available on the NWSC website. In addition, high resolution sand lance maps in a pdf format along with a growing bibliography will be available on the website. The intent is to provide the best available science to the MRCs and other local groups. Although there are still a lot of questions left unanswered and there is a recognized need to study Pacific sand lance as part of the PSP Action Agenda, there is very little funding directed towards forage fish.

Macroalgae Research, presented by Kathy Van Alstna, Shannon Point Marine Center

There are three major groups of macroalgae (commonly referred to as seaweed) in the Pacific Northwest region including: red algae (~373 species), green algae (~117 species), and brown algae (~193 species). Many types of seaweeds have defense mechanisms such as producing hard calcification or chemical compounds that make them difficult to eat, taste bad or cause other physiological problem to the organisms that might eat them. Chemical compounds can be released by the seaweeds when they become stressed or die. For example, when dark sea lettuce becomes stressed it produces dopamine, which is a toxin. Dopamine makes seaweed taste really bitter.

Dopamine is also released into the water as the seaweed dies and decomposes. When dopamine is released into the water it can reduce crab larval survival and reduce the growth rate and survival of other seaweeds and embryos of seaweeds.

Kathy's research is primarily focused on "green tides," an excessive growth of ulvoid seaweed. The research is multidisciplinary and incorporates both lab and field work. The field work involves monitoring the growth of seaweeds as well as taking a variety of chemical and physical measurements at a half dozen different sites off Fidalgo, Whidbey, and Blakely Islands. The lab work involves studying the biology and ecology of green macroalgae, and conducting experiments with light, nutrients and herbivores to investigate the impacts on green tide blooms. Green tides have been occurring more frequently throughout Puget Sound. There appears to be a lot of year to year and site to site variation in green tide algal blooms. In general, these blooms seem to be worse down south. It is currently unknown why blooms occur where they do. Green tides are problematic because they out-compete other marine plants, reduce oxygen and pH, reduce available nutrients, and produce noxious odors when they accumulate on beaches. The compounds associated with the noxious and toxic odors include dimethyl sulfide and hydrogen sulfide which is produced by bacteria during the decaying process. Dimethyl sulfide is produced by the algae and hydrogen sulfide is actually produced by the bacteria that decompose the algae. Hydrogen sulfide is extremely toxic. Dimethyl sulfide smells really bad but it is not as toxic as hydrogen sulfide. Little is known regarding the extent of environmental effects caused by compounds. With this research, Kathy hopes to identify the harmful natural products produced by green tide seaweeds and quantify the effects of these compounds on organisms that live in areas where green tides occur.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

A big Thank You goes out to Chris Kowitz from the County for removing the groins at the east March's Point boat ramp. The County only charged for the excavator, not labor. It took several dump truck loads to haul away all of the rock. Four enormous concrete blocks were discovered buried underneath the rock. The County removed the concrete even though they have no real use for them. A big Thank You also goes out to Joan for obtaining all of the appropriate permits and for over seeing the project, to Tom Slocum for the survey and professional drawings, and to Erica for doing all of the leg work to get this project done! The MRC will draft thank you letters to those who helped with the March's Point groin removal project. The diver survey work in Fidalgo Bay at the trestle was completed in June. A lot of fencing material was found during the surveys including small pieces of boards, wire etc. The fencing material has all been removed. Joan is currently working with SRSC to finalize the contract agreement for the beach nourishment project at west March's Point. The beach nourishment will occur after the construction work has been completed. The subcommittee met July 27th. The Subcommittee agreed to send out a Request for Proposals for 2011 projects. The RFP will go out by September 1. The 2011 Work Plan is due January. The Subcommittee will meet after the regular MRC meeting on September 9th to discuss the work plan. The MRC should finalize the plan by December. Please let the MRC Subcommittee know if you have any project ideas or proposals.

NWSC Report

Ivar provided highlights from the July 30 NWSC meeting. Ivar recommended everyone read the NWSC meeting summary distributed by Connie. Jon Neel with the Department of Ecology gave an excellent presentation on the Washington State Oil Spill Program and compared what is going on in the Gulf with what could happen here in our

waters. An oil spill in Puget Sound would spread much more quickly and be closer to shore than an oil spill in the Gulf. This is because of the cold, dense waters of Puget Sound, the extreme tidal changes, and the heavier crude oil that is transported here. The good news is that Washington State is better prepared for an oil spill than the Gulf. If an oil spill did occur in Puget Sound, the Department of Ecology and the Coast Guard would be in charge. The source of the oil spill would be from a vessel rather than a continual spill from an oil well since we don't drill in Puget Sound. We have vessels in Fidalgo Bay and well trained teams who are standing by just in case there is a spill. We have a rescue vessel in Neah Bay that is the only one in the Country. A tug-barge from Cherry Point lost its power last week. The tugboat itself carried 100,000 gallons of fuel and on the barge carried 8 million gallons of fuel. These types of fuel barges and container ships travel through Puget Sound on a regular basis which is reason for concern. Unfortunately, funding for Ecology's Spill Prevention Preparedness and Response Program has been cut back over the years and more budget cuts are expected this year. Kathleen Herman reported on the Pot Susan Marine Stewardship Area. There is an ocean acidification workshop coming up October 7th in Port Townsend.

