

# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the January 13, 2011 meeting held at Padilla Bay NERR

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

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

**Others Attending:** Todd Woodard, Samish Indian Nation; Matt Reynolds, City of Anacortes; Jeff Beltramini, City of Anacortes; Neil Norcross, Tesoro; Christina Maginnis, DOE; Kurt Baumgarten, DOE; Lori Wight, SCPW; Sue Madsen, SFEG; Rachel Benbrook, PFPS; Kara Cardinal, UW SMA; Lin Folsom, SCEA; Doug Stark, Whatcom MRC; Brian Stafki, WSU Extension; Sasha Horst, NWSC

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Chair Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:07.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Anacortes Stormwater Program**, presented by Matt Reynolds and Jeff Beltramini

The Anacortes stormwater plan is available on the City's website. Components of the management plan include public education and outreach. One step will be outreach through the utility bills. They have put signs at ponds with a number to call about garbage dumping. They have also identified dumping hot spots and check them regularly. Nineteen water quality vaults have been installed at outfalls. These units help settle solids, but do not have filters, clean other contaminants, or hold back floodwaters. The vaults have a small footprint, even fitting within a sidewalk, and treat a large area. The City checks and vacuums the vaults on a schedule. One MRC member mentioned using raingardens and bioswales as possibility. Other City projects have included eliminating a detention pond and improving sewer lines

The City has begun to track all 81 of the City's outfalls, establishing a description and baseline for each one. They are required to monitor and test two outfalls, one residential and one commercial. Sampling has not yet started. Lori Wight from SCPW presented the Good Cleaning Practices and Pet Waste Posters.

### **Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update:**

The new proposal and annual workplan was emailed to MRC members. The approved proposal must be submitted to the NWS by January 21 and to the WA DOE by the end of the month. The Samish requested an advance on the funds for the beach restoration project of \$12K. This will allow the tribe to jumpstart the project, sign contracts and complete it this year within the fish window. The subcommittee was in agreement to use most of the funds from this grant cycle for the Samish project. MRC members made no objections.

### **Administrative Report**

- Emailed budget update. We have \$174,633 remaining in the budget. All but the 30k for the additional Spartina surveys must be spent by June 30, 2011. Please submit invoices!
- Let Tracy know if you have a project that needs a little more money, because there will be unspent funds. Paul commented that there is extra money from the Bayview Smart Sponge unit. At this point it looks like we will likely have at least \$28K remaining in the budget at the end of the grant cycle. Those funds will be returned to the NWS. It is not possible to do a whole new project with extra funds.
- Kari asked about using excess FBD funds for brittle star activities materials and photos. Tracy and Erica gave approval.
- We are assuming current funding levels (\$240,000) but need to be prepared to scale down. It would be a good idea to prioritize projects and develop alternate budgets.
- Scheduled a meeting with the NWSC staff for Feb 4 to discuss our project ideas. Project leads and/or MRC chair invited to join. Full applications due to the NWSC March 28.
- Lori asked about having copies of all project reports with financial breakdowns available on the Skagit MRC website. Tracy responded that this information is not on the website and it is not readily available. If MRC members are interested in this information, the County administration staff might be able to put something together, but it will take some time. Please let Tracy know if this is something you are interested in pursuing.
- Erica volunteered to review the annual report.

### **Project Proposals for the 2011-2013 MRC Grant:**

- Tracy emailed the current draft budget & new proposals (Drift Cell Analysis, Shoreline Access Guide and Trail Tales) for review and discussion today, as well as additional comments and suggestions on individual tasks listed on the draft budget. Five alternatives were listed for the drift cell analysis.
- Paul gave an update on task #13, Shannon Point Forage Fish Habitat Restoration. Jim Johannessen had underestimated the cost of riprap removal, necessitating the increase in the cost from \$61K to \$68K. The increase of \$7K will be in budget year 2.
- Paul suggested removing task #10, native oyster restoration, from this budget and transferring the request to the Kimberley Clark funds. He requested a placeholder for the project from the undesignated 2011 KC funds.
- Sue Madsen explained the Padilla and Samish Bay Drift Cell Analysis, task #11. One of her goals is to increase community outreach through a marsh cleanup project. SFEG would be the lead, subcontracting CGS for the drift cell analysis and PFPS (Rachel Benbrook) for outreach. There was a discussion among MRC members about the different alternatives and their values. Ivar commented that due to the extent of shoreline development, there isn't a benefit to doing a drift cell analysis on either island, particularly Samish. Sue responded that SFEG does work with private landowners. Betsy commented that it made sense to finish the drift cell analysis work that the MRC has started and do the outreach later. The County's Shoreline Master Plan Update is starting and the drift cell analysis would be useful. Outreach will be needed as part of that process. Paul felt that while outreach is important, it might be more appropriate to do after the analysis. Ivar

pointed out that there are no forage fish present on Guemes. Paul commented that new riprap going in could cause an erosion problem. Erica suggested the information from the analysis could be used to convince people to do soft shore armoring. Kurt commented that community relationship building could take years. Lori mentioned the shoreline owner education is a current vehicle that could be used for outreach. Brian added that the Shore Stewards program could support outreach efforts.

- Doug Stark from Whatcom MRC presented the Shoreline Access Guide proposal, task #15, and answered questions. The project for this grant cycle is an online website and database. The future goal is a book. Estimated costs are \$3,000 for budget year one and \$3,700 for year two, dependent on volunteer contribution. It was unclear exactly how much the Skagit MRC would contribute.
- The Trail Tales project was presented, task #8, with an estimated total budget of \$8K. Friends of Skagit Beaches (FOSB) is the lead and will collaborate with WSU Beach Watchers and Shannon Point Marine Center to create the program. FOSB is applying for the Public Participation Grant from the WADOE. Several other organizations are helping to support the project, including the City, Port, and Samish Tribe.
- Project proposals put on hold are the Field Guides, Shoreline Processes Workshop, 4-H ROV project, March's Point Post Groin Removal Survey, Stormwater Monitoring, LID/Stormwater Education Workshops and Abalone Restoration.

**Project Status & Discussion:** Due to time constraints, we did not cover project status. Project leads will send their report(s) to Tracy. She will compile the reports and send them out.

**Nomination and Election of MRC Officers:**

*Chair – Lori Kyle*, nominated by Erica and seconded by Pete

*Vice-Chair – Pete Haase*, nominated by Mike and seconded by Ivar

*NWS Representative – Connie Thoman*, nominated by Lori and seconded by Betsy

*NWS Alternate – Neil Borman*, nominated by Kari and seconded by Lori

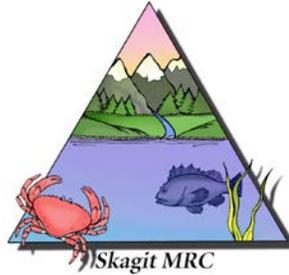
*Secretary – Tracy Alker* will take on this position. Betsy will give support when needed.

Polly moved to accept the slate as presented. Consensus was reached.

**Announcements:**

- Brian announced that he would be leaving the BW Coordinator position. It should be relisted soon and will take up to two months to rehire.
- Erica passed around the FBD Report and thanked the photographers. Sasha will put it on the ftp server for people to download.
- Neil Norcross will be the new alternate for Rebecca on the MRC. Welcome!
- Mike commented that PFPS's Director, Kathy Fletcher, is retiring. They will have a new director on board by April 1<sup>st</sup>. This is also the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the organization with many events happening throughout the year.
- February 15 is PFPS's annual environmental lobby day in Olympia. Please consider attending. Register on their website.  
<http://pugetsound.org/pps-home-page/programs/policy/lobbyday/2011>
- February 16 is SFEG's Annual Dinner. Kurt invited MRC members to attend.  
<http://www.skagitfisheries.org/>

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 am. The next meeting will be held on Feb 10 at the Mt. Vernon Senior Center.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the February 10, 2011 meeting held at the Mount Vernon Senior Center

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Paul Dinnel, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Jim Ramaglia, Lori Kyle, Pete Haase

**Members Absent:** Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Kurt Buchanan, Ivar Dolph, Kari Odden, Mike Sato, Charles O'Hara

**Others Attending:** Connie Price, NWSC; Gary Stoyka, Skagit County Public Works; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR; Christine Betchley, WSU Beach Watcher; Rachel Benbrook, PPS; Lin Folsom, SCEA

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

## **Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative Subcommittee Update:**

The 2010 annual report has been completed and the 2011 workplan was recently approved by the NWSC. The workplan includes two key projects: 1. Continuation of the East March's Point Groin Removal Project; and 2. Restore 500 feet of shoreline at Weaverling Spit, in Fidalgo Bay. Reports for the SRSC's West March's Point beach nourishment project have been submitted.

## **Administrative Report**

- Tracy emailed the budget update. We have \$168,736 remaining in the budget. All but the 30k for the additional Spartina surveys must be spent by June 30, 2011. Please submit invoices! Paul noted that although the County hasn't been invoiced yet for the Cannery Pond feasibility study, \$28,389 has been charged to that project. The County will be invoiced with the submittal of the draft report this spring.
- NWSC is currently drafting the 2010 annual report. Please let Tracy or Sasha know if there are any projects or accomplishments that you would like to see highlighted in the report. Betsy suggested highlighting the Samish bank stabilization project. It would be great if one of our MRC members would provide a quote about our program for the report. If you are interested in providing a quote, please contact Sasha. In order to get the attention of the folks in Olympia, it might be a good idea to get a statement from one of our local politicians

about our program. Local political support would send a very positive message about our program.

- Sasha is interested in working with the MRCs to produce a short video clip of some of one or two of our projects. Please let Tracy know if you have any ideas or suggestions.
- Tracy is working with Sasha on a new MRC website. The NWSC purchased the domain name: skagitmrc.org. Tracy and Sasha will meet with County IT staff to discuss the details and address legal concerns.
- We will be asked to present one or two of our proposed projects at the NWSC meeting in April. We will need to make a decision on what projects to present and who will present them at our MRC meeting in March.
- Mike Sato submitted a letter requesting to designate Rachel Benbrook as his alternate as the People for Puget Sound representative on the MRC. It was the consensus of the MRC to appoint Rachel as Mike's alternate. Tracy will amend the MRC membership resolution which will need to be approved and signed by the Board of County Commissioners

### **NWSC Commission Report**

- The NWSC retreat will be held February 24 and 25. The first day will be at the Padilla Bay Reserve and the second day in La Conner. The primary topic of discussion will be the budget.
- The NWSI reauthorization bill did not pass through congress. Congress also failed to pass the 2011 budget. They are currently in the process of drafting a budget without earmarks. Unfortunately, the NWSI appropriation is considered an earmark, so we will need to find another source of funding. When we didn't have earmarks in the past we received funding through NOAA. Ginny met with NOAA to discuss possible funding options. Our budget strategy will be discussed at the NWSC retreat February 24 and 25.
- The City of Bellingham is working with the Island MRC to coordinate their data. The City uses a system called CityIQ that allows the public to see online maps. The Island MRC will use this same platform for their data coordination project that will be called SoundIQ. The data can also be downloaded for scientific analysis.
- Penny Dalton, the Director of Washington Sea Grant, announced two requests for proposals for research projects in 2011. Citizen science projects don't typically score as well.

### **Project Proposals for the 2011-2013 MRC Grant:**

- Full applications due to the NWSC March 28. The application looks a lot different this year.
- We are assuming current funding levels will remain the same (\$120,000 per yr) but we will need to be prepared to scale down and prioritize projects with alternate budgets.
- Tracy, Lori, and Neil met with the NWSC staff Feb 4 to discuss our proposed projects and budget.
- Tracy emailed the updated budget proposals as well as the projects that have been considered by the MRC budget subcommittee but put on hold for now. There is currently \$16,000 remaining in the budget that could be moved to other projects.
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** Paul requested adding \$2,000 for Olympia oyster seed production during the second year.
- **Shannon Point Forage Fish Habitat Restoration:** Paul Dinnel expressed his concern that the rip rap removal and monitoring at Shannon Point could potentially end up costing a lot more than originally estimated. Rip rap removal might have to be done with a crane and barge and disposal costs are currently unknown. Paul requested adding \$14,000 to the budget for a total project cost of \$84,000.
- **Guemes Island Drift Cell Analysis:** Tracy said that after discussing the Guemes Drift Cell Analysis project with Sasha, it was determined that it might make more sense for the

County to contract directly with the contractor to complete the drift cell analysis for Guemes Island during the first year since that's the way the MRC has always done it. We would contract with SFEG the second year for the community outreach rather than SFEG subcontracting the contractor for the drift cell study as originally proposed. Lori suggested that we could hold an MRC meeting at Guemes Island and invite community members. We could coordinate with the contractor to schedule a community meeting as well. Neil pointed out that we could use the remaining funds towards expanding the drift cell project to some of the other areas identified. Rachel suggested including Vendovi and Sinclair islands in the drift cell analysis as well. Vendovi Island was recently purchased by the Skagit Land Trust. Could there be potential restoration opportunities there? After some discussion it was determined that those islands are mostly composed of a rocky shoreline so it might not be worth it. A question was brought up as to whether or not the Vendovi Island shoreline was suitable for mussel habitat and if so, could we expand the mussel program out there? Would it make sense to complete a blueprint restoration analysis in the Skagit Delta area?

- **Getting to the Shore:** Whatcom MRC decided to put the "Getting to the Shore" proposal on hold for now. They formed a subcommittee to collect background information and work out all of the details including costs etc. Whatcom MRC plans to propose this project during the next round of grant funding. Skagit MRC agreed that it would be a good idea to put this project on hold as well. Neil suggested that we appoint a volunteer to work with the Whatcom MRC subcommittee to get the information needed so that we will be ready to move forward with this project when funding becomes available. It was suggested that we leave this project on the table with a small budget for travel. However, it was determined that the administration budget could be used to cover travel expenses.
- **Freestad Lagoon Restoration and the Tommy Thompson Trail Interpretive Program:** These proposals will depend on additional grant funding. Skagit MRC will have to put these projects on hold if the additional grant funding isn't received. So far the Freestad Restoration project proposal has made it through the first cut for ESRP funding. If these projects are dropped we will have another \$23,000 to put towards other projects.
- **Escape Cord Outreach:** Polly mentioned that the WDFW received funding for escape cord outreach so there might be some overlap and duplication of effort. They plan to conduct outreach through the production of educational video tapes and through TV interviews and an ad campaign. It might be a good idea to coordinate our outreach efforts with theirs. Erica pointed out that our program won't be duplicating WDFW's efforts since they aren't going to be going to the boat launches and talking to everyone like the Beach Watcher volunteers do. Lori suggested that it would be a good idea to also educate property owners who launch from their own private beaches. We could mail rot cord samples along with educational information to those communities. Connie Price noted that the law now reads that they can write a ticket for illegal pots on the boat. They don't have to be on the water.

#### **2009-2011 Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator Brian Stafki's last day was January 31, 2011. Although the position has been approved by WSU, it is still uncertain as to when the position will be filled. The Beach Watcher volunteers have offered to move forward with the Beach Watcher training on their own this spring. Christine Betchly, a Beach Watcher volunteer, has offered to take the lead with the Young Beach Stewards training. Chris is looking into options for invoicing the MRC for the field trips. Beach Watcher volunteers will also continue with monitoring, organizing one or two naturalist beach walks, setting up and hosting the display at special events, helping with Fidalgo Bay Day, etc. Unspent funds will be returned to the NWSC for other projects.
- **MRC Brochure:** Ivar and Jim have designed the first draft
- **LID Brochure:** Betsy is currently in the process of gathering materials and drafting the brochure. Please send Betsy or Tracy photos or examples of LID projects in Skagit County.

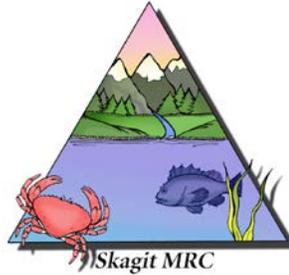
Connie pointed out that a rain garden has been installed at the new Anthony's restaurant in Anacortes. A rain garden has also been installed at T Avenue off of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Connie will send photos. A rain garden and roof garden has been proposed for the office located at O Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Street on the west side of the PS Rope warehouse.

- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** The rain garden is being constructed behind the Depot where the parking lot used to be. Construction should be completed in the spring.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Historical research and field work has been completed. It is anticipated that graduate student Hanna Seyel's draft thesis will be complete sometime this spring. Hanna will be invited to present her research to the MRC after completing her thesis. Evidence indicates Cannery Pond was not historically a pocket estuary. Restoration will not be pursued at this time. Removing the berm is not recommended because there is a large stand of trees that provide shade for forage fish. Dredging a channel through the berm to provide a connection to the saltwater is also not recommended because it would likely eventually just fill in. The old railroad berm will continue to erode naturally.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursion:** Two training excursions will take place in April.
- **Smart Sponge (SWAT Unit Installation):** A Stormwater Antimicrobial Unit with Smart Sponges was installed at Bay View. The purpose for this project is to analyze the efficiency of the smart sponge at destroying bacteria. This project has been challenging because of the lack of detectable fecal coliform entering the system and sedimentation clogging and flooding the system. Straw and netting was used to help filter sediments to prevent clogging and flooding. Due to the high maintenance requirements and associated costs, Smart Sponges might not be the best answer.
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** Collected oysters last month for DNA testing in Oregon for future seed production. Paul plans to meet with Brady Blake in April to look for new restoration sites. Paul will work with a student to place oyster shell bags along the Fidalgo Bay trestle.
- **Spartina Surveys:** Recruiting kayaker volunteers now through April. Training will take place in La Conner this spring. Jointly working with the Jefferson and Clallam MRCs to get a contact out there to help identify the best and safest areas to survey. Conditions tend to be a little more difficult out that way for kayaking. Rachel plans to give a presentation on the program at the REI in Bellingham.

#### **Announcements:**

- Rachel Benbrook requested the MRC and or/individuals consider submitting a letter of support for the oil spill preparedness program HB1186. Connie Price pointed out that the NWSC is submitting a letter of support and offered to send a copy to use as an example.
- Next Tuesday is Environmental Lobby Day. People for Puget Sound along with several other environmental groups and individuals across the state will be taking buses and carpools down to Olympia to lobby on environmental issues. There is still space available if anybody is interested.
- Lori noted that we need to get permission if using photos of kids in reports and on websites.
- Christine Betchley mentioned that there will be a free 8-hour Hazwoper training February 26 in Everett. The training is required to help care for oiled wildlife.
- Connie announced that the Seafarer Memorial Building has moved back to the park. After the building is up and running we can start having our MRC meetings there again. The waterfront festival will likely occur before the building is actually ready.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 am. The next meeting will be held March 10 at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve center.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the March 10, 2011 meeting held at the Padilla Bay Reserve

**Members Attending:** Tracy Aker, Kurt Buchanan, Ivar Dolph, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Erica Pickett, Connie Thoman, Lori Kyle, Pete Haase, Kari Odden, Rachel Benbrook (Alternate), Neil Norcross (Alternate), Todd Woodard (Alternate)

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

**Others Attending:** Sasha Horst, NWSC; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR; Denise Crowe, SPMC; Adam Lorio, Samish Indian Nation

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Peter Haase began the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Envision Skagit 2060- *Presented by Betsy Stevenson***

Skagit County's population has more than doubled since 1960 and is expected to increase by another 100,000 by 2060 for an estimated total population of 218,000. The question is how do we accommodate the population growth? Where do we locate new businesses, jobs, public facilities, infrastructure, schools, healthcare, transportation, public safety, recreation, etc? What do we want the county to look like 50 years from now? To help answer these questions, Skagit County received a grant from the EPA to initiate "Envision Skagit 2060" as part of the county's long range planning process. Envision Skagit 2060 is a collaborative community effort to develop and recommend a 50-year vision for Skagit County. It will ultimately result in recommended changes to comprehensive plans and policies addressing land use planning, community and economic development, environmental protection and natural resource conservation. This project involves three phases:

Phase I (2009-2010) - Technical and Steering Committees: Technical and steering committees were formed to help identify alternative indicators and scenarios and come up with a list of recommendations. The Steering Committee is comprised of 13 citizens appointed by the county commissioners based on their broad interest in the community, not for their political or special interest groups. The alternative indicators and scenarios were identified and plugged into a

sophisticated land use model developed by Oregon State University to help evaluate and visualize the different land use scenarios and long term impacts of different policy choices. Unfortunately climate change and sea level rise could not be included in the model, but they will be taken into consideration as part of the planning process. Rachel suggested using free visualization software called SLAMM (Sea Level Affects Marshes Model Visualization) <http://www.slamview.org>. The software allows you to choose different scenarios to visualize the potential impacts of sea level rise over a period of time. Another free tool that can be used to help visualize the potential impacts of sea level rise is NOAA's Digital Coast [www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast). Betsy sits on the Ecosystem Technical committee. They came up with a list of recommendations including: infill within the cities, staying out of the flood plain, leaving habitat areas, and potential restoration projects.

Phase 2 (2010-2011) - Community Vision: We are currently in Phase 2 of this project. The Steering Committee has organized several visioning workshops for the general public at various locations throughout the county. Several of these workshops have already taken place. One of the workshops was held at Mount Vernon High School to encourage young people to participate in the visioning process. Those who are unable to make it to the workshops but are interested in participating, are invited to leave written comments on the website:

[www.skagitcounty.net/envisionskagit](http://www.skagitcounty.net/envisionskagit). Several presentations have been scheduled as part of the Envision Skagit 2060 public outreach effort. The presentations are free and open to the public. The next presentation is scheduled for Thursday, April 28 at the Lincoln Theatre, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Edward T. McMahon, a leading expert in land conservation, urban design, and sustainable development, will present “The Dollars and Sense of Sustainable Development.”

Phase 3 (2011-2013) – Implementation: Phase 3 will begin in the second half of 2011 and will continue through 2012. The Citizen Committee will share its recommendations for a preferred future with elected officials from the county, cities, towns, tribes, and other implementing bodies in Skagit County.

### **NWSC Retreat/Meeting Report**

- The primary focus at the retreat was the budget. Different budget scenarios were considered as well as what could happen if we don't get funded at all. The MRCs need to prioritize projects in order of importance without looking at cost or budget. We also need to start looking into other potential sources of funding. The Northwest Straits Foundation will still be able to help the MRCs apply for grants and other sources of funding even if the NWSI doesn't get funded. Sharon said that the NERRS Science Collaborative could be a potential source of funding. Rachel suggested looking into corporate sponsors. Todd said that there will also likely be opportunities to partner with tribes on projects.
- The MRCs were encouraged to draft letters of support for the NWSI to the Washington State federal delegation and to thank them for their past report.
- There was some concern about the lack of communication between some of the MRCs and the Puget Sound Partnership. The Whidbey Basin Action Area is so large it has been very difficult forming a local integration organization. Betsy said that she would try contacting PSP again to get an update.
- Discussed the MRC's role in the community. Some MRCs routinely review new plans and regulations such as the Shoreline Master Program and make recommendations to the county commissioners. The difference between advisory versus advocacy was also discussed. Skagit MRC has always been more interested in taking action rather than having an advisory role. The question was asked if Skagit MRC members would be interested in taking on more of an advisory role. This question will be further discussed at the next Skagit MRC meeting.

- The Forage Fish Technical Committee workshop was held in January. The meeting was well attended, there was standing room only. They discussed current research, policies, and identified data gaps and needs. Caroline is currently writing up action items from the workshop. The meeting summary is available on the NWSI website.
- More than 400 pots were removed in two days in B.C. and ½ a purse seine located in a designated rockfish sanctuary was also removed. The derelict net had been killing rockfish for the last 20 years. This project received a lot of press.

### **Administrative Report**

- The updated budget report will be e-mailed as soon as the data can be accessed.
- Please help Tracy in tracking leveraged funding- (e.g. additional grants, donations, volunteer hours, equipment, materials, printing, partnerships etc). This will be good information to have when reporting our accomplishments and seeking grants. The conversion for volunteer hours to money can be found on the National Average Wage Index, a government website ([www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/AWI.html](http://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/AWI.html)).
- Skagit MRC drafted a letter of support for the NWSI and sent it to our federal delegates (Thank you for your input Lori, Neil, Erica, and Kurt).
- A letter of support for the NWSI from the County Commissioners has been drafted and is currently going through the internal review process before it gets signed by the Commissioners.
- WSDOT State Ferries thanked Skagit MRC for our letter of support for their request for federal appropriations to purchase a vacuum sweeper for pollution reduction. Unfortunately they did not get the grant because the appropriations were earmarked funds.
- We will need to select 1 or 2 of our proposed projects to present at the April 29<sup>th</sup> NWSC meeting. Please contact Tracy with your suggestions.
- It is time to give an update to the Skagit County Commissioners. We will need one or two volunteers to present an overview of the MRC and highlight our accomplishments. Please contact Tracy if you are interested in helping with the presentation.
- A survey created by UW graduate student Hilary Papendick on Sea Level Rise was recently emailed to MRC members. Please take the time to complete this survey.

### **Project Prioritization for the 2011-2013 MRC Grant:**

- The NWSC requested the MRCs prioritize the list of projects to be funded for the 2011-2013 MRC Grant. If the budget is reduced the higher priority projects will be funded first. We may have to find other sources of funding for the remaining projects. The subcommittee met last Thursday to develop the list. Projects were prioritized based on matching funds, on the ground work, and perceived importance. Projects that could potentially be funded through other funding sources were scored a little lower. There are a lot of uncertainties which made this a very difficult exercise. These are all great projects so there was a lot of discussion as to how these projects should be rated. Should restoration projects be rated higher than outreach projects? What is more important? Would it be easier to find other sources of funding for restoration projects rather than outreach? Committee members agreed to adopt the recommendations of the subcommittee since they have already spent hours discussing the options and prioritizing projects. The list of projects might have to be revisited after we know what the budget will be. Skagit MRC projects were prioritized as follows:

1. Administration
2. *Spartina* Surveys
3. Fidalgo Bay Day
4. Community Beach Seining Day
5. Skagit MRC Brochure
6. WSU Beach Watchers
7. WSU Shore Stewards

8. Young Beach Stewards
9. Recreational Crabber Escape Cord Education
10. Trail Tales
11. Freestad Lagoon Restoration Design
12. Guemes Island Drift Cell Analysis and Outreach
13. Shannon Point Forage Fish Habitat Restoration

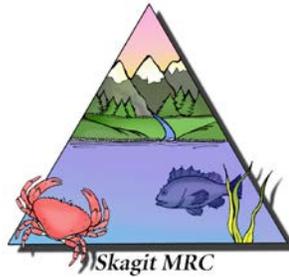
#### **2009-2011 Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** It is still uncertain as to when or if the WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator position will be filled. The Beach Watcher volunteers have started the planning process for the Beach Watcher training this spring. Ivar and Erica will provide an overview of the Beach Watcher program and introduce speakers. Christine Betchley, a Beach Watcher volunteer has organized two field trips for the Young Beach Stewards.
- **MRC Brochure:** Ivar and Jim are designing the first draft. It will be a little different this year.
- **LID Brochure:** Betsy is currently in the process of gathering materials and drafting the brochure. Connie will send photos of examples of LID projects.
- **Anacortes Deport Rain Garden:** No Report
- **Cannery Pond Study:** No Report
- **Shannon Point Research Excursion:** No Report
- **Smart Sponge (SWAT Unit Installation):** No Report
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** No Report
- **Spartina Surveys:** Rachel is writing an article on *Spartina* for the Sea Kayakers magazine. She will try to get a word in about Skagit MRC.

#### **Announcements:**

- Neil said that the Skyline Club Association has proposed two redevelopment projects at Tugboat Park. They are considering beach restoration as part of their proposal but so far have not included tree planting in the preliminary plan. This is a known forage fish habitat area, so this might be something Skagit MRC should consider commenting on.
- Connie announced that the Seafarer Memorial Park will be open May 20<sup>th</sup>, just in time for the Anacortes Waterfront Festival. After the building is up and running we can start having our MRC meetings there again.
- RE-Sources will hold a public forum for the Custom Plywood Mill Site tonight, March 10 (7-9 PM) at the Anacortes Senior Center.
- International Marine Debris Conference -will be held the end of March in Honolulu Hawaii. Ginny will be presenting the NWSI derelict gear project.
- American Fisheries Society Conference - will be held September 4-8 at the Seattle Convention Center. Caroline is organizing a session on forage fish.
- Salish Sea Conference – will be held October 25-27 in Vancouver BC.
- “Secrets in the Sound” by Florian Graner will be shown on Kiro 7, March 24 and April 2 at 10:00 PM. DVDs will be available for purchase on the NWS Foundation website and the Seadoc Society website.
- Todd Woodard announced that the contract with CGS for the beach restoration work has been finalized and they are scheduled to start initial survey work March 21, 2011.
- Rachel Benbrook said that they have scheduled three volunteer habitat restoration work parties at Deer Harbor, Orcas Island.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. The next meeting will be held April 14 at the Mount Vernon Senior Center.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the April 14, 2011 meeting held at the Mount Vernon Senior Center

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Kurt Buchanan, Ivar Dolph, Neil Borman, Betsy Stevenson, Erica Pickett, Lori Kyle, Pete Haase, Kari Odden, Rachel Benbrook (Alternate), Todd Woodard (Alternate), Mike Sato

**Members Absent:** Paul Dinnel, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Charles O'Hara, Jim Ramaglia, Polly Fischer, Connie Thoman

**Others Attending:** Kyle Deerkop, Upper Skagit Tribe; Bob Fritzen, Ecology

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

## **Shoreline Master Program Update- *Presented by Betsy Stevenson***

Betsy Stevenson provided the Skagit MRC with an update on the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) planning process. The new or revised elements include environment designations, a restoration plan, and cumulative impacts analysis with a no net loss standard. Some of the key issues that will be addressed include: non-conforming uses/structures, overwater structures, shoreline armoring, buffers and setbacks, and vegetation conservation. The goal of the SMP is to balance environmental protection, public access, water-oriented uses, and private versus public interest in accordance with the Shoreline Management Act (SMA).

The County received grant funding to help with the three-year planning process which began January 2011. The planning process is broken into six phases. Phases 1 and 2 will be completed in year one. Phase 1 involves identifying the preliminary shoreline jurisdiction and developing a public participation plan. The shoreline boundaries include lakes and reservoirs greater than 20 acres; rivers and streams with mean annual flow over 20 cubic feet per second; marine shorelines; associated wetlands; and lands extending landward 200 feet from the ordinary high water mark, floodways and floodplain areas, and 200 feet landward of the floodway. The floodway boundaries are designated through FEMA and the Flood Insurance Rate Map program. Public involvement will include, open house events (Visioning in summer 2011 and review of the Draft SMP mid-2012), meetings with community groups, community outreach (e.g. posters, fliers, fairs, booths etc.), a SMP webpage, list serve for website updates, FAQs, document postings, and post card to all landowners, establishing a Shoreline Advisory Committee, information sessions for the Planning Commission, and County meetings with planning commissions and elected officials.

The Shoreline Advisory Committee (SAC) will review and provide input on technical documents created to support development of the SMP as well as on draft SMP policies and regulations. The County is currently accepting applications for 11-15 individuals who represent various interest groups that are affected or impacted by shoreline management issues to serve on the SAC.

Phase 2 involves collecting shoreline inventory data and shoreline analysis and characterization. The inventory will include maps with relevant physical, biological and cultural features analysis and characterization that will be used to assess shoreline ecological functions and make recommendations for SMP development and restoration planning. Data from Skagit MRC and other organizations will be utilized as part of the planning process. Information collected from the Envision Skagit process will also be helpful for long term shoreline planning. Interactive shoreline inventory maps will be made available on the website to allow the user to select different layers. Maps will include comprehensive land use and zoning designation, marine public access, drift cells, shoreline modifications, marine shoreforms, water quality, environmental cleanup sites, bottomfish habitat, forage fish spawning habitat, salmon habitat etc.

Phase 3 will be completed in Year 2 and will involve shoreline environment designations, policy and regulation development guidelines for specific uses and modification activities, and cumulative impact analysis to ensure no net loss of ecological function under a reasonably foreseeable future. The regulatory content will include: public access, shoreline uses and modifications, vegetation conservation, in-water activities, and upland activities. The environmental designations will be based on criteria in Ecology's guidelines, ecological condition per inventory/analysis, and existing and planned land use.

