

Fidalgo Bay Day 2007

A Public Education Program Sponsored by
Skagit County Marine Resources Committee
Anacortes Community Maritime Center



Photo by Jean Bailey



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

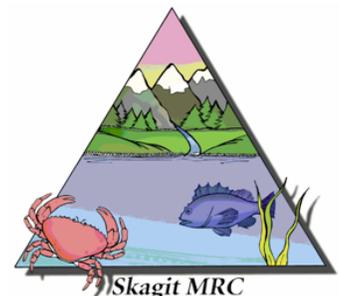


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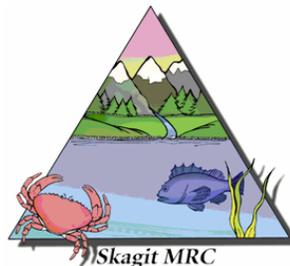
Fidalgo Bay Day 2007

Fidalgo Bay Day started out as Marine Ecology Day in 2004. Since then we have tried two locations and a variety of attractants to bring a little education to the public. This year's event involved thirty companies, nonprofit groups and agencies. Our forty-nine volunteers came to us from the Anacortes Community Maritime Center, Skagit County Marine Resources Committee and WSU/Skagit-Snohomish Beach Watchers. Without them, none of this would have been possible.

Last year Dan Penttila of WDFW provided the main event with a beach seine and indoor display. This year's event was held at Seafarers' Memorial Park, in part to accommodate the Shannon Point research boat. The bottom around Seafarers' Park is too rough to allow a beach seine, but the aquaria provided by Shannon Point made up for the lack.

Although the celebration is not a long one, much planning goes into providing entertainment and information for the public. The event could not happen without the enthusiastic participation of a few key organizations:

- The Skagit Marine Resources Committee supported the event with a budget of \$2000 and the help of a number of key members.
- The Anacortes Community Maritime Center supplied insurance, organization, muscle and oyster cookers. Members also arranged signage and several kids' activities.
- The Samish Indian Nation brought Bill Bailey and Rosie Cayou to give us a wonderful traditional welcome and delectable barbecued salmon lunches.
- Shannon Point Marine Center provided the living creatures which were the centerpiece of the day.
- WSU/Skagit Beach Watchers members showed up in force to do everything from planning and organization, minding the clams and oysters to making coffee and popcorn.



Shannon Point Marine Center



Samish Indian Nation

- Taylor Shellfish Farms once again made our event memorable by supplying all the clams and oysters to us at no charge. Many thanks to Bill Dewey for this generosity and thanks to Paul Dinnel for handling all the logistical details of fetching and preparing the shellfish. Paul even formulated the delectable secret sauces for the day.
- The Port of Anacortes provided the use of the facilities at Seafarers' Memorial Park at no charge to us, a huge donation.
- Anacortes Yacht Club lent us their super-duper stainless steel grill, another boost from the community which saved much fooling around and hundreds of dollars. AYC member Warren Walz even delivered the grill to the site and came back at the end to pick it up. Thanks, Warren!
- Dan Penttila of WDFW spent half his weekend setting up the microscope and surrounding display with specimens of forage fish and their eggs for all to examine. Dan was still talking to people long after the official close of the day and finally allowed as how he really DID have to pack up and go home.
- Alex Alexander of Padilla Bay National Estuarine Reserve brought the video macroscope to amaze and delight folks young and old with an up-close look at barnacles waving their tiny fans to catch the odd bite to eat. Both Dan and Alex talked with people right through what might have been a lunch hour, munching on their brown bag sandwiches in between visitors. Next year we will have to line up some relief for exhibitors.
- The City of Anacortes provided some crucial printing for us.
- Skagit County Public Works Intern Emily Derenne showed folks the ins and outs of water quality monitoring.
- This year we had the support of five local restaurants, in keeping with our underlying theme of "Food: Pathway to the Brain." Randy's Pier 61, The Captain's Place and Mary Ann's Kitchen brought gallons of delicious chowder. Gere-A-Deli gave us a huge pan of brownies and McDonald's set us up with a large cooler of orange drink for the kids.
- The Anacortes Boys' and Girls' Club let us borrow their popcorn machine with popcorn, helping us to create a festive atmosphere.
- Anacortes Youth Arts lent us the rubber fish and invertebrates to make fish prints. Monica Oppel taught the perfect technique for creating the most prints with the least mess.