Native Oyster Workshop- Travel Expenditure Request

Paul Dinnel has been invited to return to the West Coast Native Oyster Workshop that will be held September 16-17 in Suquamish Washington. This workshop brings native oyster experts together to talk about their work. Paul will give an update on the Fidalgo Bay native oyster restoration project at the workshop. Paul requested that the funds from the MRC's native oyster project be used towards paying for lodging and travel expenses for this workshop. There is close to \$4,000 remaining in the budget for the native oyster project that we have yet to spend. The money was originally intended to be used for purchasing oyster seed in the spring, but we still haven't gotten approval because of genetics issues. Paul is currently in talks with WDFW about the possibility of transporting some of the adult oysters from the trestle site to other sites in Fidalgo Bay and Padilla Bay instead of using oyster seed. It was the consensus of the MRC to use funds from Task 7: Native Oyster Restoration to pay for Paul's lodging and travel expenses for the workshop.

Project Status & Discussion:

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** no report
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Paul has had several meetings with Gary Robinson with the City of Anacortes. Gary is currently working on Phase II of the Depot reconstruction which will include LID components. The Phase II project design includes a rain garden, pervious paving, and rain barrels as a demonstration project. The rain barrels will be used to collect water which will be used to water the rain garden during the drier times of the year. The construction of Phase II will occur over the next several months. The total cost of the project will be around \$30,000. The MRC will be providing \$17,000 to go towards the LID demonstration project. It is still unclear if the MRC will sign funds over to the Parks Department for construction or contract it directly.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Ongoing. Have been actively conducting monthly beach seining with help from Beach Watcher volunteers. Will continue seining through December to get one year's worth of data. The graduate student is currently working on a plan for collecting sediment cores from Cannery pond. The cores will be collected some time next month to determine whether or not it was ever open to the Guemes Channel. The graduate student is also working with Ivar to

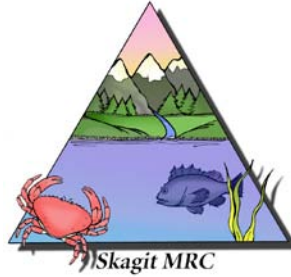
do some bird surveys and has been working on the historical background to determine what the original conditions were.

- **LID Brochures:** no report
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Coming up September 18th. Most of the same exhibitors who participated in the past will be back again this year. There will be a ton of wonderful food, educational exhibits and lots children's activities, so be sure to pass the word along about this wonderful event. Thanks to Taylor Shellfish for supplying 3 gallons of oysters for sampling again this year. Erica's neighbor has agreed to run the skiff for the beach seining activity. She has not been able to get in touch with Dan Pentilla. There is a FBD planning tomorrow at 4 PM at the Majestic Inn.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** Had two cruises on the research vessel in June. Approximately 20 attendees looked at research methods, saw fish farms on Cypress and had a discussion about feeder bluffs. There will be two more training cruises in the fall or following spring.
- **Beach Watchers / Shore Steward Program:** Ivar introduced Brian Staski, the new WSU Beach Watcher coordinator. Brian received his Masters degree in Environmental Education from the North Cascades Institute at WWU. Brian comes to us from the South Sound Estuary Association where he helped develop the interpretive center, provided educational services to the Quimper Peninsula community of Jefferson County, and promoted environmental education programs aboard the historic schooner Adventuress. Brian started his new position as the WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator just last month.
- **Native Oyster Project:** Several volunteers helped with monitoring in July and August. Just finishing up the final sampling last weekend. Beach Watcher volunteers and students helped with sampling at the trestle. Christine's crew brought in oyster shell bags that Paul will pick up tomorrow to finish up. Found a massive settlement of native oyster larvae from last summer in the oyster settlement bags and the main plots. Found as many as 350 juvenile native oysters in the settlement bags at the trestle, and found several along the eastern side of Fidalgo Bay, along the northern side of Crandall Spit, and up as far as the plywood mill site. Did not find any oyster recruitment at Cape Sante or March's Point or around the corner. It appears that most of them stay along the eastern side of the Bay but a few have crossed to the western side as well. Would like to put some more shell out and possibly move some adults up to the Cape Sante area.
- **N. Skagit Drift Cell Analysis:** Complete.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Tracy has been working with Sasha to amend the grant to include the Ecosystem Restoration funds to expand the program to Jefferson and Clallam Counties.
- **Smart Sponge:** Finished monitoring storm drain units in Anacortes. Paul is currently working on the report. The Bay View site for the large smart sponge unit has moved uphill. The County will help build and install the apparatus that will contain the smart sponge. It will be much smaller than originally planned. There will likely be some funding left over. Volunteers will be used to samples from upstream, in the middle, and downstream of the smart sponge unit to analyze the effectiveness for removing bacteria.