Phases 4, 5, and 6 will be completed in Year 3. Phase 4 will involve adopting a restoration plan and revisiting the previous phases as needed. The restoration plan will provide goals and priorities, benchmarks and implementation strategy to ensure gradual restoration of impaired shorelines. Phase 5 will involve a local approval process; and Phase 6 will involve a state approval processes.

Next Steps: Shoreline analysis will occur May 2011 and the Community Visioning open houses have been scheduled for June 7, 2011 at the Concrete Senior Center, June 8, 2011 at Old Lyman Town Hall, and June 15, 2011 at the Commissioners Hearing Room. Drafting the SMP will begin during the fall of 2011. The SMP update will be complete 2013. Pete suggested pursuing the PSP Eco-net funding to expand the outreach program. However, this funding does require a match which might be a bit of a challenge during this difficult economic time.

### **NWSC Meeting Report**

- The NWSC Annual Report is complete and available on the web site. It looks great. We will be getting copies soon. The commission would like the MRCs to account for where the Reports get distributed. No need to track every single one but in general, where do they get sent. For example, to city and county officials, community members, etc.
- Salish Sea Conference coming up in Vancouver B.C. on October 25-27. A call for abstracts will be out very soon.
- Ginny attended the National Marine Debris Conference in Hawaii. The derelict gear project was presented by Ginny, Tom Good of NOAA, and Kyle Antonelis of Natural Resources Consultants. It was very well received and the conference was great.
- With the B.C. Ministry of the Environment, the NWS Initiative completed removal of 200 crab pots in 4 days in B.C.'s Boundary Bay.
- It's summer intern season so keep them in mind for MRC help on projects. Contact Sasha.
- MRC presentations: The April commission meeting will include presentations from MRCs on projects. Focus on the projects that are the most marketable and could potentially receive funding from elsewhere, especially action-oriented projects. Anyone can give the presentations – 1 or 2 is sufficient.
- Island MRC presented on its "Sound IQ" data archiving and access project with the City of Bellingham GIS staff help. They are building an internet based, Google Earth type "roll-over/hover over" data archive for technical and lay community members.

- Duane Fagergren gave an update on the Puget Sound Partnership and Snohomish MRC and UW Environmental Management Team gave an update on the oil spill preparedness and response project, of which I remember little.
- Terry Williams was presented with the Warren Magnuson Puget Sound Legacy Award for his many years of work on marine issues.
- Kathy Fletcher's retirement party will be June 22 at the Seattle Aquarium, everyone is welcome.

### **Administrative Report**

- The updated budget report was e-mailed. We currently have \$150,857 remaining in our budget. However the remaining budget will likely be closer to \$64k at the end of this grant. This large remaining balance is primarily due to the fact that we are no longer supporting a Beach Watcher Coordinator and we downsized the SWAT project. The unspent funds will go back to the NWSC. Some MRC members expressed concern that the MRC would lose such a large chunk of money. Although it is too late to amend the grant and move funds to a different project, it might be possible to request the funds be used towards a specific regional project within Skagit County (e.g. surveying and removing derelict crab pots out of Skagit Bay).
- Don't forget to track your volunteer hours. If you are a project lead, please also track the leveraged funding for your project/s.
- Our MRC 2011-2013 grant application has been submitted to the NWSC. We are now waiting for the Technical Committee to review it and to find out what the budget will be.
- Skagit MRC must select a project proposal for the 2011-2013 grant to present at the April 29 NWSC meeting. The NWSC indicated that they are interested in hearing more about Paul's Shannon Point rip rap removal proposal. However, Paul will be unable to present it and the other MRC members indicated that they are not familiar enough with the technical aspects of the project to give the presentation. The consensus of the MRC was to present the "Trail Tales" Tommy Thompson Trail Interpretive Program. Betty Carteret, president of the Friends of Skagit Beaches and a WSU Beach Watcher, agreed to give the presentation. Thank you Betty!
- Skagit County Public Works just hired an intern who will be available to help with WSU Beach Watcher and Shore Stewards coordination and will also be available to help Betsy with the LID brochure.
- Nominations for the SeaDoc Society's 2011 Salish Sea Science Prize are being accepted through June 15. A \$2,000 prize will be awarded in October at the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference in Vancouver, BC. For more information go to the SeaDoc Society's: <http://www.seadocsociety.org/ssp>
- The Health Department notified the MRC that portions of Samish Bay shellfish growing areas in Skagit County will be downgraded from "Approved" to "Conditionally Approved" due to high levels of fecal coliform bacteria periodically found in Samish Bay. The highest bacteria levels typically occur in the spring and late fall during big rain events. If high levels of bacteria are detected, most of Samish Bay will be closed to shellfish harvests for up to five days. The Clean Samish Initiative (CSI) was recently established to identify and correct the pollution sources in the Samish watershed. This multi-agency effort is funded through an EPA grant and administered by Skagit County.
- During the Government Management and Accountability Program session on Puget Sound, the Governor challenged the PSP to select the top three measurable action items to accomplish by the end of the year. The Clean Samish Initiative was identified as one of the possible actions.
- The Puget Sound Partnership scheduled several workshops for setting ecosystem recovery targets. The MRC might be interested in the following:
  - Marine and Nearshore Species and Habitats-(April 19 Olympia)

- Marine & Nearshore Species & Habitats, Water Quantity, & Programmatic Indicators- (May 13, Olympia) further describe and refine target options

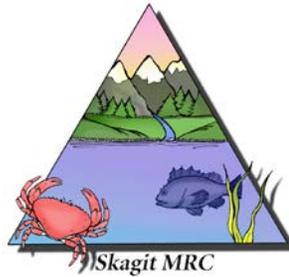
### **2009-2011 Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** It is still uncertain as to when or if the WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator position will be filled. Beach Watcher training is currently in full swing. Part of the training took place in Island County with Beach Watchers from other counties. Approximately 60 Beach Watchers attended. Beach Watcher volunteers have organized and coordinated the training completely on their own. 15 new Skagit Beach Watchers signed up for the training. Volunteers are gearing up to help with some of the MRC projects such as the March's Point post-groin removal monitoring. Lori commended the Beach Watchers for stepping up and doing such a great job coordinating the training and volunteer efforts with ongoing projects.
- **MRC Brochure:** The brochure will be finalized and printed soon.
- **LID Brochure:** Skagit County Public Works recently hired an intern who will help Betsy with the LID brochure.
- **Anacortes Deport Rain Garden:** MRC funds will most likely go towards purchasing LID materials.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** No Report
- **Shannon Point Research Excursion:** The last two marine sampling training excursions took place April 4 and 5. A final report will be completed before the end of June.
- **Smart Sponge (SWAT Unit Installation):** No Report
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** No Report
- **Spartina Surveys:** Rachel is working with Jefferson and Clallam County MRCs to get coordinators in place to help with volunteer recruitment for the kayak surveys. Rachel is writing an article on *Spartina* for the Sea Kayakers magazine. She will not be able to get a word in about Skagit MRC since they are limited for space and the article isn't just about *Spartina* in Puget Sound.

### **Announcements:**

- The money for the Central Weaverling Spit Enhancement project came through. Jim Johannessen with Coastal Geologic Services completed the initial survey work for Phase II. The next step will be to finalize the project design and secure the permits. The actual restoration work probably won't take place until next year.
- Skagit Green Drinks is held every 3rd Thursday at the Empire in downtown Mount Vernon. It generally starts around 5:30 PM and goes until whenever. It is a great opportunity for people who care about the environment to meet in an informal setting. For more information go to: <http://www.greendrinks.org/WA/Mount%20Vernon>
- Vendovi Island has been purchased by the San Juan Preservation Trust. Vendovi Island is a 200 acre island located approximately seven miles north of Anacortes. The San Juan Preservation Trust will be collecting an inventory of the island's resources and developing a management plan. No public access will be allowed at this time. However, they do plan to run two public trips in June. Ivar has been asked to conduct bird surveys. The first bird survey will be conducted in a couple of weeks, the second one will be later in May, and then another one might take place in the summer. Ivar will be joined by a Beach Watcher (and boat owner), a PhD Marine Bird Specialist from the SeaDoc Society, and possibly a couple of birders from the Audubon Society to help with the inventory. A group of people from the University of Washington Herbarium Society will conduct a plant survey.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 am. The next meeting will be held May 12 at the Padilla Bay Reserve.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the May 12, 2011 meeting held at the Padilla Bay Reserve

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Paul Dinnel, Jim Ramaglia, Connie Thoman, Ivar Dolph, Neil Borman, Erica Pickett, Lori Kyle

**Members Absent:** Betsy Stevenson, Kurt Buchanan, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Charles O'Hara, Mike Sato, Polly Fischer, Kari Odden

**Others Attending:** Betty Carteret, Friends of Skagit Beaches; Sharron Riggs, Padilla Bay Reserve

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

## **“Trail Tales” Project Proposal-** *Presented by Betty Carteret*

The project proposal is a multi-dimensional interpretive program centered on the popular *Tommy Thompson* recreational trail along the shoreline of Fidalgo Bay. The multiple partnerships and opportunity for community involvement is quiet impressive. This proposal will tie in nicely with some of the other Skagit MRC projects along the Tommy Thompson Trail including habitat restoration and forage fish interpretive signage. The objective of the Trail Tales project is to increase public understanding of the ecological importance of Fidalgo Bay, the history of the Bay such as indigenous use by the Samish, human impacts, and Ecology's Bay-wide cleanup effort. The scope of the project includes the installation of interpretive signage with QR code technology to link smart phones to the website; a website with printable maps and an events calendar; brochures; docent lead interpretive hikes; special events; workshops and demonstrations; educational videos; watershed-to-sea pledge with special incentives; and a one day university. Skagit MRC will be involved with the development of the interpretive program. The Friends of Skagit Beaches applied for Ecology's Public Participation grant which would be the primary source of funding. The total project budget is ~ \$135,300. Funding from the Skagit MRC will be used towards training the docents and volunteer coordination.

## **NWSC Meeting Report**

- The MRCs from each county presented on at least one proposed project at the April 29 NWSC meeting. A link to each presentation is available in the NWSC minutes:
  - Whatcom MRC: Water Quality Monitoring
  - Clallam MRC: Derelict Crab Pot Removal
  - San Juan MRC: Stormwater Monitoring Plan
  - Jefferson MRC: Olympia Oyster Restoration & Maynard Beach Nearshore Restoration

- Island MRC: Stormwater Phytoremediation
- Snohomish MRC: Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area
- Skagit MRC: Trail Tales Interpretive Program & Shannon Point Forage Fish Habitat Restoration
- Tom Bancroft is replacing Kathy Fletcher as the new Executive Director for People for Puget Sound. Kathy's replacement on the NWSC is still uncertain.
- Caroline Gibson is available to help MRCs write abstracts and bundle similar projects for presentation at the Salish Sea Conference.
- There is still no new news about the Initiative's fiscal year 2011 budget.

### **Administrative Report**

- The updated budget report was e-mailed. We currently have \$145,440 remaining in our budget. The unspent funds will go back to the NWSC.
- The NWSC is offering one registration fee per MRC from the Foundation for the Salish Sea Conference in Vancouver B.C. in October 25-27. Lori Kyle nominated Jim Ramaglia. Jim said that he will need to check his schedule before he can officially accept the nomination.
- The NWSC 2010 Annual Report was distributed to MRC members. The report will also be distributed to the County Commissioners, the City of Anacortes Council members, the Mayor of Anacortes, the Skagit Conservation District Board members, and the Anacortes Library.
- RE-Sources has withdrawn its representation on the Skagit MRC at this time due to a full work load and limited staff time.
- MRC grant deliverables: The (2009-2011) MRC grant expires June 30, 2011. All grant deliverables are due **June 17, 2011**. This is a firm deadline, there will be no exceptions. All reports must include a cover sheet with the grant and task number (ask Tracy for cover sheet template). All deliverables must include one hard copy and one electronic copy. All images should be included as separate jpg files, not just imbedded in documents or pdfs. All reports should included volunteer hours and leveraged funds.
- We recently received feedback regarding MRC project proposals for the new grant (2011-213). Any projects that include collection of data will require copy of data as a deliverable, and submission of a Quality Assurance Project Plan. Any members who are contractors intending to bid on project work would be ineligible to do so unless they recused themselves from discussions during the proposal development/selection process and that must be documented in our meeting minutes. It is important for the MRC to have ownership of a project. When the MRC is credited for a project it raises awareness and our profile. This should be considered when determining the project priorities. Skagit MRC discussed the feedback received from the NWSC review panel on the proposed projects:
  - Spartina Survey & Removal: Due to a potential conflict of interest, we will need to assign a new project lead and re-submit this proposal. MRC members who are also potential contractors must recuse themselves from any discussions regarding this proposal and noted in our minutes.
  - Fidalgo Bay Day: Photos of kids must have a signed release so we can use them.
  - MRC Report to the Community: The review panel suggested changing this to a subtask under the Administration Task to save time and have more flexible funds.
  - WSU Beach Watcher Training: The NWSC is concerned about investing into a position that is currently uncertain. However, the WSU Beach Watcher volunteers do not want to take on the training themselves. The Coordinator position has been approved and the WSU Extension is currently organizing a review panel. They will likely advertise for the position soon.
  - WSU Shore Stewards: The review panel suggested separating this task from the Beach Watchers. This task can be contracted with someone directly. The Skagit Conservation District might be interested.
  - WSU Young Beach Stewards: The review panel questioned what makes this a WSU program and suggested contracting this task out to someone other than Beach Watchers.

- Recreational Crabber Outreach: Funding is possible through the Northwest Straits Foundation for this as a regional project and will include coordinating efforts of other MRCs. It can also be packaged with WDFW outreach efforts.
- Trail Tales: The review panel questioned what the MRC role is and how this project fits MRC priorities. They are concerned that it doesn't appear to be an MRC project, just pass through funds. Several MRC members are on the Advisory Board of the Friends of Skagit Beaches and will be involved in the development of the interpretive program. This project ties into past MRC projects centered on the Tommy Thompson trail including habitat restoration and forage fish interpretive signage. It also fits within the goals identified in Skagit MRC's 5-Year Strategic Plan. MRC funds will be used towards docent training and volunteer coordination.
- Freestad Lagoon Restoration Project Design: NWSC funds cannot be used for a design specific to private property. However, funds can be used for the interpretive signage component of the project. It is still unclear if there will be public access, so this project will be moved to a lower priority for funding.
- Guemes Island Drift Cell Analysis: The review panel suggested removing the outreach component of the project because it hasn't been needed in the past and we can't do any restoration work on private property. Another option would be to hold a Shore Stewards workshop there instead and maybe have an MRC meeting and invite residents to hear the results of the drift cell study.
- Shannon Point Forage Fish Habitat Restoration: The review panel was concerned that there wouldn't be enough time for permitting and that we were asking for enough funding to do the work. This is a great project and could easily be matched with other funds. They asked where the rock would go and suggested we partner with someone like the City to remove the rock. The MRC conceded that there will be plenty of time for permitting. Paul said that the cost estimates were determined by an experienced contractor. The rock would have to be removed by a barge because it can only be accessed by water. The contractor would have to determine what to do with the rock.
- Native oyster Restoration: We will need to add a monitoring component to the project to make the results measurable. The review panel also suggested taking a video of the monitoring work and contacting the media.

### **MRC/NWSC Chair/Lead Staff Meeting Summary**

- FY2011 Budget Update: letters of support received by congressional offices raised awareness of the local and regional support for the Initiative. Ginny is communicating with NOAA in hopes of securing funding to keep our infrastructure intact and she is working with Senator Murray's office to find a long-term funding solution.
- The Northwest Straits Foundation can contract directly with government agencies and private organizations. Joan said it is better to have a project ready to look for funding. some other ways to raise funds:
  - Ad hoc campaign - The recent derelict fishing gear capital campaign that raised \$14,000 to use for matching funds. Joan said the Foundation can help develop materials for this type of fundraising.
  - Mitigation funding – The City of Oak Harbor added \$50,000 to Cornet Bay restoration because it was an existing project.
  - Oil companies – Joan has successfully leveraged funds from BP, Shell and ConocoPhillips.
- Documenting Leveraged Funding: Adding in-kind as leveraged funds in addition to outside funding is critical, along with volunteer hours and partner cash sources. This information shows the greater effect of the federal dollars invested in the Northwest Straits. Island County documented leveraging \$3.45 for every \$1 of Island County MRC funds
- PSP Education and Outreach: Dave Ward presented on the PSP Stewardship program. They are now launching an update of the Action Agenda with new near-term actions with a 2-3 year time frame. Dave is working on how to build linkages with MRCs to be directly engaged with the Action Agenda.
- NWSC U-Tube video website: <http://www.youtube.com/user/nwstraits#g/a> - Sasha posted a video on Skagit MRC's Marine Sampling Training Expedition. The site also includes the car

wash kit video, underwater derelict gear removal videos, and a video called "Voices of the Strait, a Scuba View" funded by the PSP. This chapter of the Voices of the Strait series documents the changes Olympic Peninsula divers have seen in the last years.