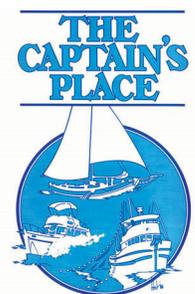
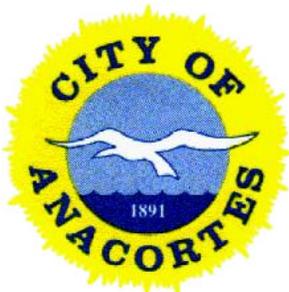




Photo by Jean Bailey

Betsy Stevenson of the Skagit Marine Resources Committee, at far left, minds the store at the information table. The traditional native print in front of her was donated by Samish Tribal member Bill Bailey to help the ACMC raise money for the event. Beach Watchers Caroline and Harold Spehar chat about the number of smiles produced by Harold in his whimsical “Juan de Fuca” costume. Harold was our greeter.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Fran Jepperson (left) chaired all the kids’ events and made sure that our ESD building entrance looked inviting with the fish prints being made right there.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Shannon Point Marine Center brought the ZOO!



Photo by Jean Bailey

One of the best parts of the whole day was getting to talk to a real marine scientist like Gisele Muller-Parker, seen here at left.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Gene McKeen of Shannon Point gives the crowd some interesting facts about the urchins and other creatures in the aquarium.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Gisele introduces a youngster to one of our local sea cucumbers.



Photo by Jean Bailey

One of the aquaria was set at kid level and filled with hardier “touchable” organisms.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Gisele demonstrates the ROV unit for the kids.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Dan Penttila talked with more than a hundred people in the course of the day, telling them about forage fish and the many kinds of shrimp in our local waters.

A budding fish biologist takes a peek through Dan's stereoscope while keeping a good grip on the popcorn cup.



Photo by Jean Bailey



Photo by Jean Bailey

Alex Alexander of Padilla Bay Estuarine Reserve shifts his barnacles to center stage.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Photo by Jean Bailey

This little racer is fascinated by the motion of the feathery "feet" of the barnacles.