Announcements and Miscellaneous:

- Brian Stafki said that the SeaTech 4-H club recently successfully tested one of their ROV units in saltwater. This ROV vessel and GPS could potentially be used to search for and map derelict crab pots. The 4-H club is seeking funding to expand this project.
- Brian Stafki announced that there is a new grant opportunity through NOAA called the Bay Watershed Education and Training Program (B-WET). This program encourages organizations such as WSU Beach Watchers to coordinate education and training efforts with groups like the MRC. The grant application deadline is in about one month.
- Brandon Jensen with Hart Crowser announced that they have been contracted to clean up the old custom plywood mill site in Anacortes. He is interested in coordinating the clean up effort and possible restoration work with the MRC.
- Christine announced that she is now on the Executive Committee for the Clean Samish Initiative. Unfortunately due to this major commitment, she will not be able to attend the monthly MRC meetings for at least one year because the meeting schedule conflicts with our monthly MRC meetings. Christine requested that Todd Woodard take her place at the MRC meetings as her alternate. Jennifer Weeks used to be her alternate but she is no longer there. The consensus of the MRC was to amend the MRC roster to add Todd as the alternate representative for the Samish Tribe.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m. The next meeting will be held September 9, at 9:00 a.m. at Padilla Bay. The Skagit Restoration Initiative Subcommittee meeting will be held following the Skagit MRC meeting.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the Sept 9 meeting held at the Padilla Bay NERR

Members Attending: Ivar Dolph, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Paul Dinnel, Christine Woodward, Kevin Bright, Lori Kyle, Rebecca Spurling

Others Attending: Brian Stafki, WSU Beach Watchers; Rachael Benbrook, PPS; Denise Crowe, Shannon Point Marine Center; Doug Bulthuis, Padilla Bay NERR; Lin Folsom, SCEA & Beach Watchers; Sue Ehler, Beach Watchers

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:06.

Minutes: Approved

Public Comments: None

Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Projects, presented by Doug Bulthuis

The Reserve was established in 1982. It owns 95% of the intertidal tracts in Padilla Bay. It also owns a small farm along the bay. Padilla Bay carries out education programs, stewardship projects and a coastal training program for professionals that work in shoreline management or policy.

Various individuals carry out research, including visiting scientists, NOAA graduate research fellows and locally funded research assistants. Padilla Bay staff also does research and monitoring. Some project examples are the Stream Team, the Padilla Bay demonstration farm and eelgrass distribution studies.

John Rybczyk of WWU has been studying the lowering sediment level of the bay due to compaction and sediment starvation. His research incorporates the problem of sea level rise and coastal wetland sustainability. Paul Dinnel has researched crab distribution in the eelgrass beds. Additional study topics have been scoters, harbor seal ranges, impacts of logs on the bay's plant and animal communities and community distribution within the rocky intertidal zone.

There are four monitoring stations, including two channel sites, one slough site and the last a deepwater site. Monitoring includes water quality data, weather data and nutrient and chlorophyll concentrations. Biological monitoring includes the distribution of plants and algae, barnacles and aerial photos.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

There will be a short meeting today. The request for proposals is out.

Administrative Report

- E-mailed Budget Update. We still have \$173,908 remaining in the budget that must be spent by June 30, 2011. Please get those invoices in!
- Grant amendments in progress include:
 - Spartina Project - Add \$30k from the NWSC Ecosystem Restoration Funds to extend the survey work regionally to Jefferson & Clallam Counties.
 - Oyster Workshop - Included language about the West Coast Native Oyster Workshop as part of the Oyster Restoration Task, in order to cover travel expenses.
 - MRC Display/Children's Activities - Transfer \$200 from Admin to Fidalgo Bay Day to purchase stamps and clay for children's activities. Tracy will order stamps later today.
- NWSC/MRC Conference will be held November 5-6, at the Rosario Resort-Orcas Island. Please save your receipts for the ferry, parking, and hotel for reimbursement. If you use your credit card, we will need a photocopy of the card that clearly shows the name and last four digits or credit card statement. If you pay for anything with a check we will need a copy of the cashed check. If you pay with cash or debit we will only need the invoices/receipts
- EcoNet. Is anybody interested in representing Skagit MRC? Tracy can attend some meetings but will need an alternate. Kari will check on Skagit Land Trust involvement and consider being the alternate.
- Additional funding opportunities. The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) Grant RFP should go out Sept 27th. The NOAA Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education & Training (B-WET) Program deadline is Oct 8. WSU Beach Watchers plans to apply and is seeking partners such as the MRC.
- Tracy asked MRC members about meeting location, whether it should be at the Port or at Padilla Bay. The decision was made to have meetings at Padilla Bay.