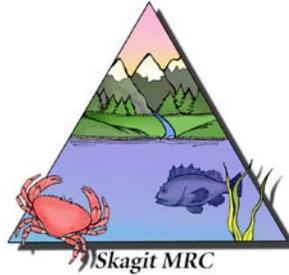
#### **2009-2011 Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** Kay Haaland, the WSU Extension Interim Director, is currently filling in as the WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator. They are currently in the process of forming an interview panel for the Beach Watcher Coordinator position. 15 new Beach Watcher volunteers recently completed the 50 hour spring training session. The newly recruited Beach Watchers will complete another 50 hour training session in the fall for a total of 100 hours of training. Erica is working on the final reports.
- **MRC Brochure:** The brochure will be finalized and printed soon.
- **LID Brochure:** The intern produced the first draft which is currently under review.
- **Anacortes Deport Rain Garden:** MRC funds will go towards purchasing LID materials. A contract has been drafted.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** Paul is working with the graduate student to complete the report.
- **Shannon Point Research Excursion:** The last two marine sampling training excursions took place April 4 and 5. The final report has been completed.
- **Smart Sponge (SWAT Unit Installation):** The experiment has been temporarily put on hold. Will continue with some of the experiments in one or two weeks. The final report will be completed in June.
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** Sampling at the trestle will take place in June for native oyster settlement. Searching for additional restoration sites. The final report will be completed in June.
- **Spartina Surveys:** No Report
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The date has been set for September 17. It will most likely be held at the Seafarer's Memorial Building in Anacortes.

#### **Announcements:**

- Vendovi Island, a 200 acre island located approximately seven miles north of Anacortes, has been purchased by the San Juan Preservation Trust. They will be collecting an inventory of the island's resources and developing a management plan. No public access will be allowed at this time. However, they do plan to run two public trips in June. Ivar Dolph has been asked to conduct bird surveys. The first bird survey was completed in April and the next one will occur May 25. Ivar recruited a team of experienced birders to help with the surveys. Ivar has also been invited to go out with NOAA to conduct a bird survey in Skagit Bay and the Rosario Straits area.
- The Bivalve Bash will be held July 16.
- Lori noted that May 4, 2011 was the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Skagit MRC.
- Neil reminded MRC members that we will need to identify restoration projects in Fidalgo and Padilla Bays and develop a 2012 work plan for the KC funds soon.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 A.M. The next meeting will be held June 9 at the Mount Vernon Senior Center.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the June 9, 2011 meeting held at the Mount Vernon Senior Center

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Paul Dinnel, Kurt Buchanan, Connie Thoman, Neil Borman, Erica Pickett, Lori Kyle, Kari Odden, Charles O'Hara, Mike Sato

**Members Absent:** Betsy Stevenson, Jim Ramaglia, Ivar Dolph, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Polly Fischer

**Others Attending:** Sandra Caldwell, Ecology; Gary Stoyka, Skagit County Public Works; Wendy Steffensen, RE-Sources

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Custom Plywood Mill Site Cleanup Plan Update- *Presented by Sandra Caldwell***

Sandra Caldwell from Ecology provided an update on the Puget Sound Initiative's bay-wide cleanup sites for Anacortes including: Cap Sante Marine, Custom Plywood, Dakota Creek, Former Scott Paper Mill, Former Shell Tank Farm, and Whitmarsh Landfill. The Puget Sound Initiative is a collaborative effort to cleanup, restore, and protect the Puget Sound by using a bay-wide approach rather than site specific, to achieve faster and more efficient results. Increased erosion has led to the exposure of the contaminated sediments which can potentially harm humans, wildlife, and the marine environment. This is why there is an urgent need to cleanup these contaminated sites and prevent further damage. To date, cleanup action for most of the Anacortes sites is near completion. Cleanup action for the upland area at the Custom Plywood site is scheduled to begin July 2011. Ecology has determined that the uplands cleanup should be expedited because the eroding upland soils are contaminating the marine environment. The majority of contaminants in the upland areas include petroleum products and metals. The contaminants in the aquatic area consist of dioxins and wood waste. The aquatic cleanup action will consist of dredging areas where dioxin concentrations are greater than 25ppt and thin layer capping where dioxin concentrations are between 10 and 25 ppt. A pilot study completed on the east coast will be used as an experimental approach to determine whether contaminants in eelgrass beds can be effectively capped. A long term monitoring plan will be required. In addition, pilings that are currently protecting the shoreline will be removed and replaced with break water extensions. A fish migration passage and forage fish habitat enhancement will also be included as part of the restoration plan.

Project Timeline:

- Upland construction (July – October 2011)
- JARPA (May 2011 -February 2012)

- Public comment period (February 2012 – May 2012)
- Interim Action Addendum, CAP, and EDR Cleanup
- In water construction (June 2012 – October 2013)

Ecology will work with the property owners to install and monitor ground water wells at each site to analyze the success of the cleanup action. The monitoring results might trigger some further remediation.

**Skagit Restoration Initiative:** Tracie Johannessen drafted a timeline for the 2012 Work Plan development:

- July 15, 2011 - Request for LOIs is distributed
- August 30, 2011 – Deadline for LOIs
- August 30, 2011 – Skagit MRC and Technical Committee review LOIs
- September 10, 2011 – Full proposals are requested; decline notices sent out
- October 30, 2011 – Full presented to proposals deadline
- November 1, 2011 – Review of proposed projects by Technical Committee
- December 3, 2011 – Draft Work Plan presented to Foundation Board of Directors
- December 8, 2011 – Draft Work Plan presented to the Skagit MRC
- January 12, 2012 – Final Work Plan approved by Skagit MRC
- January 27, 2012 – Final Work Plan approval by Foundation Board of Directors
- February 2012 – Comments from Kimberly Clark and Ecology
- February 2012 – Concurrence from Ecology
- April 1, 2012 - \$125,000 annual payment is received by the NWSF

The Skagit Restoration Initiative subcommittee will meet during the first week of July to discuss the 2012 Work Plan and develop criteria for the Letters of Interest (LOIs). It was determined that LOIs rather than a Request for Proposals would allow for a broader group of interests to participate. We currently have a balance of \$53,000 and another \$112,500 will be available 2012.

### **NWSC Meeting Report**

- This year's conference will be in Port Townsend at the Northwest Maritime Center on December 2-3. The NWSC staff will be sending out a "save the date" reminder soon. Funds for MRC members to participate in this event will be included in MRC grant agreements.
- Senator Patty Murray and Senator Norm Dicks introduced the Initiative's reauthorization bill.
- The NWSC ad hoc budget committee decided it was important to keep the infrastructure of the Initiative intact while looking for more secure sources of funding. In order to do this, they recommended a 6 month budget with the estimated remaining funds of \$380,000 to help ensure that MRC grants can begin July 1. Each MRC will receive an equal share of \$25,700 to cover the six month period (July 1 – December 31, 2011). The Northwest Straits Foundation will also help seek additional project funding for MRC work.
- The Salish Sea Conference will be held October 25-27 in Vancouver, B.C. MRC members are encouraged to attend. One scholarship for each MRC is available through the Northwest Straits Foundation.

### **Administrative Report**

- The 2009-2011 MRC Gant expires June 30, 2011. Grant deliverables are due June 17, 2011. This is a firm deadline. Please get those invoices in and report your volunteer hours and leveraged funds to Tracy.
- Each MRC will receive \$27,500 to help support administration and action projects through the end of 2011. Skagit County has agreed to pay for staff support so that most of the money allocated to the MRC through the NWSC will go directly towards projects for the next six months. Projects will include: *Spartina* surveys, Fidalgo Bay Day, Community Beach Seining Day at Ship Harbor, WSU Beach Watcher Training, Shore Stewards, and Young Beach Stewards.
- Please contact Tracy if you are interested in helping with the design and updates of the MRC website.

- The Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda is being updated. We can submit our MRC projects and ideas online. Please let Tracy know if there any projects or ideas you would like me to submit.
- We need to nominate somebody to fill the MRC Vice-Chair position. Please contact Tracy if you are interested or if you would like to nominate someone.

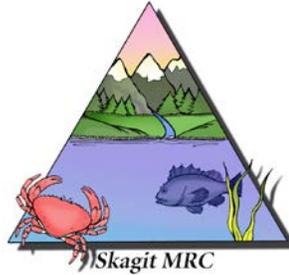
#### **2009-2011 Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Stewardship Programs:** 25 applications have been received for the Skagit County WSU Beach Watchers Coordinator position. Six or seven applicants will be selected to interview.
- **March's Point Post-Groin Removal Survey:** WSU Beach Watcher volunteers completed the survey in June. A draft report has been submitted.
- **LID Brochure:** The brochure has been completed. Approximately 200 brochures will be printed before the end of the month.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** The City of Anacortes is in the process of purchasing LID materials for the demonstration site.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** The final report has been completed.
- **Shannon Point Training Excursion:** The final report has been completed.
- **Smart Sponge/SWAT Unit:** Testing will continue through next year. This project will require some fine tuning. During the dry period samples will need to be taken after a good flush to get enough fecal coliform to test.
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** Monitored at the trestle early June. The 20 bags of oyster shell substrate placed near the trestle in 2009 showed signs of new Olympia oyster settlement. Received funding through the Northwest Straits Foundation to test the genetic viability of native oyster seed and add four potential new sites for native oyster restoration including: Fidalgo Bay, Kicket, East Padilla Bay, and Lone Tree. Temperature sensors have been deployed at each new site.
- **Spartina Surveys:** Survey training opportunities are posted on the People for Puget Sound website. Rachel was out surveying last week. Lori Kyle volunteered to be the Project Lead for the Spartina Program for the new six month MRC grant that begins July 1, 2011.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The planning committee recently met at Padilla Bay. This year's event is scheduled for September 17 and will be held at the Port of Anacortes Seafarer's Memorial Park Building.

#### **Miscellaneous Announcements:**

- The Port of Anacortes Seafarer's Memorial Park (former Scott's paper mill site) recently underwent extensive restoration. Removed contaminated soil, constructed two breakwater structures, enhanced forage fish spawning habitat, enhanced and stabilized the shoreline with native plants, installed interpretive signage, created better public access, and currently restoring eel grass beds. The Port of Anacortes will survey for forage fish and herring spawn after the eel grass restoration project is complete.
- This year's canoe journey will be landing at the Swinomish Reservation July 25<sup>th</sup>. There will be 100 canoes and they are expecting to have over 10,000 people attend. Parking will be available in La Conner and buses will transport people to the event.
- The Northwest Straits Foundation is sponsoring several Olympia oyster training workshops. The next workshop will be held at Fidalgo Bay on June 14, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- The next visioning workshop for the Skagit County Shoreline Master Program update will be held Wednesday, June 15m 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Skagit County Commissioners Admin Bldg.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m. The next meeting will be held July 14 at the Padilla Bay Reserve Center.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the July 14, 2011 meeting held at the Padilla Bay Reserve

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Kurt Buchanan, Connie Thoman, Neil Borman, Erica Pickett, Polly Fischer, Charles O'Hara, Neil Norcross (Alternate), Rachel Benbrook (Alternate)

**Members Absent:** Paul Dinnel, Betsy Stevenson, Jim Ramaglia, Ivar Dolph, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Kevin Bright, Rebecca Spurling, Lori Kyle, Kari Odden, Mike Sato

**Others Attending:** Ginny Broadhurst, Northwest Straits Commission

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

## **Northwest Straits Commission Update and Funding Issues-** *Presented by Ginny Broadhurst*

- As of July 1, we had to face the new budget reality of having almost no money. The NWSC was able to preserve enough money to keep staff going and to provide each MRC with \$27,500. It may be necessary to cancel some of the Commission meetings and limit travel to save money. Many of the other MRC's are using the money just to cover staff costs. The NWSC is encouraging MRCs to keep their presence in the community, keep the meetings going, and keep the structure intact. There is some funding to help with some small projects. Ginny said that the Skagit MRC is pretty fortunate in that the County has agreed to pay for staff time so that the majority of the funding can go directly towards projects. In addition, the Skagit MRC is also receiving money for restoration work in Fidalgo and Padilla Bays as part of the Kimberly Clark natural resources damage assessment settlement.
- The good news is that the NWSC will be receiving \$400,000 from the EPA in 2012. These funds will likely be routed through the Puget Sound Partnership instead of NOAA and administered through Ecology. It is hoped that by routing the money through the Puget Sound Partnership, it will open more funding opportunities. Ginny is drafting a scope of how the money will be spent. The scope includes linkages to the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda and the MRCs. Although it hasn't been finalized, it is anticipated that each MRC will receive the same level of funding (\$27,500) for the first six month period of 2012 (January 1 – June 30, 2012). Money through the state will require a match, so it will be helpful if the MRCs can leverage the funds through volunteer hours, county staff, services, equipment, partnerships, etc. It is more important than ever to account for volunteer time. More information about the EPA money and scope of work will be available at the July 29 NWSC meeting.

- The NWSC currently has enough EPA funding to allow at least one person from each MRC to attend the Salish Sea conference October 25-27, 2011.
- Ginny is currently working with Senator Patty Murray's staff to put together an evaluation panel for finding a long term funding solution. The panel will come up with a list of recommendations possibly as soon as August 2011.
- The NWSC and the Northwest Straits Foundation have been busy looking for additional funding to help support some of the projects listed by the MRC's as high priorities. They were successful in securing funding for the recreational crabber outreach for several of the MRCs. There is enough money available to help with outreach materials for this year's crabbing season and to get outreach materials ready for next year as well.
- It is still unclear where we stand with the Puget Sound Partnership's Lead Integration Organization process for the Whidbey Basin Action Area. Ginny will forward the PSP document on what the Lead Integration Organization Process is and how funding is passed through. It will be a way for the PSP to pass funding down to the local level to pay for things to happen that were identified in the Action Agenda. It is really important for the MRC's to line up their work with the PSP Action Agenda in order to get more funding.

### **NWSC Meeting Report**

- This year's annual MRC/NWSC conference will be in Port Townsend at the Northwest Maritime Center on December 2-3. The agenda will include an opportunity for the MRCs to share stories on how to keep going on a small budget and identify different ways to revive the MRC's role to remain vital in the community. Some of the other MRCs have talked about taking on more of an advisory role in the community.
- The Northwest Straits Initiative's re-authorization bill passed the Senate and is now waiting for approval from the House. So far we have had a lot of support.
- The Salish Sea Conference will be held October 25-27 in Vancouver, B.C. MRC members are encouraged to attend. One scholarship for each MRC is available through the Northwest Straits Foundation.
- Congressman Rick Larsen joined the derelict gear removal team one day for an observation in Whatcom County.
- The NWSC would like to provide recognition of an MRC signature project through some type of an award. The proposed award project will get local government and the media involved in what the MRCs have accomplished and possibilities in the future. The Commission staff is currently ironing out the details.