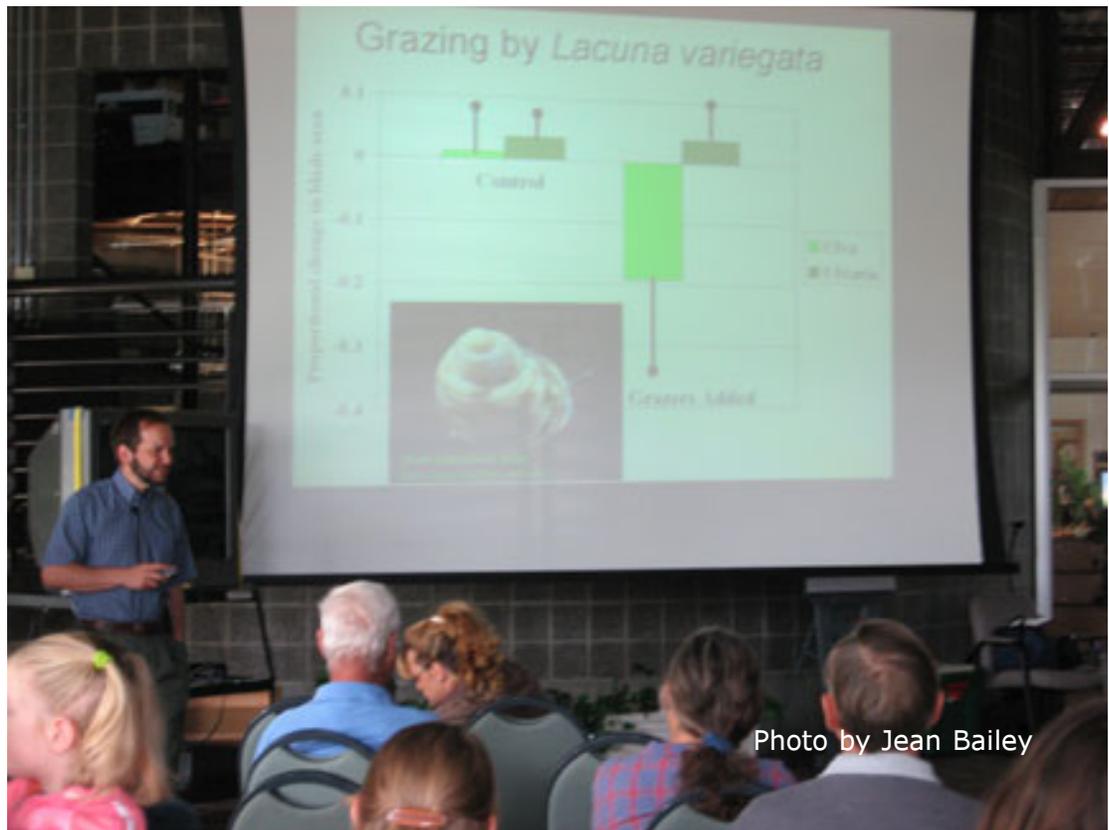


Photo by Jean Bailey

Tim Nelson , PhD., talks about “Algae: the Good, the Bad and the Stinky.”



Photo by Jean Bailey

Banjo player Paul Sund of the Skagit MRC brought the Backyard Band to provide lunchtime entertainment.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Diane Perlow of Mary Ann's Kitchen talks about the chowder. Darwin Anderson of the Captain's Place serves up a steaming bowl in the background.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Randy Barrett of Randy's Pier 61, like the two other purveyors of seafood chowder, ran out of soup in about an hour!



Photo by Jean Bailey

Paul Dinnel and his secret sauces made the shellfish unforgettable.



Photo by Jean Bailey

The cooking crew was made up of members from WSU/Skagit-Snohomish Beach Watchers and the Anacortes Community Maritime Center.

Vicki McNeil serves up delicious grilled oysters from Taylor Shellfish Farms. Taylor has been our largest and most faithful commercial backer over the years.

This year's cash donations went to help fund the shellfish water quality display at Padilla Bay Estuarine Reserve.



Photo by Jean Bailey



Photo by Jean Bailey

Rosie Cayou makes some of her traditional native fry bread for the salmon luncheon plates.



Samish Tribal member Bill Bailey (right) brings that master's touch to the barbecued salmon.



Photo by Jean Bailey

ACMC member Cary Tolman shows a youngster the secrets of the bowline.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Beach Watcher Ruth Peterson talks about habitats at the beach.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Beach Watcher Barbara Martyn-Godfrey set up a seaweed display, complete with a host of products which utilize seaweed extracts. Marshmallows are the kids' favorites!



Photo by Jean Bailey

Barbara hands out some of the critter ID cards produced by the MRC with Jim Ramaglia's underwater portraits of local fish and invertebrates.



Photo by Jean Bailey

MRC member Kari Odden and APMC member Teri Austin help the kids with fish prints. Anacortes Youth Arts generously loaned us the rubber fish. Monica Oppel was kind enough to give us the benefit of her experience in setting up the activity.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Kids like these made over a hundred fish prints during the day. Visible in the background is the cooler of orange drink supplied free of charge by our local McDonald's restaurant.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Aundrea McBride lent us a coloring book full of sea creatures so that we had some basic line drawings for the kids to color. These drawings were then made into buttons by a couple of enthusiastic teen-agers, Aubrey Hoffman and her friend Julia Cox.



Photo by Jean Bailey
Photo by Jean Bailey

Who would have guessed there could be this much happiness locked up in a button?