NWSC Meeting, reported by Charlie:

- MRC members should register for the NWS conference.
- There was a discussion of oil spills and the question raised about MRC involvement in discussions with refineries about spill response. This prompted a discussion today among Skagit MRC members about spill response with the general feeling that it was difficult for volunteers to get involved because of training and the equipment necessary.
- The NWS has unspent project money, causing some concern.

Project Status & Discussion:

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** Twelve BW trainees will complete their training in October. The classes for Tues/Fri are arranged. MRC members are invited to graduation. The Young Beach Stewards Program will take place again this fall. There is an idea for continuing the program through the formation of a school

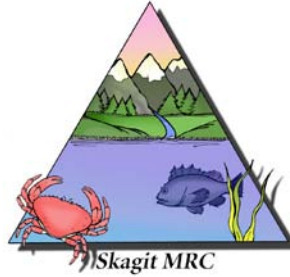
club. Beach Watchers collected two days of pre-restoration data at March's Point. Twelve volunteers carried out the recreational crabber outreach program and contacted 150 people. The program will be continued and improved upon next year.

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** No report.
- **LID Brochures:** No report.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** No report.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** No report.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** No report.
- **Native Oyster Project:** No report.
- **Smart Sponge:** No report.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Erica handed out posters for distribution and a volunteer schedule for MRC members to sign up. The event is ready to go.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** A NPR reporter went out with Rachel. The story will be broadcast a couple of times next Wednesday as part of a series on the Salish Sea. There will be web page coverage as well. Surveying has started.

Announcements:

- One of the Shannon Point Marine Centers boats, the Flora, has been mothballed. An alternative boat will be needed for beach seining.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 am. The next meeting will be held on October 14 at the Senior Center.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the October 14th meeting held at Mt Vernon Senior Center

Members Attending: Erica Pickett, Ivar Dolph, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Connie Thoman, Lori Kyle, Kurt Buchanan

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Jim Ramaglia, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara, Rebecca Spurling, Mike Sato, Christine Woodward

Others Attending: Brian Stafki, WSU/Beach Watcher; Caroline Gibson, NWSC; Denise Crowe, SPMC; Tammy Olson, WDNR; Lisa Kaufman, WDNR; Pete Haase, ReSources; Todd Woodard, Samish DNR; Kara Cardinal, UW School of Marine Affairs; Joan Drinkwin, NWSF; Rachel Benbrook, PPS

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:00

Minutes: Approved. Later, a question was raised about unspent funds from the NWS, as noted in Charlie's September NWSC report. The comment may have instead referred to unspent MRC funds and was struck from the minutes.

Public Comments: None.

Restoration of Native Oysters (*Ostrea lurida*) in Fidalgo Bay, presented by Paul Dinnel

The native oyster restoration has been an all-volunteer Skagit MRC project since 2002. It is the first oyster restoration project in North Puget Sound. It has involved many partners, including the Puget Sound Restoration Fund, Beach Watchers and community volunteers. The restoration goal is the creation of a self-sustaining native oyster bed. This requires oysters, proper habitat, bed structure, sufficiently warm temperature, spawning adults and larval settlement. Restoration sites are located at the trestle, Weaverling Spit and the Crandall Spit lagoon. The Fidalgo Bay oyster restoration project has cost approximately 35K since its inception, with 95% of the cost going toward oyster seed.

Plantings were done in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2006. Shell recruitment bags were placed to jumpstart the beds by providing a proper substrate for settlement. The number of oysters per m² has been increasing, with excellent settlement in 2009. Potential natural habitat has also been surveyed. There is little available and it is primarily near the trestle. The restoration

project started from zero, with no live native oysters or shells. Current recruitment has come from the restoration beds and is establishing in a north-south pattern.

Paul gave this presentation at the West Coast Native Oyster Workshop. A suggestion was made during the workshop to have ten more sites in the North Sound. A few possible locations are Padilla Bay, Cap Sante, Skagit Bay, Samish Bay, Kukatali and Chuckanut Bay. In November, Paul will send some samples to a lab for genetic testing. The recruits from the trestle could be a potential seed source for other restoration projects in the North Sound.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

A meeting was held on September 11. There was a discussion of supporting projects that improve water quality going into streams (and subsequently into FB) along the Tommy Thompson Trail. There is a RFP out, which closes on October 21. The subcommittee will meet and discuss potential projects at the MRC conference.