### **Skagit Restoration Initiative:**

- Tracie Johannessen's role with the Northwest Straits Foundation and the Skagit Restoration Initiative includes implementing and tracking the process for proposals, developing draft timelines and evaluative tools for approval by the committee and helping to administer funds and generate final work plans. Because Tracie is the wife of Jim Johannessen, of Coastal Geologic Services, she will not participate in the evaluation of project proposals in order to avoid a potential conflict of interest.
- \$23,623 remains from the Coastal Protection Fund which was intended for the East March's Point groin removal project. This money expires December 2011. Skagit MRC is considering asking for an extension to use the funds for removing the remaining section of groins and additional beach nourishment at the site. The committee will need to review the March's Point groin removal monitoring plan and survey results before determining the next steps.
- The Committee discussed priorities for restoration projects in the Padilla Bay and Fidalgo Bay nearshore for the 2012 work plan. Land acquisition was discussed as an element of the strategy. There is a potential opportunity for purchasing tidelands adjacent to the Padilla Bay Reserve. Other potential restoration projects included removing the remaining section of the groins at East March's Point and beach nourishment.
- A request for Letters of Intent/Interest (LOI) has been drafted by Tracie Johannessen and approved by Committee members. The request will be widely distributed July 15. The deadline

for LOIs will be August 30, 2011. The next step will be to ask for full proposals. The proposal evaluation template will need to be slightly modified for land acquisition proposals.

- The Committee adopted the time line with modification that the draft workplan be approved by the Skagit MRC at the November meeting prior to submission to the NWS Foundation Board.

### **Administrative Report**

- The remaining balance of the 2009-2011 MRC Grant is approximately **\$70,000**
- MRC grant reports have been submitted. Thanks to everybody for providing the information needed to get the reports done.
- The County signed the grant contract with Ecology to receive \$27,500 to help support administration and action projects through the end of 2011. Skagit County has agreed to pay for staff support so that most of the money allocated to the MRC through the NWS Foundation will go directly towards projects for the next six months. Projects will include: *Spartina* surveys, Fidalgo Bay Day, Community Beach Seining Day at Ship Harbor, WSU Beach Watcher Training, Shore Stewards, and Young Beach Stewards. These projects and deliverables must be completed by December 31, 2011, so there will be a very fast turnaround.
- A contract amendment with People for Puget Sound for the *Spartina* surveys has been drafted and is waiting for signatures. The amendment will include an additional \$3,100 of grant funding to continue surveying for *Spartina* in Skagit County through the end of this year.
- An Interlocal Agreement with WSU has been drafted and is under review for signatures. The contract will include Beach Watchers training and volunteer coordination, Shore Stewards workshop and outreach, and Young Beach Stewards training and volunteer coordination.
- Due to the recent poor meeting attendance and the inability to reach a quorum, it was suggested that we revisit our By-laws and the definition of a quorum.

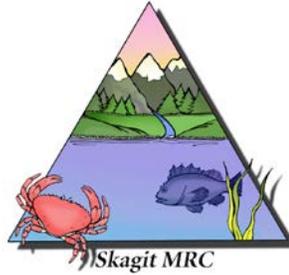
### **Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Beach Watchers:** Six applicants will be interviewed for the WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator position July 15. Chrys Bertolotto formed an advisory group to create a business plan for a more self sustainable Beach Watchers program.
- **March's Point Post-Groin Removal Survey:** WSU Beach Watcher volunteers completed the survey in June. A draft report has been submitted. The data collected will need to be analyzed. Analysis should also include comparing data collected for the RSI for March's Point with the recent survey data.
- **LID Brochure:** The brochure has been completed.
- **Anacortes Depot Rain Garden:** The City of Anacortes purchased LID materials for the Depot demonstration site. The final report has been completed.
- **Cannery Pond Study:** The final report has been completed. However, there will be no thesis.
- **Shannon Point Training Excursion:** The final report has been completed.
- **Smart Sponge/SWAT Unit:** A draft report has been completed. Testing will continue through next year. This project will require some fine tuning. During the dry period samples will need to be taken after a good flush to get enough fecal coliform to test.
- **Native Oyster Restoration:** The final report has been completed. There is enough funding from other sources (other than the MRC) to continue this project over the next two years.
- ***Spartina* Surveys:** *Spartina* surveys have taken place in Fidalgo Bay and along the shorelines of Guemes and Cypress Islands. Rachel met with the Jefferson MRC and gave a presentation on *Spartina* at Port Angeles in June. *Spartina* training took place in Port Townsend. People for Puget Sound recently hired someone to work as a temporary part-time coordinator for *Spartina* surveys in Clallam and Jefferson Counties. There has been a slow start to the growing season so they will likely be surveying through October. It's been getting more and more difficult to find *Spartina*.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** This year's event is scheduled for September 17 and will be held at the Port of Anacortes Seafarer's Memorial Park Building. Planning is well underway.

### **Miscellaneous Announcements:**

- Polly announced that the Puget Sound Anglers and the Anacortes Parks and Recreation sponsored the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Kids Fishing Derby at Heart Lake on June 4. Each one of the 247 kids who participated took home at least five fish. Several of the fish weighed as much as 5 lbs! The number of participating boats doubled from last year's event. Polly thought it would be great to videotape the event next year. Erica suggested contacting the Anacortes High School video program.
- The Swinomish Tribe is hosting this year's Salish Sea Canoe Journey which will take place July 25-31. It is anticipated that around 110 canoes will be participating and approximately 10,000 people are expected to attend this year's event. A shuttle bus will be provided to transport folks to and from the event. The event flyer will include a map that will show where everything will be located. Charlie will distribute the event flyer to MRC members as soon as it is available. For more information check out the website: <http://paddletoswinomish.com/>.
- Ten juvenile Chinook and Coho salmon were caught during two beach seine surveys that took place at the Port's O' Avenue restoration site.
- Ivar recently assisted NOAA with a birding survey aboard a NOAA research vessel. He noted that there is a lot of research going on in the Salish Sea that most of us are unaware of. MRC members entertained the idea of having some kind of a regional electronic bulletin board where research from various organizations could be posted and viewed online.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, August 10 at the Seafarer's Memorial Building in Anacortes.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the August 10, 2011 meeting held at the Seafarer's Memorial Park Building, Anacortes

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Connie Thoman, Betsy Stevenson, Lori Kyle, Ivar Dolph, Polly Fischer, Christine Woodward, Mike Sato

**Members Absent:** Paul Dinnel, Kurt Buchanan, Neil Borman, Erica Pickett, Jim Ramaglia, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara, Rebecca Spurling, Kari Odden

**Others Attending:** Joan Drinkwin, Northwest Straits Foundation; Rick Haley, Skagit County Public Works; Pete Haase; Lee First, RE-Sources; Lynne Jordan, WSU Beach Watchers

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Clean Samish Initiative:** *Presented by Rick Haley*

Fecal coliform has been problematic in the Samish watershed for decades. One of the biggest challenges in abating the pollution problem is the wide variety of mixed uses within the Samish watershed and the multiple water courses that feed into it. The amount of fecal coliform in the Samish changes seasonally, with the highest levels occurring in the spring during big rain events. There are many possible sources of polluting bacteria in the Samish including: impaired septic systems, manure spreading practices, human recreational activities, marina live-aboard boats, and livestock, wildlife, waterfowl, and pet waste.

Although improvements have been made to the Samish Bay pollution issue through public education and outreach, the repair and replacement of failing septic systems, and implementation of farm management plans, recent water quality tests show that there is still much work to be done. Samish Bay was closed to commercial shellfish harvest for more than 10 weeks in 2008 and 2009, due to high numbers of fecal coliform bacteria during rain events. This brought regional attention and led to the creation of the Clean Samish Initiative (CSI), a multiple partnership organization whose primary goal is to achieve both short and long-term pollution reductions in the Samish Basin. CSI Partners include: Skagit County, the State Departments of Ecology and Health, the Skagit Conservation District, the Skagit Conservation Education Alliance, the Samish Tribe, the Western Washington Agricultural Association, the Washington State Dairy Federation, EPA, and Taylor Shellfish, among others.

In 2010, the CSI was awarded a three-year \$960,000 EPA grant along with a match from the Skagit County's Clean Water fund, to improve water quality in the Samish River Basin. A work plan was developed under the CSI which involves concentrated water quality monitoring and microbial source tracking, land owner contact, voluntary property inspections (septic, animal access, manure handling), public education and outreach, land owner assistance and incentive programs, and follow-up

enforcement if needed. In response to the recent downgrade of 4,000 acres of Samish Bay by the Health Department, Governor Christine Gregoire challenged state agencies to address this issue more quickly. In response, local officials released a more ambitious plan and accelerated timeline to improve water quality. The new goal is to have the shellfish beds back in approved status by the fall of 2012.

To date, several public meetings and workshops have been held. Water quality monitoring is being conducted regularly and results are posted on the CSI website: (<http://www.skagitcounty.net/Common/Asp/Default.asp?d=PublicWorksCleanWater&c=General&p=cleansamish.htm>). The County is working to identify specific locations and sources of pollution. Two rounds of microbial source tracking have been completed and results are expected to be available in the fall. A public meeting will be held to share the results. Voluntary site visits with willing landowners are being conducted. If potential sources or conditions of fecal coliform bacteria pollution are present, the inspectors will refer landowners to appropriate resource agencies with programs designed to help eliminate the pollution. Follow-up monitoring and landowner contact will help to ensure improvements. Enforcement of County or State regulations will occur only in the case that landowners with demonstrated pollution problems do not cooperate voluntarily. The Skagit Conservation District enlisted a peer to peer livestock owner group to talk to other livestock owners about available resources and Best Management Practices to improve water quality. The County has a Natural Resources Stewardship program that provides free fencing, invasive plant removal, and riparian planting on land owner property. Multiple portable toilets and pet waste stations have been placed throughout the Samish watershed in an effort to reduce the pollution associated with both human and pet waste. A map with all of the pet waste station and portable toilet locations can be found on the CSI website.

#### **Northwest Straits Foundation Project Support:** *Presented by Joan Drinkiwin*

Joan presented the spreadsheet of MRC projects and possible funding opportunities for projects. Funding sources can include grants, sponsors, fund raising, etc. It might be more difficult to find funding for research/monitoring projects such as drift cell analysis. Project designs might need to be slightly tweaked to make them more competitive for funding. Priority projects that would be good candidates for grant funding as well as projects that could be funded as a package with other MRC projects were discussed. Some of our education and outreach projects might be good candidates to fund as a package with other MRC education and outreach projects. The Shannon Point rip rap removal project was identified as a great candidate for grant funding, but more information is needed including an engineering survey and permission from the property owners (i.e. City of Anacortes and Shannon Point Marine Center). It was suggested that we create a list of all potential projects regardless of scale, costs, or private land issues. You never know what type of funding might become available or what partnerships could form with certain projects.

#### **Skagit Restoration Initiative**

Jim Johannessen completed a preliminary draft design for the Weaverling Spit restoration project.

#### **NWSC Meeting Report**

- The NWSC meeting summary was distributed electronically to all Skagit MRC members.
- The Jefferson MRC is submitting a proposal in support of a ban of fin fish aquaculture as part of the Jefferson County Shoreline Master Program update. They requested a letter of support from the NWSC. The NWSC Technical Committee agreed to review Jefferson's proposal and will make a recommendation to the Commission at the August NWSC meeting. Although fin fish aquaculture occurs in Skagit County, the Skagit County MRC has never taken a position regarding this issue.
- The 13<sup>th</sup> annual NWSC/MRC Conference will be held December 2-3 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. Planning is currently underway. This year there will be a silent auction and donations will be needed from MRCs and Commissioners.

#### **Administrative Report**

- The new six month MRC grant period recently began July 1, 2011. There is no budget update report this month.
- The contract amendment with People for Puget Sound for the Spartina surveys is currently undergoing the signature process.

- The Interlocal Agreement with WSU for the Beach Watchers/Shore Stewards program is currently undergoing the signature process. The contract will be ratified for work to begin July 1, 2011. WSU is unable to take on the Young Beach Stewards during this short grant period so we will be contracting with Christine Betchley to complete this task.
- The NWSC has been awarded an EPA grant for \$400,000 for 2012. Each MRC will receive another \$27,500. Funding will be available for another six month period (January 1, 2012- June 30, 2012). This grant requires a match which can be made through volunteer hours, staff time, equipment, donations, partnerships, etc. We will need to start putting together a list of project ideas and proposals by September. Please submit your project proposals to Tracy.
- Don't forget to register for the NWSC/MRC conference. The conference will be held December 2-3 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. Please contact Connie Price if you plan to attend. There is money in the budget to reimburse MRC members for travel and hotel. It is more important than ever to try to attend the conference this year, even if it's just for one day. Conference details can be viewed on the NWSC website: <http://www.nwstraits.org/Whats-New/Meetings-Events/2011-MRC-Conference.aspx>.
- A free 2-day workshop on project design and evaluation for Eco-Net members will be held October 5-6 (8:30 am to 4:30 pm) in Olympia. Space is limited, so you must register with Kristen Cooley: [Kristen.cooley@psp.wa.gov](mailto:Kristen.cooley@psp.wa.gov). The subject line for email: Registration for Project Design & Evaluation Workshop. You must include your name, organization, Local Eco-Net Affiliation, contact info and confirm your commitment to attend both days of training. The deadline for registration is September 6.

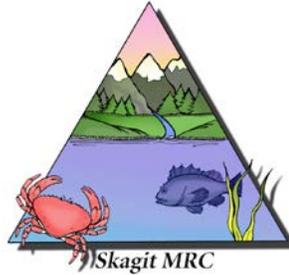
#### **Project Status & Discussion:**

- **WSU Beach Watchers:** Ivar introduced Lynne Jordan who was recently hired as the new WSU Beach Watchers/Shore Stewards Coordinator. Welcome Lynne!
- **Community Beach Seining Event:** Shannon Point Marine Center and Skagit Beach Watchers sponsored a "Community Beach Seining" event at Ship Harbor on August 8. This was a public educational event and the data collected will be added to a fish database. Approximately 25 people attended the event.
- **Spartina Surveys:** Spartina surveys have taken place at Sequim Bay and Discovery bay on the Olympic Peninsula, as well as the Chuckanut shoreline on the Whatcom/Skagit County line. See <http://pugetsound.org/science/spartina-program/2010schedule> for details.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** This year's event is scheduled for September 17 and will be held at the Port of Anacortes Seafarer's Memorial Park Building.

#### **Miscellaneous Announcements:**

- National Estuaries Day is September 24, 2011. The Samish Nation has pledged to survey the Fidalgo Bay area for cleanup opportunities and to conduct outreach for a Fidalgo Bay Clean-Up Day event.
- The Samish Nation received EPA funding to enhance their stormwater monitoring program. They partnered with the City of Anacortes to monitor additional storm drains and conduct outreach to reduce pet waste.
- A large amount of wood waste was discovered covering prime forage fish habitat at the Fidalgo Bay beach restoration site. Shellfish beds had to be temporarily closed to recreational harvests as a precaution while the wood waste was tested for contaminants. Because it is unclear how the wood waste got there, it will be difficult to prevent this occurrence from happening again.
- DNR's Secret Harbor restoration project design is 30% complete and is anticipated to be 100% complete by September. Creosote pilings have all been removed. EPA funding will be used for the biological monitoring and analyzing potential water quality impacts. DNR is still seeking funding for the restoration portion of the project.
- Ivar made three trips to Vendovi Island to survey birds. 65 different species of birds were identified.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday, September 8 at the Mount Vernon Senior Center.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the September 8, 2011 meeting held at the Mount Vernon Senior Center

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Connie Thoman, Betsy Stevenson, Lori Kyle, Ivar Dolph, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Erica Pickett, Jim Ramaglia, Charles O'Hara, Rebecca Spurling, Kari Odden, Kevin Bright, Rachel Benbrook, Todd Woodard (MRC Alternate), Neil Norcross (MRC Alternate)

**Members Absent:** Paul Dinnel, Kurt Buchanan, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward

**Others Attending:** Lee First, RE-Sources; Pat Curry, Tesoro; Carrie Wilcoxon, Padilla Bay; Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR; Myless (Chip) Boothe, Ecology

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Tesoro's Proposal to Ship Crude By Rail:** *Presented by Rebecca Spurling and Pat Curry*  
High quality domestic crude oil was recently discovered in Williston North Dakota. The biggest challenge is getting the crude oil to a refinery without having to build a new one. Tesoro is proposing to transport the crude oil by rail from North Dakota to the refinery at west March's Point in Anacortes using existing infrastructure. A unit train of 100 rail tanker cars (over 1 mile long) will be dedicated to this task. New facilities will be constructed for loading and unloading which will consist of a concrete platform with a secondary containment area, two new sets of spur tracks, and an administration/control building. This project will allow Tesoro to increase its supply of crude oil by an average of 30,000 barrels per day and will cost approximately \$50 million to complete.