Photo by Jean Bailey

Noelle Escheté and Rebecca Vigoren had a good time decorating the children.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Having one's face painted with sea creatures is a fun part of the day.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Our own rubber stamp factory in Anacortes, Clearsnap, Inc, donated all the materials and Harriet Vick to show the kids the basics. The stamps were all of animals and plants of the sea.



Photo by Jean Bailey

The smallest kids liked the rolling stamps which Clearsnap brought.



The paddle boat pool is always on the must-do list of the younger set.



ACMC members sold a bunch of the paddle-powered Fidalgo Flyer catamarans as a fund raiser.



Beach Watcher
Harold Spehar spent the
day entertaining people.

Photo by Jean Bailey

Beach Watcher Jean Nelson minds the snack booth and popcorn machine. The popcorn provided a little extra excitement by setting off the fire alarm in the ESD building.



Photo by Jean Bailey



Photo by Jean Bailey

Skagit County Public Works intern Emma Derenne demonstrated the ins and outs of water quality monitoring.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Static displays like this one from Skagit Conservation Education Alliance lined the presentation hall at the ESD building.

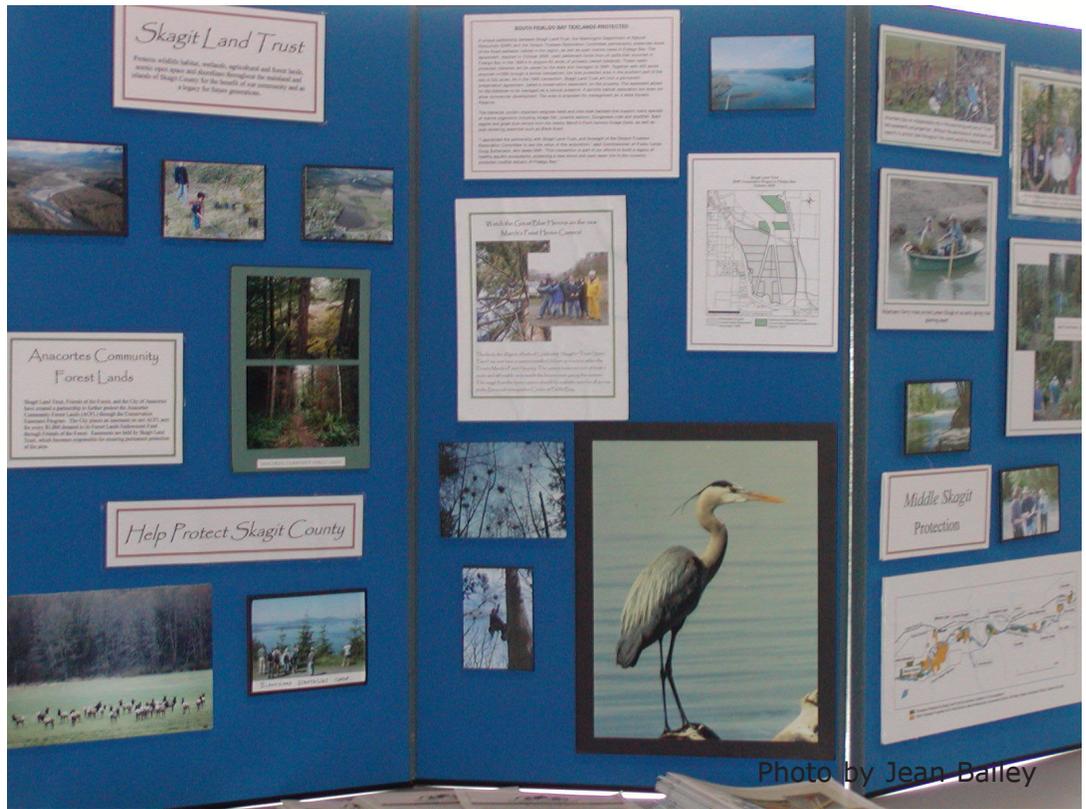


Photo by Jean Bailey

Skagit Land Trust brought their display.