Administrative Report

- E-mailed Budget Update. We still have \$173,256 remaining in the budget that must be spent by June 30, 2011. Please get those invoices in!
- Spartina contract amendment- Working with PPS to amend contract to add \$30k from the NWSC Ecosystem Restoration Funds, to extend the survey work regionally to Jefferson & Clallam & possibly Whatcom Counties.
- An EConet Meeting will be held on Oct 29. Dave Ward will present the Puget Sound Partnership's Five Year Strategy for Implementation of the Public Awareness, Behavior Change and Social Infrastructure Section of the Action Agenda. A Project Design and Evaluation Workshop for ECO net members hosted (by PSP and provided by NOAA) on Nov 4 & 5 at the WSU Extension office in Everett
- The County and Upper Skagit Tribe are proposing a Samish Island Estuary Restoration Project. It is located on LDS land that they will donate to the County so that it can be public access. CGS recently completed a feasibility study. The County is applying for an ESRP grant for planning and preliminary design. They have asked for a letter of support from the Skagit MRC. Tracy sent around a conceptual design of the project. The Skagit MRC agreed to send a letter of support for the design project.
- Please start thinking about future project ideas/proposals for the next grant cycle starting July 1, 2011. We will need to have a list of proposed projects ready by Jan.

Membership Application for Pete Haase

Pete gave a short description of his background. He works for ReSources and his interests lie primarily in stormwater and other water quality issues. Polly moved to approve his application and Paul Dinnel seconded. His application will be forwarded to the County Commissioners for approval. Welcome, Pete!

NWSC Report:

No report was available from the Skagit MRC representative. Caroline Gibson of the NWS mentioned that the Commission had discussed oil spill response. She also referred meeting attendees to the NWS website for more information.

Project Status & Discussion:

- WSU Stewardship Programs: In part II of the 2010 Beach Watcher training, three trainees did not come back. There are four trainees that come regularly. October 26th is graduation. All Skagit MRC members are invited. There will be two spring workshops

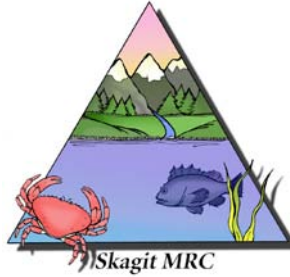
for realtors, focusing on LID and septic. The crabber outreach group is working with BW groups in other counties and hoping to expand the program for next season.

- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** No report
- **LID Brochures:** No report
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Gary Robinson said that the project is on track to begin in the next 2 or 3 months. It will include interpretive signs and porous pavers.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** The project is on track. The student has done preliminary coring. There has been monthly beach seining. (Thank you volunteers!) Of the 35K in funding, 22K has been spent, although WWU has not yet billed. Some additional funds may be necessary.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** There have been two excursions. The next two will likely be in the spring.
- **Smart Sponge:** A draft of the storm drain inserts project monitoring report has been submitted to Tracy. The SWAT unit for Bayview is currently under construction. The County will do the installation. The unit was downsized, so there will be funds left over. The Storm Team may do fecal coliform sample work gratis.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** There will be a debriefing meeting held at the WSU extension office on Nov 1st. Comments have been made about this one being the best FBD yet. The question of future locations was briefly discussed. A suggestion was made to hold the event one time at the Padilla Bay NERR. Seafarer's Park will be available for the event by next September.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Volunteers have been out on the water more with the good weather. Thirty-four miles have been surveyed in Skagit County. 71 m² of spartina has been found, including an area of Hope Island that was previously unknown. Rachel went to BC for training to start a similar program there. She will also have a poster at the Restore America's Estuaries Conference. There was a short discussion about the problem of getting into Alice Bay due to the lack of a launch spot. Two members gave potential contact persons / launch points.

Announcements:

- Christine will be presenting the Samish beach restoration project at the Restore America's Estuaries Conference.
- Polly announced that the Puget Sound Anglers voted to donate \$1,000 to the NWS derelict gear project.
- Kurt mentioned that Skagit County has taken over doing the Samish Bay fecal coliform sampling. The volunteer storm team has moved its efforts to Bayview.
- Pete announced that signs noting what waterways drain to Samish Bay have been placed in Whatcom County, but not yet in Skagit. There will be eighty signs throughout the watershed.
- A 4H Club is doing a saltwater ROV and hoping to install a camera on it. It could be used for marine education and research. The group may be looking for fund support per Brian.
- Betsy commented that there was nothing new to report from Rebecca Ponzio on the local integration team for Puget Sound Partnership.
- Caroline announced that the MRC conference agenda has been finalized. Details are available online today.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am. **The decision was made to change the next meeting from November 11th to November 18th due to Veteran's Day.** It will be held at Padilla Bay.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the November 18 meeting held at the Padilla Bay NERR