Several studies have been completed or are in the process of being completed to help assess potential environmental impacts including: a biological assessment, a wetland assessment, a stormwater flow study, and a cultural resources study. An environmental checklist has been completed and submitted to the County along with the site plan and other application materials which will be available to the public sometime in October. In order to help mitigate potential environmental impacts, the project design will include a 200ft set back from the shoreline and the cows currently located on the project site will be moved upland. Impacts to wetlands will also be avoided. Concrete railroad ties will take the place of creosote ties. Elements for managing stormwater runoff will be incorporated into the project design including: bioswales, a detention pond, a retention pond, and other things that provide filterability. If determined to be jurisdictional by the Corps, one of the major ditches that flows directly to Fidalgo Bay will be filled to redirect stormwater flow from the concrete platform to a treatment center. Filling the ditch and redirecting stormwater flow will also help reduce erosive impacts by reducing the energy of flow. There is a permitted discharge for offloading crude oil on a concrete surface. The concrete pad will have a lip to help catch any spills. An industrial stormwater discharge permit will be

required during construction. In addition, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and a Spill Prevention and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan will be developed for potential spills. A geographic response plan (GRP) is already in place due to pipelines that parallel the train tracks. A robust maintenance plan for the unit train will also be put in place. Crews will routinely inspect the rail cars on a daily basis. Brand new cars will be dedicated to this service. Air quality will not be an issue because it is an intake system with one-way valves so there will be no emissions. It is anticipated that there will only be a small impact on traffic compared to historic use, because up until now there has been a decrease in rail use. It is anticipated that HWY 20 would only be exposed to an average of one Unit train a day. The intersections will not be blocked for more than 10 minutes. It is also anticipated that this project will likely result in reduced overall marine activity because fewer ships and pipelines will be required for transporting oil.

### **NWSC Meeting Report**

- The NWSC meeting summary was distributed electronically to all Skagit MRC members.
- Senator Murray fully supports the Northwest Straits Initiative and agreed that it's important to find a way to keep it funded.
- The 13<sup>th</sup> annual NWSC/MRC Conference will be held December 2-3 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. Planning is currently underway. Don't forget to register!
- The Jefferson MRC submitted a proposal in support of a ban of fin fish aquaculture as part of the Jefferson County Shoreline Master Program update that was rejected by the Department of Ecology (DOE), so they requested a letter of support from the NWSC. The NWSC Technical Committee reviewed Jefferson's proposal and drafted a letter to DOE from the whole Commission asking DOE to review the exemption of finfish agriculture from regulated discharge under the Clean Water Act. The Commission noted that they do not endorse or oppose finfish aquaculture.
- At the conclusion of the meeting there was a site visit to the Coupeville phytoremediation project site. The site consisted of a swale and poplar trees that they planted to improve water quality. They are currently evaluating the effectiveness of the project for treating stormwater. They would eventually like to use it to treat water from the wastewater treatment plant.

### **Administrative Report**

- The budget report was emailed. So far we have only spent \$237 out of the \$27,500 budget for this six month grant period.
- Several MRCs have been working on getting their projects into the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda. Either Tracy or Betsy will try to get in touch with Rebecca Ponzio to try to get an update on the Local Integrating Organization process and to determine the proper procedures for getting our projects into the Action Agenda. Action Agenda update workshops will be held: September 13, 14, and 15 in Tacoma.
- The NWSC has been awarded an EPA grant for \$400,000 for 2012. Each MRC will receive another \$27,500. Funding will be available for another six month period (January 1, 2012- June 30, 2012). This grant requires a match which can be made through volunteer hours, staff time, equipment, donations, partnerships, etc. We will need to start putting together a list of project ideas and proposals by October. The proposals will need to be completed and approved by November, so the grant can be fully amended and executed by the end of December. Please submit your project proposals to Tracy.
- A free 2-day workshop on project design and evaluation for Eco-Net members will be held October 5-6 (8:30 am to 4:30 pm) in Olympia. Registration deadline was September 6.
- Neil will receive the NWSC scholarship as the Skagit MRC representative to attend the Salish Sea Conference in Vancouver BC.

### **Skagit MRC Vice Chair Election**

- MRC members unanimously elected Kari Odden as the new Skagit MRC Vice-Chair through the end of 2011. New elections will occur January 2012.

### **Skagit Restoration Initiative Update**

We recently received four letters of intent: 1. Nearshore habitat restoration at Bay View State Park (submitted by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission); 2. Implement and expand native oyster restoration project in Fidalgo Bay as part of a 10-year goal to enhance 100 acres of native oyster habitat in Puget Sound (submitted by the Puget Sound Restoration Fund); 3. Initiate the scoping and analysis for an estuarine restoration project in the South Padilla Bay area (submitted by the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve); 4. Complete a land acquisition project within the tidelands of Padilla Bay. The subcommittee will meet after the regular MRC meeting to decide which ones to invite for full proposals. The deadline for full proposals is October 30, 2011. Established criteria will be used to evaluate each proposal.

Todd reported that they are making a few adjustments to the preliminary design plans for the Phase II beach restoration project near the RV Park and are moving ahead with the permitting process. The schedule is right on track to begin the work next summer. They are making headway with Phase III of the beach restoration that will occur right in front of the RV Park and extend all the way up to the undeveloped shoreline of Weaverling Spit. Lori reported that Tom Slocum completed the preliminary survey for the rip rap removal at Shannon Point Marine Center.

### **Skagit ECONet Update**

The Skagit ECONet meeting was held September 1. Kristen Cooley and Debbie Ruggles from the PSP talked about funding availability and grant opportunities for the ECONet group. They are seeking project proposal ideas that would fit the grant criteria. Corrine Story talked about the status of the Clean Samish Initiative. Kristi Carpenter talked about the Friday Creek Habitat Stewards and stormwater education. Betsy Stevenson talked about the Shoreline Master Program update. The draft analysis and inventory characterization report is on the County website. Written comments will be accepted until September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Samish River Family Festival will be held October 8 at the Donovan County Park in Alger (11:00 – 3:00 PM). Ward Krkoska talked about how they have been getting a lot of public participation in SCEA's Letter Box trail. Many of the educational posters are now available in Spanish. The Puget Sound Partnership is offering free project design and evaluation training for ECONet members that will take place October 5 and 6 in Olympia.

### **Project Status & Discussion**

- **WSU Beach Watchers:** WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator Lynne Jordan is working with the Snohomish WSU Beach Watcher Chrys Bertolotto to plan for the second half of the Beach Watcher training that will begin in October.
- **Community Beach Seining Event:** Shannon Point Marine Center and Skagit Beach Watchers sponsored a "Community Beach Seining" event at Ship Harbor on August 8. This was a public educational event and the data collected will be added to a fish database. Approximately 25 people attended the event.
- ***Spartina* Surveys:** *Spartina* surveys in Clallam and Jefferson Counties have primarily involved walking along the shoreline rather than kayak-based surveys. So far only one small plant has been found. The online Washington Coastal Atlas has been a very useful tool in locating public beach accesses (<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/coastalatlus/>). Several plants were found in the N. Swinomish Channel which has caused some concern because they will be going to seed unless they are treated soon. So far approximately 50 miles of shoreline have been surveyed.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** This year's event is scheduled for September 17 and will be held at the Port of Anacortes Seafarer's Memorial Park Building. This year there will be ice cream provided by the Mad Hatter Ice Cream in addition to the usual seafood and chowder.

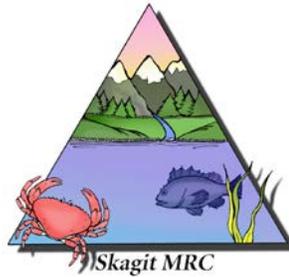
### **Miscellaneous Announcements**

- The Samish Indian Nation is organizing and hosting a Fidalgo Bay area cleanup event as part of National Estuaries Day which will be held 9:00 – 3:00 PM on September 24, 2011. They are seeking volunteers to participate in this event. More information can be found on their website ([www.samishtribe.nsn.us](http://www.samishtribe.nsn.us)).
- The Samish Indian Nation received funding as part of a USGS study to develop a fine scale circulation model of Fidalgo Bay that shows sediment movement, and potential impacts that the

removal of the causeway might have on eel grass beds. This study will be completed as soon as they get enough data to cover seasonal influence (2012 or 2013).

- Ivar made four trips to Vendovi Island to survey birds. Bird surveys will continue on a monthly basis until they collect enough seasonal data.
- The results from the microbial source tracking study as part of the Clean Samish Initiative will be provided during a community meeting at the Edison Elementary School September 8<sup>th</sup> 6:00-8:00 PM.
- The Skagit Conservation District is putting together a proposal to produce a video that will show the before and after footage of restoration projects as well as an entertaining educational component that will show the movement and path of stormwater using rubber ducks representing pollution. They will partner with the Northwest Indian College and the City stormwater programs in Skagit County.
- The Skagit Valley Festival of Family Farms will be held October 1 and 2, 2011. Visit their website for more information: <http://www.festivaloffamilyfarms.com/>.
- Beach Watchers and Shannon Point Marine Center have been going out to Friday Harbor once a month to identify and count seabirds along transects aboard the Centennial research vessel.
- Rachel announced that due to budget shortfalls, People for Puget Sound was forced to go through another round of lay-offs which included the elimination of Mike Sato's position. Mike was with People for Puget Sound for 20 years and will be greatly missed. Because Mike will no longer be able to represent People for Puget Sound on the Skagit MRC, the MRC conceded that Rachel should take Mike's place. Rachel is currently listed as Mike's alternate on the Skagit MRC membership roster, so the roster will need to be amended and approved by the County Commissioners to make it official.

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday, October 13 at the Port's Seafarer's Memorial Park building.



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the October 13, 2011 meeting held at the Seafarer's Memorial Building in Anacortes

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Connie Thoman, Paul Dinnel, Kurt Buchanan, Lori Kyle, Ivar Dolph, Erica Pickett, Jim Ramaglia, Rachel Benbrook

**Members Absent:** Betsy Stevenson, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Rebecca Spurling, Kari Odden, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara

**Others Attending:** Sharon Riggs, Padilla Bay NERR; Lisa Kaufman, DNR; Lynne Jordan, WSU Beach Watchers; Jesse Sayles, Arizona State University

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Cypress Island-Secret Harbor Restoration Project:** *Presented by Lisa Kaufman*

Cypress Island became heavily modified since the late 1800s when it was first homesteaded. In the 1960s the state designated Cypress Island as the first natural resource conservation area. Certain areas of the island are highly valuable and classified as a natural resource protection area because of the unique biological and habitat features. DNR now owns about 95% of the island. The state-owned land of ~48 acres is protected and managed under a comprehensive management plan: [http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/amp\\_na\\_cypress\\_plan.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/amp_na_cypress_plan.pdf). The plan will continue to be updated as things change and as new goals are created. It was last updated in 2007 after DNR created an aquatic reserve around the tidelands and bedlands of the island. The management plan will be reviewed every five years.

To date, most of the buildings on the island have been demolished. A few will be retained and restored for recreational and educational purposes. Historical records have been reviewed and a cultural resources assessment is underway. Several middens have been discovered. The Samish Tribe is conducting most of the baseline sampling which includes biological and physical data. They are currently looking for volunteers from the Audubon Society to help with bird surveys. Nearshore fish use assessments have been completed for all areas of the island, except for Secret Harbor, which will occur in 2012: [http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/aqr\\_rsve\\_cypress\\_fishmonitoring\\_rprt.pdf](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/aqr_rsve_cypress_fishmonitoring_rprt.pdf). Beach seining will take place in Secret Harbor in 2012. A weather station has been installed and is collecting precipitation data, wind, and temperature. Baseline vegetation monitoring has also been completed. Water quality monitoring is ongoing. A small feasibility study was completed to address what to do with the sewer lagoons on the property that haven't been used since the 1980's. Consultants recommended breaching the left lagoon and letting the middle one drain on its own. The area will be replanted to

speed up the eutrophication process to become a forested wetland. The project design is now 30% complete and addresses key restoration areas:

- Partial removal of a tidal dike and filling of ditches to restore hydrology and allow the wetland to regenerate. Salt marsh plants are already at the site which is a good sign for maintaining a wetland.
- Removal of culverts to allow for tidal influence and provide fish access. Fish have been observed in the estuary.
- Removal of the road and removal of fill to create estuarine channels and open up to salt water influx.
- Re-grading of berms around stock ponds. Although the ponds aren't natural, it was determined that they provide good habitat, so they will be left intact.
- Installing a culvert to maintain the trail system and increase water flow to the ditches and freshwater wetland system. Re-vegetate with native wetland plants to restore wetland functions.
- Removal of a derelict creosote-treated dock.
- Renovate the former Secret Harbor School for Boys building for recreational, research, and educational use. Renovation features will include the installation of solar panels, a septic system, and internet access.

DNR is currently seeking ~ \$400,000 for the construction phase which is supposed to take place in 2013. The permitting process will begin in January. Some of the work will be done in-house to help keep costs down. Following construction, the project will include up to five years of monitoring to determine the extent to which the habitat has recovered. Monitoring will also provide for adaptive management of the site to improve any conditions that have not recovered. Carbon sequestering will also be monitored to analyze the changes over time as the salt marsh becomes established.

#### **NWSC Meeting Report** (*September 30, 2011- Friday Harbor*)

- The NWSC meeting summary was distributed electronically to all Skagit MRC members.
- Dr. Gary Greene and Dr. Tina Wyllie-Echeverria researched and developed a predictive model for Pacific sand lance in deep water sediment fields of the San Juan Archipelago. The results of the study indicated that sand lance prefer medium to coarse grains, sub-tidal habitat hosts all age classes of sand lance, and there is a high density of sand lance in the sediment during the winter months starting in October. They found all stages of sexual maturity, although only 5% of the sample fish were sexually mature. The model has the ability to successfully track and monitor the species, but there is still more work to be done.
- Tom Cowan has been working with tribes to increase reporting of lost fishing gear to the Commission.
- Reviewed the origin of the San Juan County Local Integrating Organization (LIO) of the Puget Sound Partnership. The LIO process consists of an Accountability Oversight Committee (five members, two appointed by county council members and 2-3 tribal members, and an ex-officio member from the Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council. In addition, there is an Implementation Committee that consists of 14 members appointed by local entities. They provide prioritization of funding and improve coordination between groups working on the Action Agenda.
- The NWSC received a letter from Ecology regarding the net pen issue in Jefferson County. Ecology said that the state requires marine net pen facilities to obtain coverage under a site specific National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The discharge standards represent all known, available and reasonable treatment for marine salmon net pens. Ecology has not granted any exemptions to the Clean Water Act for marine net pens. However, Ecology identified proposed policies on net pen aquaculture under the Jefferson County Shoreline Master Program that will need further attention to meet the requirements of the Shoreline Management Act.
- Kathy Fletcher and Terrie Klinger's terms on the Commission will expire at the end of October. Tom Bancroft has been attending as Kathy's alternate. Tom and Terrie are interested in reapplying for Commission seats. However, there are no designated seats so anyone can apply.
- Ginny is encouraging everyone to look for local business support for MRC projects.

- Connie distributed reminder cards to register for the MRC Conference in Port Townsend on December 2-3.

#### **NWSC/MRC Conference** (*December 2-3, 2011, Northwest Maritime Center, Port Townsend*)

- Registration Deadline - Please register for the conference ASAP. The deadline for registration is November 21.
- Reimbursement- There is enough money in our budget to cover MRC members who wish to attend the conference. Please let Tracy know if you are planning to attend. For reimbursement please keep all of your receipts. If you are paying with a credit card you must provide a photo copy of the credit card with all numbers blacked out except for the last four. Or you can provide a copy of your credit card statement with everything blacked out except for the conference transactions. If you are paying with a check you must provide a copy of the cashed check (front and back). If you are paying with cash you are only required to provide the receipts. There is a \$93 per diem for hotels in Port Townsend. We can only reimburse you for a one night stay.
- Silent Auction-The NWSC has requested each MRC donate a gift basket with items that have a local flavor or are experience oriented. The goal is to build community connections between MRC members and to raise money to help underwrite conference expenses. Paul contacted Taylor's Seafood who has agreed to contribute a \$50 gift certificate and the Padilla Bay Estuarine Research Reserve will donate a sweatshirt. Jim has agreed to donate one or two of his amazing underwater photos. Lori will donate a jar of pickled onions and a jar of pickled garlic. Thank you all for your generous contributions. Please contact Tracy if you can think of anything else to include in the Skagit MRC gift basket for the silent auction.