Photo by Jean Bailey

Orca Network set up their information display.



WSU/Skagit-Snohomish Beach Watcher volunteers brought information as well as help.



The Skagit Conservation District has been a participant since our first year in 2004.

Evaluation

Our goals were to attract at least 200 visitors, to raise awareness of the saltwater around us and the creatures in it, and to connect with children.

Although we don't have a good way to count the folks who attend Fidalgo Bay Day, judging from the number of fish prints and buttons made and the rapid disappearance of the chowder and seafood we think we served well over 300 adults.

The aquaria provided by Shannon Point Marine Center were an absolutely magical way to transmit information to the public. The Shannon Point staffers attended the tanks for the entire event, answering what must have seemed an endless stream of questions. We had perfect weather for the day, not too hot, not too cold, dry and not too windy.

Our connections with the children were really excellent. I spoke with many parents who marveled at the breadth and variety of activities. The refreshments helped, too!

We have consistently had problems getting folks to the site before about eleven o'clock. Perhaps this is because we have trained them to view the day as a pleasant free lunch. Perhaps they will never be attracted to presentations which promise to require a little thought. Maybe we need to do a survey of our audience.

While the ESD building is a gorgeous facility, it does not present a welcoming face to the public with its smoked windows and closed doors. The doors may not be propped open for fear of setting off the electronic alarm system. Next year we need better welcome signs.

The chowder tasting event needs its own chairperson to make sure that all the details of that event go smoothly. We ran out of about 12 gallons of chowder in an hour, so we need to consider asking other restaurants to participate. There isn't really much space to put up displays in the chowder room, but it was a very barren looking space once the chowder folks had left.

We had excellent participation from the community: schools, businesses, agencies and nonprofit groups all sprang to assist us. As can be seen from the next two pages, we had the help of more than thirty organizations and nearly fifty volunteers. Forty of those volunteers were on site the day of the event.

This year we achieved one of our most important goals: everyone was still friends at the end. Next year we hope for that result and maybe a somewhat larger audience.

Participating Organizations

Anacortes Community Maritime Center

Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Shannon Point Marine Center

WSU/Skagit-Snohomish Beach Watchers

Taylor Shellfish Farms

Port of Anacortes

City of Anacortes

Skagit County Public Works

Anacortes Yacht Club

Samish Indian Nation

Captain's Place

Randy's Pier 61

Anacortes Dare Program

Mary Ann's Kitchen

Jim Ramaglia Photography

Gere-A-Deli

McDonald's

Frontier Industries

Clearsnap, Inc.

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

Orcanet

Padilla Bay National Estuarine Reserve

Anacortes Youth Arts

Boys' & Girls' Club

Insights Gallery

Skagit County Conservation District

Anacortes Chamber of Commerce

Skagit Conservation Education Alliance

Bayshore Office Products

People for Puget Sound

Backyard Band

Skagit Land Trust

Photo by Jean Bailey

Participating Volunteers

Teri Austin

Caroline Barney

Buddy Brown

Scott Bullock

Julia Cox

Paul Dinnel

Britta Escheté

Dixon Elder

Keri Hoffman

Patty Hutchins

Vern Lauridsen

Raffi Manion

Laura Manion

Barbara Martyn-Godfrey

Charlaine McGinnis-Brown

Dennis Mazza

Dennis McMillan

Boshie Morris

Keeley O'Connell

Kari Odden

Jeanne Olmsted

Erica Pickett

Linda Sanford

Harold Spehar

Pat Steffani

Connie Thoman

Rebecca Vigoren

Jean Bailey

Lyn Bishop

Tony Bull

Shelagh Considine

Catherine Davis

Ivar Dolph

Noelle Escheté

Lyndon Greene

Aubrey Hoffman

Fran Jepperson

Aundrea McBride

Vicki McNeil

Jean Nelson

Elizabeth O'Berry

Gabriel Olmsted

Ruth Peterson

Michele Pope

Caroline Spehar

Kathe Stanness

Betsy Stevenson

Cary Tolman

Photo by Jean Bailey