Members Attending: Ivar Dolph, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato, Pete Haase

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Jim Ramaglia, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara, Lori Kyle, Rebecca Spurling

Others Attending: Bob Fritzen, WDOE; Todd Woodard, Samish DNR; Wendy Steffensen, ReSources; Denise Crowe, SPMC; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR; Mike See, SCPW; Lori Wight, SCPW; Brian Stafki, WSU Beach Watchers

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:10.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: None.

Public Participation Grant: Fidalgo Bay Custom Plywood Cleanup Site, presented by Wendy Steffensen, ReSources

ReSources has a grant for public outreach and education concerning two Ecology clean-up sites in Anacortes, one of which is Custom Plywood. ReSources received a copy of the pre-public draft of the remedial investigation and feasibility study through the Tribes. Wendy presented information from the study, including historical information, maps of both the site and sample points, and upland and intertidal contaminants found. She questioned samples from study sites that contained dioxins, but didn't fail the bioassays. Paul commented that while certain chemicals may not be toxic to invertebrates, they could potentially be toxic to humans. Public release of the remedial investigation is scheduled for Winter 2011. The public will have only 30 days to comment. MRC members can request updates and additional information by contacting Sandra Caldwell from the DOE, saca461@ecy.wa.gov, or Wendy, waters@re-sources.org. Wendy emphasized that the interim action cleanup of the site is designed to be the final cleanup of the upland portion.

There was a question about who owns the strip of land along a portion of the TT Trail (north side of the eastern part of the study site). Members wondered if it belongs to the City. There was also a question from Todd about whether there were samples taken from the eastern

portion of the site. He commented that people clam there regularly. Erica and other members noted the active surf smelt fishing in the cleanup site area.

Skagit County Stormwater Management Projects, presented by Mike See, Skagit County Public Works

SCPW has applied for a grant to redevelop the Public Works old Cinema 5 parking lot into a LID parking lot with rain gardens and pervious pavement. Mike passed around design blueprints of the project. The County owns the site. There is support for the project from the County Administrator and Council. The total cost for the project is 365K. The Skagit MRC could help to meet the match, possibly through sign development and recruiting volunteers. There was a discussion of maintenance issues, including ongoing funding and training maintenance staff. A few members raised the issue of increasing the stream buffer, currently planned at 10 feet.

December update per Betsy: The County did not receive the grant and will be looking for alternative funding sources.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update, Neil

The subcommittee has a meeting today. The decision was made that if a subcommittee member submits a proposal, he/she will reclude him/herself from the discussion. One proposal is from Bayview State Park for improving the flow of water around the Park. Another proposal is from the Samish Tribe for expanding the beach restoration project.

NWSC/MRC Conference, Neil

Notable sessions included one on volunteer monitoring, how to do it and keep the results and protocols consistent. Another was on producing educational videos. It gave ideas for creating and posting videos. A link for [Voices of the Sound](#) is available on the NWS website.

Administrative Report, Tracy

- Tracy welcomed Pete as a member of the Skagit MRC. The Board of County Commissioners signed a resolution appointing him.
- E-mailed Budget Update. We still have \$164,122 remaining in the budget that must be spent by June 30, 2011. Please get those invoices in!
- A contract is signed and finalized to add \$30k from the NWSC Ecosystem Restoration Funds to extend the spartina survey work regionally to Jefferson, Clallam and possibly Whatcom Counties.
- The NWSC gave each MRC 2 copies of "Oceanography" with the DVD "A Sea Change". One copy will go to a local library. Several members suggested Anacortes.
- We need to start compiling a list of potential projects with budgets for the next grant cycle. The initial list is due by January or early February. The full application is due March 28. A subcommittee was formed to review projects. Members are Erica, Pete, Paul, Kurt, Neil, Tracy and potentially Todd. They will meet the first week of December. A suggestion was made to get lists of current projects other MRC's are working on.

Highlights from the NWSC/MRC Lead Staff Meeting, Tracy

- The 2011-2013 grant timeline was emailed. Sasha will send the criteria in a few weeks. Please e-mail Tracy your project ideas to discuss at the MRC meeting in December. Regional projects are strongly encouraged.
- Data Coordination. There is a need for better access to data generated by MRC's.
- MRC Website. Tools are available for analyzing our website and to provide suggestions for how to optimize the site for search engines. Sasha will help develop a new website outside of the County's site.