#### **Administrative Report**

- The budget report was emailed. So far we have only spent \$1,166 out of the \$27,500 budget for this six month grant period. It is anticipated that most of this money will be spent by December. The funds remaining in the budget can be rolled over, as long as it's not a large number and the project is billed out by March.
- KSVR, the Skagit Valley College radio station, has a radio talk show called Skagit Talks. They will be doing a 12-14 minute interview with Neil about the Skagit MRC in November. Tracy asked MRC members if there were any projects or accomplishments we should highlight. Lori suggested talking about the Car Wash Kits and said she would be willing to help Neil with the interview. Lori said that the SCD bought additional car wash kits that are now at the Les Schwab stores in Burlington and Sedro Woolley. Please contact Tracy if there are other projects you would like to highlight.

#### **MRC Budget Proposals (January 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012)**

- The NWSC has been awarded an EPA grant for \$400,000 for 2012. Each MRC will receive another \$27,500. Funding will be available for another six month period (January 1, 2012- June 30, 2012). This grant requires a match which can be made through volunteer hours, staff time, equipment, donations, partnerships, etc. If you have a project proposal that you would like to submit, please send it to Tracy as soon as possible. The proposals will need to be completed and approved by the November 10<sup>th</sup> MRC meeting, so the grant can be fully amended and executed by the end of December.
- So far we have received one proposal requesting \$6,500 for 100 hours of Beach Watcher training and \$6,500 for Beach Watchers project management and volunteer management, for a total budget request of \$13,000.
- Paul is currently working with the NWSF to secure USFWS Coastal Program grant funds (~\$16,000) for the design and permitting phase of the Shannon Point rip rap removal project. He recently received letters of support for the project from the two property owners WWU, and the City of Anacortes. Paul is considering submitting a proposal for MRC funds if the other funding doesn't come through.

## Puget Sound Partnership

- Local Integration Organization: Skagit County Commissioner Ron Wesen is in the process of organizing a meeting with elected officials to discuss the LIO process for the Whidbey Basin Action Area. No groups have been excluded at this point. The meeting is expected to take place sometime in November.
- PSP Action Agenda Updates: were mailed to MRC members for feedback. Unfortunately it was a little short notice, so nobody really had a chance to look at it.
- PSP Action Agenda Update Open House: Ivar attended the PSP open House that was held October 10. Although the open house was well attended it was pretty disappointing because the Action Agenda was never really discussed. PSP asked for comments but it was difficult to provide any feedback on something that wasn't very clear.
- PSP Whidbey Basin Science Symposium: held September 30<sup>th</sup> in Arlington. Tracy, Paul, and Erica attended. Erica reported that it was very interesting and was kind enough to share her notes (thank you Erica). The primary focus was on climate change.

## Project Status & Discussion

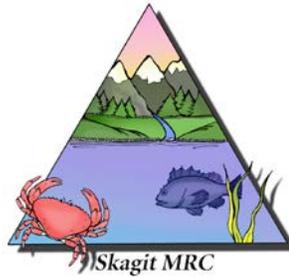
- **WSU Beach Watchers**: The second half of the Beach Watcher training began October and is currently underway. Lynne distributed copies of the training agenda and invited MRC members to attend some of the talks. Forty people have expressed interest in Beach Watcher training in 2012.
- **Shore Stewards**: A Shore Stewards Planning Committee meeting will be held October 19, 2011 from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM at the WSU Extension office in Burlington. Lynne encouraged MRC members to attend to help provide some guidance in the planning process. Cookies are on the agenda!
- **Community Beach Seining Event**: Shannon Point Marine Center and Skagit Beach Watchers sponsored a "Community Beach Seining" event at Ship Harbor on August 8. This was a public educational event and the data collected will be added to a fish database. Approximately 40 people attended the event. Several people were walk-ins. Another community beach seining event will occur in June and August 2012. Shannon Point has agreed to provide funding for half the boat use again. Paul might try to target specific groups or locations to invite and ask for RSVPs. We have to be careful not to get too many people because there is limited space.
- **Smart Sponge**: Still waiting to get significant rain before collecting more water samples from the Smart Sponge at Bay View.
- **Native Oyster Restoration**: Research continues with funding through the NWSF and the Puget Sound Restoration Fund. Temperature and salinity sensors have been placed at four new locations with the goal of distributing seed to expand the native oyster restoration efforts. A letter has been sent to the Swinomish Tribe asking permission to distribute seed at Lone Tree Point and Kiket Island lagoons. Paul is also working with the Padilla Bay Reserve to put seed out there as well. Submitted a proposal for Skagit Restoration Initiative funds to expand oyster shell habitat in Fidalgo Bay.
- **Spartina Surveys**: Currently wrapping up this year's field season. Rachel recently returned from a three day survey trip in Clallam County. Very few new plants were found this year. However, several plants were discovered in the N. Swinomish Channel. Last month they went out with the WSDA crew and removed the *Spartina* found in the Red River at the Lummi Delta where two plants were discovered four years ago, now there are 50! Over 150 miles of shoreline have been surveyed for this year. Rachel gave a talk on *Spartina* at the Salish Sea conference. Rachel will share survey photos.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day**: This year's event took place September 17 at the Port of Anacortes Seafarer's Memorial Park Building. It was well attended. Thank you cards were sent out to Fidalgo Bay Day sponsors and partners.
- **Young Beach Stewards**: 24 Mount Vernon High School students signed up for the program, but a few dropped out. 15 students, including two special needs students, participated in a field trip to the WWU Shannon Point marine Center, the Port of Anacortes restoration site, and the Samish Tribe's Fidalgo Bay coastal restoration site. Classroom presentations covered everything from nautical maps and charts to careers in oceanography and current marine

resources related issues. Students provided volunteer service dedicated to removing trash from a swale located on Mount Vernon High School property. Items were categorized and weighed for comparison to previous years.

### **Miscellaneous Announcements**

- Rebecca Spurling has been nominated as a finalist for the 2011 Business & Professional Woman of the Year award. The Skagit Women's Alliance and Network (SWAN) awards banquet will be held Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. Congratulations Rebecca!!
- There is currently a legislative proposal to reform the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) permits and Forest Practices Application Processes [http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/legislative/fact\\_sheets/dnr-wdfw-hydro-leg.pdf](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/legislative/fact_sheets/dnr-wdfw-hydro-leg.pdf). This could have an impact on other future projects that require an HPA permit such as the derelict gear program and creosote removal.
- This morning was the ground breaking ceremony for the E & F dock replacement. They are removing the old creosote pilings and wooden docks and replacing them with concrete docks and steel pilings.
- The Storm Team is gearing up to start sampling at various areas around Bay View this winter including a few new locations.
- The rain gardens at the Anthony's parking lot weren't draining properly because they specked the wrong filter fabric. The fabric has been replaced and the rain garden is now draining properly.
- An Agriculture and Northwest Ecosystems Symposium will be held at the WSU Extension Center in Mount Vernon October 27<sup>th</sup> (1:15 – 6:00 PM). Graduate students will provide short presentations, there will be a poster session, and David Montgomery will be the keynote speaker. David is a geomorphologist at the University of Washington and author of "Dirt" and "King of Fish".
- Lori thanked Jim for sharing the underwater photo slideshows. Friends from as far away as Kansas City have been enjoying them as well.

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday, November 10 at the Mount Vernon Senior Center



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the November 10, 2011 meeting held at the Mount Vernon Senior Center

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Connie Thoman, Lori Kyle, Ivar Dolph, Erica Pickett, Jim Ramaglia, Rachel Benbrook, Kari Odden

**Members Absent:** Betsy Stevenson, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Polly Fischer, Neil Borman, Rebecca Spurling, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara, Paul Dinnel, Kurt Buchanan

**Others Attending:** Pete Haase; Mike Sato; Joan Drinkwin, NWSF

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Lori Kyle began the meeting at 9:08 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

## **Earth Day Then and Now- How Have We Done?** *Presented by Pete Haase*

Pete, a retired Boeing employee and former Director of the Skagit Conservation Education Alliance, spends many volunteer hours monitoring water quality and planting trees to restore salmon habitat in Skagit County. It was recently brought to his attention that with all of the ongoing environmental issues, some of the volunteers and other members of the environmental community are starting to question whether or not their hard work is really making a difference. Pete was inspired to do a little research to find out if we have made any progress since the first Earth Day was held April 22, 1970.

Prior to the 1960s, most Americans were oblivious to environmental issues until the publication of Rachel Carson's New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book sold more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries and is credited for raising public awareness about environmental issues. Earth Day was founded in 1970 by Senator Gaylord Nelson. It was first introduced as a teach-in at High Schools, colleges, and Universities across the country. Each campus received the Environmental Handbook which identified the top 40 environmental concerns they were facing in the 1970s. Support for Earth Day reached across the political and social spectrum. Over 20 million people across the country participated in the first Earth Day. Earth Day worked and evolved nationwide because of the grassroots approach taken in which community actions were based on local concerns.

Many significant actions have taken place in response to the elevated environmental concerns following the first Earth Day. One of the most important actions was the establishment of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) December 2, 1970 followed by the enactment of several environmental laws including: The Clean Air Act (1970), the Endangered Species Act (1973), Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976), and the Clean Water Act (1977).

Earth Day continues to be an annual event. It finally went global in 1990 when Dennis Hayes, the original Earth Day organizer, formed the Earth Day Network (<http://www.earthday.org/>) to help coordinate Earth Day events world-wide. 200 million people participated from 141 countries during the

1990 Earth Day celebration which helped pave the way for the first United Nations Earth Summit in 1992. Now thanks to internet access, the Earth Day Network coordinates with over 22,000 partners in 192 countries and more than 1 billion people participate in Earth Day activities each year. Pete concluded that yes, we have made great progress since the first Earth Day and hopes that everyone will continue to work hard for the environment because we truly are making a difference.

#### **NWSC Meeting Report** (*November 4, 2011- Tulalip*)

- Salmon recovery in the San Juan Islands was presented by Barbara Rosenkotter. 137 species depend on salmon. Decaying salmon provide important nutrients to upland ecosystems. There has been a 20% recovery of Chinook salmon since they were put on the Endangered Species list. Protection of high quality nearshore marine habitat is the top salmon recovery goal for the San Juans and is included in the Shoreline Master Plan update.
- Kathleen Herman presented the Snohomish MRC nearshore sediment study. The project area encompasses 4 miles of shoreline from Mukilteo to Everett. The railroad located along the shoreline has caused a significant loss of important nearshore habitat, a key component to the survival and recovery of salmon. A stakeholder process will be used to identify and prioritize potential restoration projects within the project study area.
- Sally Hintz from Senator Maria Cantwell's office reported that it has been very challenging to find funding for the Northwest Straits. It is important to show how many jobs are leveraged in our work when seeking funding or talking with legislators. Cantwell signed an amendment that allows the Coast Guard to assist with the salmon virus research. Cantwell also authorized a bill to fund a study on tsunami debris that is predicted to hit the west coast sometime in 2013-2017 and to fund the program for increased oil spill response.
- An additional \$6,000 of unspent funds from the previous grant cycle will be allocated to each MRC for projects or administration. These funds are not intended to support other organizations.
- MRCs need to let Sasha know how many copies of the 2011NWSC Annual Report are needed and where they will be distributed (e.g. local library, County Commissioners, etc). It is very expensive to print the reports, so there will only be a limited print run. However, the report will be available electronically and possibly as a shorter version. Sasha requested that MRC members and others send jpg pictures, of MRC projects, people and places.

#### **Debrief from the Salish Sea Conference**

- The Northwest Straits Commission staff and representatives from all seven MRCs were among the more than 900 people attending the conference with about 100 on the waiting list.
- The program and abstracts are currently available online [www.salishseaconference.org/materials.php](http://www.salishseaconference.org/materials.php) and session summary reports will also soon be made available online.

#### **NWSC/MRC Conference** (*December 2-3, 2011, Northwest Maritime Center, Port Townsend*)

- Registration Deadline - Please register for the conference ASAP. The deadline for registration is November 21. There is enough money in our budget to cover MRC members who wish to attend the conference. Please let Tracy know if you are planning to attend or if you are interested in car pooling.
- Silent Auction-The NWSC has requested each MRC donate a gift basket with items that have a local flavor or donate items that are experience oriented. The goal is to build community connections between MRC members and to raise money to help underwrite conference expenses. Paul contacted Taylor's Seafood who has agreed to contribute a \$50 gift certificate and the Padilla Bay Estuarine Research Reserve will donate a sweatshirt. Jim has agreed to donate one or two of his amazing underwater photos printed on canvas. Lori will donate jars of pickled onions and pickled corn and possibly a bottle of hard cider or wine. Rachel said that Anacortes Kayak Tours plans to donate a gift certificate for a kayak tour for two through Deception Pass. Thank you all for your generous contributions. Please contact Tracy if you can think of anything else to include in the Skagit MRC gift basket for the silent auction.
- The NWSC is looking for inspiring MRC stories to share at the conference.

## **Administrative Report**

- Budget Update: The budget report was emailed. Most of these grant funds must be spent by the end of December. However, some of the remaining funds can be rolled over, as long as it's not a large amount and as long as the projects are billed out by March. Please get those invoices in as soon as possible!
- MRC Meeting Attendance: The low meeting attendance has started to become an issue. We have not had a quorum for the last three or four meetings so we haven't been able to reach a consensus to make any important decisions. According to Skagit MRC By-laws, an MRC member cannot have more than three unexcused absences. There are a few MRC members who have far exceeded the number of allowable unexcused absences. A letter will be sent to those individuals who continually have unexcused absences. They will be given the opportunity to provide an alternate or to become an ex-officio (non-voting) member.
- Case Statement and Work Plan Development: MRC members discussed the idea of planning a retreat and inviting a facilitator to help develop a case statement and work plan. A case statement with a brief description about the MRCs work will help when seeking funding. The work plan should include how the MRC will move forward even without funding. It should also include a strategy for looking outside of the box for other funding sources like talking to local businesses and fund raising strategies. The facilitator should be someone who is familiar with the MRC.

## **MRC Budget Proposals- \$33,500 Total Budget (January 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012)**

- Task 1: Administration (Tracy- Project Lead): \$7,500
- Task 2: WSU Beach Watcher Training (100 Hours) (Ivar- Project Lead): \$6,500
- Task 3: WSU Beach Watcher Project & Volunteer Management (Ivar - Project Lead): \$6,500
- Task 4: Plastic Cap Recycling Art Project (Rebecca- Project Lead): \$7,000

MRC members expressed some concern about the Task 4- Plastic Cap Recycling project. Several MRC members felt that the project did not have a direct connection to the marine environment and didn't fit the MRC five-year strategic plan. They were also concerned that the art projects would just end up getting thrown away in the end. It was suggested that a better use of the money would be to put it towards funding the MRC priority projects such as the Shannon Point rip rap removal project. Although we have requested grant funding for the rip rap removal project there is no guarantee we will get that money. The consensus of those MRC members who were present at the November MRC meeting was to approve the funding requests for Tasks 1, 2, and 3 as proposed. However, because we did not have a quorum, a final decision on the 2012 budget cannot be made until the next MRC meeting in December.

## **Northwest Straits Foundation Update**

- Public Participation Grant: Recently received a letter from Ecology confirming the elimination of the Public Participation Grant funding. Unfortunately this grant was slated to fund crabber outreach work in Snohomish, Skagit, and Jefferson counties. This grant was also slated to fund the Friends of Skagit Beaches "Trail Tales" project.
- Shannon Point Rip Rap Removal Project: Recently submitted a pre-proposal to the USFWS Coastal Program to request funding for the feasibility and design for the rip rap removal project at Shannon Point. Received letters of support from the both property owners (Western Washington University and the City of Anacortes).
- MRC Conference Session: This work session will help MRCs figure out how to find funding and to keep moving forward even without funding during these hard economic times.