- 15% of the donations received for the showing of “Beneath the Salish Sea” went to MRCs. These funds can be used for awards, food or other items that are prohibited by federal funds (such as MRC shirts, hats, etc.). We could also look for opportunities to raise small amounts of money locally to provide some additional discretionary funds.
- Program Evaluation. It has been six years since the overall NWSI Evaluation. Ginny is floating the idea of doing an MRC by MRC evaluation.

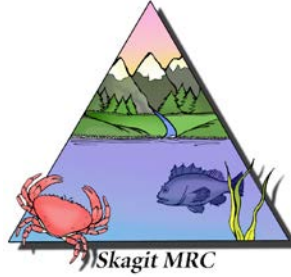
Project Status & Discussion:

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** In the process of developing a list of projects for the next two years. There will be a shoreline homeowner’s workshop in early April. Two dates are set for realtor workshops, probably for septic and LID. Some potential instructors have been found. Four Beach Watchers graduated last month. The question arose about continuing the Spring/Fall training split and the decision was made to continue it for next year. Beach Watchers from Skagit and a few other counties are applying for funds through NOAA for recreational crabber outreach. The Young Beach Stewards program that worked with MVHS students last year may be shifted to Anacortes HS due to school teacher time and interest.
- **Education Materials (Field Guides/MRC Brochures):** No report.
- **LID Brochures:** No report.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Waiting for a start date for rain garden construction.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Ongoing. A portion of the coring is completed, with more organic debris found versus beach sediment. Beach seinings have continued.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** May be scheduled for the first week of June.
- **Smart Sponge:** Finished the final monitoring report and submitted to Tracy and the NWS. The Bayview unit has been built and installed. It’s located up two blocks from Rozema Boat Works. The Storm Team will collect samples from the unit during storm events.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** There is a wrap-up meeting planned for December 6th. The written report will be completed by the end of the year.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Rachel is giving a report on the project at the Restore America’s Estuaries Conference.

Announcements:

- The Samish DNR is hosting the 2nd Fidalgo Bay Science Conference on February 23rd. Please email Todd if you didn’t get an invitation and would like one.
- The Samish DNR is entering it’s 6th year of monitoring water outfalls into Fidalgo Bay and has that data available to other organizations. There is also a five-year summary report available.
- Brian mentioned the 4-H robotics marine ROV that is in design. The group is looking for parameters to follow in order that the robot may be useful for research.
- Kurt announced that the Samish Storm team that sampled in the Samish basin during storm events has the data available. The County is now doing the sampling. The Storm Team is now putting its efforts into Bayview and is finding very high FC counts. Samish Watershed monitoring data from the Storm team and the County can be found here: www.samishwaterdata.homestead.com.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be held on December 9th at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the December 9, 2010 meeting held at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center

Members Attending: Ivar Dolph, Paul Dinnel, Tracy Alker, Kari Odden, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Christine Woodward, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Lori Kyle, Kurt Buchanan, Mike Sato, Pete Haase

Members Absent: Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling,

Others Attending: Sharon Riggs, PBNERR; Todd Woodard, Samish DNR; Denise Crowe, SPMC; Rachael Benbrook, PFPS; Brandon Jensen; Sue Madsen, SFEG; Joan Drinkwin, NWSF; Lori Wight, SCPW; Doug Stark, Whatcom MRC; Brian Stafki, WSU Beach Watchers

Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:05.

Minutes: Approved.

Public Comments: None.

Fidalgo Bay Soft Shore Bank Stabilization and Forage Fish Habitat Restoration Project, presented by Christine Woodward, Samish DNR

The project is complete. It is the restoration of 550' of beach that was damaged in 2001-02 when condominiums were built. Soft shore armoring was put in place in 2005, but failed and suffered additional beach loss. In 2009, the Samish tribe stepped in to implement the project, using the existing plans, when the condo developer failed to do so. The project consists of four drift cells. It used 1475 tons of rock, 375 of gravel and 132 of washed sand. An archaeologist was on site for all activities that could potentially disrupt the bank, due to the presence of ancestral remains. The planting was done in spring 2010, aided by 50 students from Cap Sante Alternative H.S. and condo residents.

Project challenges were the deeply undercut bank, beach loss greater than estimated between the original survey and the start of the project, tides and the soft beach. Project highlights were the support that the tribe received from so many organizations and agencies, a great contractor and especially the success of the project. A large storm in November resulted in the loss of 2' of beach in front of the tribal center

(outside of the project area) and almost no beach loss inside the project area. Forage fish have been using the beach.

The next phase of the project is to extend the project 550' onto Samish Tribal lands. Seven native plant beds for the proposed project area have already been planted. The Samish tribe is submitting a proposal to the Skagit MRC for support through the Restoration Fund.

Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update

The Subcommittee vetoed the Bayview State Park proposal because it seemed the project would lead to minimal improvement for Fidalgo Bay health. Subcommittee members have discussed the Samish Tribe's proposed Central Weaverling Spit and Beach Enhancement Project. Christine will present more information at the committee's meeting today.

Administrative Report

- E-mailed budget update. We still have \$148,895 remaining in the budget that must be spent by June 30, 2011. Please get those invoices in!
- Progress reports for all projects due Jan 14, 2011. All reports must have the MRC and NWSC logos on the cover page. Please include volunteer hours in reports.
- Please e-mail Tracy jpeg images of projects and volunteers for the annual report.
- Currently working with Sasha to develop a new independent Skagit MRC website. There will still be a MRC info page on the County website with a link to the new website. The new domain name will be skagitmrc.org
- 2011 – 2013 Grant Proposals:
 - Originally scheduled a meeting with the NWSC Staff for January 13th, after the MRC meeting, to discuss our project ideas. Project leads and/or MRC chair invited to join. **Note: The meeting date is changed to February 4th.**
 - Full applications due to the NWSC March 28, 2011.
 - Funding is contingent upon federal funding to be awarded to the NWSC. We are assuming current funding levels (\$240,000) but members should be prepared to scale down to match funds.

Project Proposals for the 2011-2013 MRC Grant

The project subcommittee met last week. The Skagit MRC is hoping for a budget of 240K, but this is not yet definite. When submitting projects, it is important to refer to the NWS project guidelines that were emailed. The committee should have a rough list of projects and costs by January 13th. Subcommittee members will probably meet the first week in January. Neil stressed the importance of getting a preliminary proposal to the subcommittee within the next two weeks.

Doug Stark from the Whatcom MRC commented that they are interesting in pursuing a project like the Getting to the Waters Edge book. He suggested that Skagit and Whatcom MRCs partner on it. He didn't have cost estimates. Sharon mentioned the WA State Shoreline Access Guide as a possible reference. Rachael mentioned the importance of including beaches that are water access only, important for boaters. Joan commented that the NWSC has no plans to support or subsidize projects such as a book. It is up to individual MRCs to pursue projects.

Someone mentioned that Betty Cartaret of Friends of Skagit Beaches is promoting the project of placing small interpretative signs along the Tommy Thompson Trail.

These signs would have a small icon that can be scanned with a phone and thereby link to a website with more information. The group is looking for a grant from Ecology. It is unclear what Betty is requesting from the MRC at this time.

Neil asked if there were any concerns about the tentative project list that Tracy had emailed. Paul was concerned about the 4-H ROV project. Brian gave some additional information. The 4-H group especially wants guidance and mentorship.

There was long discussion about the proposal process, current and past. Pete, as a member of the subcommittee, made a request for proposals to fit within a standard NWS form to make them easier to compare and understand. Mike commented on the lack of clarity of the criteria. What are the Skagit MRCs priorities? Are we matching our priorities with those of the NWS? Paul gave a description of the subcommittee process in the past and how members look at a myriad of factors.

Sue Madsen commented that it seems difficult at this point to even submit a proposal because the list appears to already be established. Various members emphasized that the door is not yet closed. Tracy commented that she would be willing to push back the Jan 13th meeting that she had scheduled with the NWS. Todd suggested a more formalized process in the future that would include a RFP going out on a set day with a formal proposal due date and the inclusion of a scoring guidelines sheet. Sue agreed that it would be helpful. Paul made a suggestion for a January 20th due date. No final decision was made.

Project Status & Discussion:

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** Efforts are being made to get more partners for the Young Beach Stewards Program. The BWs will hold their annual meeting on Jan 19 and celebrate the 5-year anniversary of the program. Brian is hosting Skagit Green Drinks, a social gathering for people in conservation fields. The group meets the 3rd Thursday of every month at the Empire Brewery.
- **Education Materials** (Field Guides/MRC Brochures): no report
- **LID Brochures:** no report
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** Still on schedule. Spoke with Gary Robinson and was assured that the project would get done.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** The last beach seining is next week. The graduate student is working hard to collect and analyze coring samples. One core contained some sand.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursions:** Scheduled for next April.
- **Smart Sponge:** The County installed the Bayview unit. Storm Watchers has been active collecting samples. No high fecal coliform counts yet. High flows have been a challenge.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Will be held the third Saturday in September. Organizers had a good debriefing last week. March 1st will be the first planning meeting for next year.
- **Spartina Survey and Removal:** Attended the Restore America's Estuaries conference, presenting a poster and giving a talk on citizen science for kayakers.

Announcements: none

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 am. The next meeting will be held on January 13 at Padilla Bay.