## **Skagit Restoration Initiative Update**

- SRI Budget: There is \$153,000 available to fund selected projects and future projects. This takes into account indirect charges by the Foundation and includes the 2012 Kimberly Clark payment and leftover funds from the 2010 workplan. There is approximately \$23,000 left of Coastal Protection Fund money earmarked for the East March's Point Project. Some of the money will be used for additional beach monitoring and analysis. Joan will propose to Ecology

that the remaining Coastal Protection Fund money be allocated to support the Shannon Point project, since it does not carry the geographic restrictions that the SRI money has.

- 2012 Work Plan Recommendations: The subcommittee recently evaluated three proposals requesting funding for 2012. The proposals were ranked in the following order:
  1. Fidalgo Bay Olympia Oyster Restoration
  2. Padilla Bay Tideland Habitat Acquisition
  3. Telegraph Slough Restoration

The first two top ranked projects were considered to be a priority for the MRC and consistent with the restoration goals of the funding. Although the Telegraph Slough Restoration proposal to facilitate stakeholder meetings is a good starting point for what will likely be a very important project, there was concern that the project could take many years to come to fruition and the preference was to use the money for more immediate returns. The remaining balance would be rolled over to help support the MRC and future restoration projects in Fidalgo and Padilla Bays. Joan pointed out that the MRC members could try to negotiate for a smaller amount of funding for the Telegraph Slough Restoration proposal. There weren't enough MRC members to have a quorum, so a final decision will be made at the next MRC meeting in December. However, the consensus of those MRC members who were present at the November MRC meeting was to approve the 2012 Work Plan as recommended by the SRI subcommittee.

- Next Steps:
  - MRC members discussed different ideas on how we should spend the rest of the SRI funds. The MRC agreed that we need to work on being more pro-active in developing better projects.
  - The 2012 Work Plan should include the amount of remaining funds to be used to support the MRC operations.
  - Potential future project ideas discussed included: potential restoration projects at the Custom Plywood site; the Fidalgo Bay causeway replacement project; and resolving Bay View State Park septic issues. Connie will contact Ecology for an update on the Custom Plywood site cleanup schedule and Erica will contact Bay View State Park to discuss alternative solutions to their septic issues.
- Timeline:

November 10, 2011	Draft workplan presented to Skagit MRC for review
December 8, 2011	Final workplan approval by Skagit MRC; workplan provided to Foundation technical committee and executive committee
January 27, 2012	Final work plan approval by Foundation Board
January 31, 2012	Final work plan delivered to Ecology
February 2012	Comments from Kimberly Clark and Ecology
February 2012	Concurrence from Ecology
April 1, 2012	\$125,000 annual payment is received by the Northwest Straits Foundation; Workplan implementation begins

### **Project Status & Discussion**

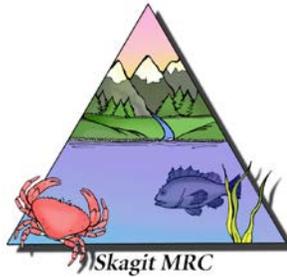
- **WSU Beach Watchers**: 10 new Beach Watchers graduated on October 28<sup>th</sup>. To date, Beach Watchers contributed 4,000 volunteer hours, approximately 5,100 new contacts were made through outreach, four Beach Watcher newsletters were distributed, and two all Beach Watcher volunteers meetings were conducted in 2011.
- **Shore Stewards**: A Shore Stewards Planning Committee meeting was held October 19, 2011, unfortunately no MRC members were able to attend. Lynne developed a draft agenda based on past workshops and the availability of speakers. The Shore Stewards workshop will be held Saturday, December 10 (9:30 AM – 2:00 PM) at the Seafarer's Memorial Park building in Anacortes. The flyer with the agenda was distributed to MRC members. Three Shore Stewards newsletters have been distributed and 10 new Shore Stewards have been recruited in 2011. Another shoreline homeowner workshop will be held in the Samish River watershed sometime in March of 2012 as part of the Clean Samish Initiative where additional topics will be covered.
- **Community Beach Seining Event**: No Report
- **Smart Sponge**: No Report

- **Native Oyster Restoration:** No Report
- ***Spartina* Surveys:** Rachel is currently working on the final report which will be finished by the end of December. Rachel will have a poster at the MRC conference that shows the most recent *Spartina* survey information.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** A report will be written and printed before the end of December. Some funding will be left over which could be used to print additional sea creature flash cards with the MRC logo on them. Funding could also be used for purchasing ocean environmental CDs for local libraries or laminated tri-fold critter identification cards.
- **Young Beach Stewards:** MVH students participated in a field trip to the Samish Tribe's Fidalgo Bay beach restoration site, the Anacortes History Museum, Shannon Point Marine Center, and the Port of Anacortes restoration site at Seafarer's Memorial Park. Classroom presentations and videos covered ocean circulation, tides, estuaries, watersheds, stormwater, waves and beach processes, and marine issues and conservation practices associated with these areas. Students provided volunteer service dedicated to pulling invasive weeds at the Samish Tribe's Fidalgo Bay restoration site.

#### **Miscellaneous Announcements**

- No Announcements

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday, December 8 at the Seafarer's Memorial Park building in Anacortes



# Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Minutes of the December 8, 2011 meeting held at the Seafarer's Memorial Park building in Anacortes

**Members Attending:** Tracy Alker, Connie Thoman, Erica Pickett, Betsy Stevenson, Jim Ramaglia, Rachel Benbrook, Kari Odden, Todd Woodard (Christine's Alternate), Neil Borman, Rebecca Spurling, Paul Dinnel, Kurt Buchanan

**Members Absent:** Lori Kyle, Ivar Dolph, Lawrence Joseph, Scott Schuyler, Christine Woodward, Polly Fischer, Kevin Bright, Charles O'Hara

**Others Attending:** Pete Haase; Nora Kammer, SRSC; Joan Drinkwin, NWSF; Sharron Riggs, Padilla Bay; Joan Pringle, Anacortes American

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Neil Borman began the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

**Minutes:** Approved.

**Public Comments:** None.

**West March's Point Beach Nourishment Project:** *Presented by Nora Kammer, SRSC*

The West March's Point beach nourishment project was partly funded by the Skagit MRC Restoration Initiative. The project site is located along the West March's Point shoreline just north of the trestle and south of Crandall Spit. Baseline conditions indicated that the beach material was very coarse with large cobble, not suitable for forage fish spawning. The goal of the project is to enhance degraded natural processes and nearshore functions that support viable forage fish spawning habitat at West March's Point. To accomplish this goal, Skagit River Systems Cooperative (SRSC) contracted with Coastal Geological Services (CGS) to prepare a beach nourishment design and monitoring plan. Pre-project surveys were conducted by CGS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Salish Sea Biological (Dan Penttila), and SRSC. Data was used to develop baseline conditions and guide the design. Baseline surveys included beach profiles, mapping of surf smelt spawning locations, photo points, and sediment grain size analysis. The locations of pre-project survey transects were marked in the field using paint marks placed above the nourishment zone. Photo points were taken and analyzed before and after beach material application. SRSC implemented the project design by placing 9,700 cubic yards of beach nourishment in October of 2010. Local gravel pits prepared the mix and delivered it via conveyor trucks. The road is located really close to the beach which made the application of the material really easy. Conveyor trucks are capable of spreading the materials out to a distance of about 70 feet. The speed and angle of the conveyor belt was remotely controlled, allowing relatively precise spreading of nourishment materials without having to leave the roadway. It is a necessity to use clean, well sorted material because foreign objects and large rocks could damage the conveyor belt. Thicker material was applied at the southern end to allow beach materials to naturally migrate northward. Initial post-project monitoring occurred April through July 2011, six months after beach

nourishment material was applied. Preliminary monitoring results indicate that the beach nourishment material is remaining relatively stable, and the distribution of target grain sizes for surf smelt and sand lance has improved. The beaches within the nourishment zone are now at a gentle slope (~ 7:1) that is typical of natural Puget Sound beaches. Dan Pentilla, of Salish Sea Biological, conducted spawning surveys between July-September 2011 during low tide and when forage fish were expected to be spawning. Although the data is still being analyzed, initial results indicate that there is an increased forage fish spawning density and increased aerial extent of spawning activity. Dan suggested that it would be beneficial to plant vegetation along the beach face to provide more shade for enhanced spawning habitat. In addition, MRC members suggested that there could also be a good opportunity to install interpretive signage to educate the public about this restoration project as part of the Friends of Skagit Beaches Trail Tales project.

### **Debrief from the MRC Conference**

- Silent Auction Results:

- Skagit MRC Gift Basket (\$50 gift certificate from Taylor's Shellfish, Samish Bay Herbed Cheese, Edison Bakery Black Olive Baguette, Pickled corn, Pickled onions, Hard Apple Cider (Merritt Apples), and Fidalgo Bay Coffee Beans - Highest Bid of \$70 went to Gabrielle LaRoche
- Anacortes Kayak Tours Trip for Two- Highest Bid of \$75 went to Jerry Masters
- Padilla Bay Sweatshirt- Highest Bid of \$35 went to Stephanie Williams

The silent auction brought in close to \$5,000 which will help to underwrite MRC conference expenses and help support the Northwest Straits Initiative and future projects. Thank you letters will be sent to those who donated to the silent auction.

- Conference Highlights: The session on GIS maps demonstrated several online tools available for anyone to use including: Sound IQ, WA Coastal Atlas (<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/coastalatlus/>), and US Topo (<http://nationalmap.gov/ustopo/>). Rachel with People for Puget Sound, the Samish Indian Nation, the Skagit County GIS department, and Suzanne Shull with Padilla Bay, are all potential resources that could assist the MRC with future mapping needs. Rachel said that she could talk about the Coastal Atlas program at a future MRC meeting. The session on How to Fund Your MRC, moderated by Joan Drinkwin and Ginny Broadhurst, provided guidelines on how to build a case statement for future funding requests and to develop a plan keep the ball rolling. Joan and Ginny can help facilitate this discussion with each MRC during a regular MRC meeting or as a special retreat or executive session.

### **Puget Sound Partnership**

- They've had a difficult time getting a Local Integration Organization in place for the Whidbey Action Area because it is such a large area and there are so many groups that are involved. Skagit County Commissioner Ron Wesen is currently working with the Puget Sound Partnership to help set up the Local Integration Organization. Neil suggested inviting Commissioner Wesen to an MRC meeting to discuss where we are in the process. Betsy also plans to meet with Rebecca Ponzio soon and hopes to find out how the MRC can be more involved.

### **Administrative Report**

- Please turn in all invoices for the MRC conference and projects as soon as possible because the current grant ends December 31, 2011.
- Approximately \$1,200 will remain under Task 3: Fidalgo Bay Day of the current grant. The consensus of the MRC is to use those funds to reprint the laminated tri-fold marine critter identification cards. Because there isn't enough time to amend the current grant, the cards will be charged to Task 1: Administration, where the remaining Fidalgo Bay Day funds will be redistributed.
- Grant reports are due the NWSC Staff by December 31, 2011. Please submit all progress reports, project reports, and project photos to Tracy by December 27, 2011.

**MRC Budget Proposals- \$33,500 Total Budget (January 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012)**

There is not enough time to amend the current MRC grant agreement before December 31, 2011, so a brand new grant contract will have to be prepared with a start date of January 1, 2012. All projects under this grant agreement must be completed by June 30, 2012. The consensus of the MRC was to approve the proposed 2012 budget and work plan as follows:

- Task 1: Administration (Tracy- Project Lead)- \$8,000: This task supports MRC operations including: meetings, travel, training, supplies special events and updating the MRC display, educational materials, reprinting MRC brochures, some staff time, etc.
- Task 2: WSU Beach Watcher Support (Ivar- Project Lead) -\$13,000: Skagit MRC will partner with Washington State University to provide 100 hours of professional training to Beach Watcher Volunteers. In return, the trained Beach Watchers will commit to 100 volunteer hours towards Skagit MRC related projects. The recruitment and application process will begin in January, with the goal of graduating 10-20 new Beach Watchers that can begin volunteering in mid-2012. This task will also involve project management and volunteer coordination. Beach Watcher activities that will be managed during this grant period will likely include: forage fish surveys and continued analysis of March's Point, Sunset Beach, and Samish Island beach monitoring data, the Winter Lecture Series from January – April 2012 at the Anacortes Public Library, and a One-Day University scheduled for May of 2012 in Anacortes.
- Task 3: Plastic Cap Recycling (Rebecca- Project Lead) - \$500: This project will help Educate students and the public about the impacts of plastics in the marine environment and what they can do to help. This project will include classroom presentations, articles in the paper, a public outreach campaign to collect plastic caps, and a large mural will be created by students for their school made out of plastic caps. \$500 will go towards purchasing supplies. Most people don't know that you have to remove plastic caps before recycling plastic bottles and containers. Those that aren't removed get tossed into the waste bin. Only a few recycling companies are able to recycle plastic caps. Girl Scouts will try to find a way to get the extra plastic caps recycled. Plastic caps are the number one trash item found along the beaches of Hawaii, second to cigarette butts. Plastic cap drop-off locations will be set up at Safeway and the Senior Center in Anacortes.
- Task 4: Shannon Point Rip Rap Removal Project Design (Paul- Project Lead) - \$12,000: This project was identified as a high priority by the MRC under the last grant funding cycle, but there was not enough money to move forward. \$12,000 under this current grant will help fund the project design and permitting. This project aims to remove significant rip rap on the southwestern side of Shannon Point to help restore 730ft of shoreline for forage fish spawning and natural beach sediment nourishment. Spawning of two species of forage fish has been documented on shorelines of Shannon Point during both winter and summer periods.

### **Skagit Restoration Initiative 2012 Work Plan Discussion**

MRC members decided to hold an executive session following the regular meeting to discuss the project proposals and options for the Skagit Restoration Initiative 2012 Work Plan. The final work plan must be adopted and approved by the Northwest Straits Foundation Board by January 27, 2012. The final work plan must be delivered to Ecology by January 31, 2012.

### **Project Status & Discussion**

- **WSU Beach Watchers:** The Friends of Skagit Beaches Trail Tales project will likely get funded. Some of the funding will also help support the WSU Beach Watcher Coordinator. Planning is currently underway for a one day university that will occur sometime in June.
- **Shore Stewards:** The Shore Stewards workshop will be held this Saturday, December 10 (9:30 AM – 2:00 PM at the Seafarer's Memorial Park building in Anacortes.
- **Community Beach Seining Event:** The next Community Beach Seining event at Ship Harbor will occur in June and August.
- **Smart Sponge:** The experiment had to be redesigned a few times to make it work. Still waiting to get significant rain before collecting more water samples from the Smart Sponge at Bay View to test for fecal coliform.

- **Native Oyster Restoration:** Currently testing the genetic viability of native oyster seed. Waiting for the hatchery to produce native oyster seed to put out at four new locations in 2012 including Padilla Bay, Fidalgo Bay, and two locations in Skagit Bay. If the SRI funds are approved, the oyster habitat in Fidalgo Bay will be expanded in 2012.
- ***Spartina* Surveys:** Currently wrapping up the final report for this year's *Spartina* program. Surveyed approximately 50 miles of shoreline in Skagit County and a total of 223 throughout the Northwest Straits region. Still finding several *Spartina* plants pop up locally, so it's important to continue the survey program to stay on top of it.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Funding for Fidalgo Bay Day in 2012 is currently uncertain. Some of the funding for the Trail Tales program could potentially be used to support Fidalgo Bay Day.
- **Young Beach Stewards:** Conducted a volunteer swale cleanup on November 10<sup>th</sup>, helped pull ivy at the Fidalgo Bay RV Park, 13 hours of classroom presentations, demonstrations and videos: covered biological ecosystems, niche parameters, limiting factors, zonation, primary producers, food webs, beach etiquette. Marine issues such as over fishing, excess nutrients, plus others was included and conservation approaches currently being used to sustain the ecosystems were also included. 2 field trips have been conducted. Christine Longdon, a recreational diver, was a guest speaker on November 17th. She demonstrated the equipment used, presented photos on many of the local organisms and, and spoke on driving etiquette. Also included were the dangers to Puget Sound organisms from lost fishing gear. Students contributed four hours of volunteer service and are currently working on their educational outreach to finish their volunteer service hours.

#### **Miscellaneous Announcements**

- No Announcements

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 12 at the Mount Vernon Senior Center.