



SKAGIT COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the May 9, 2019, Skagit County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting, held at the Skagit County Administration Building in Mount Vernon

- **MRC Members Attending:** Sarah Tchang, Jay Lind, Pete Haase, Tracy Alker, Paul Dinnel, Kari Odden (Lynne Jordan's Alternate), Jude Apple, Diane Hennebert, Betsy Stevenson, Rachel Best, Nathan Biletnikoff
- **MRC Members Absent:** Jamey Selleck, Phyllis Bravinder, Todd Mitchell, Todd Woodard
- **Others Attending:** Wayne Huseby, FOSB/FBARCSC; Jason Quigley, SCPW; Tara Naylor, SCPW; Bridget Trosin, WA Sea Grant; Jennifer Herron, FOSB

Call to Order and Introduction: Sarah Tchang called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and opened the meeting with introductions.

Approval of Minutes: April 11, 2019, MRC meeting minutes were approved as written

Public Comments: Wayne Huseby commented that Governor Jay Inslee recently signed legislation to protect southern resident orcas.

Skagit County's Stormwater Management Program: *Jason Quigley*

Jason Quigley provided a brief overview of the County's Stormwater Management Program and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The NPDES permit is a federal requirement of the Clean Water Act that regulates stormwater pollution. The Department of Ecology is the NPDES permitting authority in Washington State. Skagit County was issued its first NPDES Phase II permit in 2007. The next phase of the permit will be issued in August. The County's NPDES permit area is based on population or intensiveness of activity. The other nearby municipalities have their own permit boundaries. Skagit County's stormwater drainage systems experience runoff from very diverse land uses including agriculture, residential, commercial, and industrial. Much of the agricultural land in Skagit County is exempt from NPDES permit requirements because they are not large enough operations to meet the permit criteria. The County's Stormwater Management Program Plan is updated annually and includes the efforts that are being made to meet the NPDES Phase II permit requirements. The [Draft 2019 report](#) is now available on the County website. The County focuses on the following areas to help improve stormwater quality: public involvement, education and outreach, runoff control from development, illicit discharge detection and elimination, and improving the County's own operations and maintenance activities. Skagit County currently only has 1 and 0.5 FTEs working under the Stormwater Management Program with support from other departments. In addition to staffing a table at Fidalgo Bay Day, Jason expressed interest in exploring other opportunities to partner with Skagit MRC in the future.

Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Report: *Pete Haase*

The last NWSC meeting took place at the Maritime Center in Port Townsend on April 26th. Below are some of the highlights.

- NWSC officers were elected: Alan Clark (Clallam MRC) was elected NWSC Chair and Elsa Schwarz (Island MRC) was elected NWSC Vice-Chair.
- The NWSI Five Year Strategic Plan is almost ready for release.
- The Puget Sound Partnership is working on a communications plan. An Adhoc Communications Committee has been formed for the NWSI and they are looking for MRC members to help. Please contact Tracy or Sasha if interested. Pete noted that the San Juan MRC has been doing a really good job at marketing themselves.
- Jeff Taylor (Jefferson MRC) gave an interesting presentation on using satellite imagery to monitor kelp.
- The 2018 NWSI Annual Report is now available on the NWSI website. http://www.nwstraits.org/media/2757/2018-nwsi-annual-report_lo-res.pdf
- The 2019 NWSI conference will be held in Everett this year on November 15-16. Contact Sasha if you would like to be involved in the planning process. They are also looking for conference session ideas.
- MRC members are encouraged to attend other County MRC meetings:
 - **Snohomish MRC Meetings:** 3rd Wednesday each month, 6:30pm-8:30pm at the Snohomish County Campus (3000 Rockefeller Ave, Everett, on the 6th floor of the Robert J. Drewel Building in room 6A0).

- [Whatcom MRC Meetings](#): 1st Thursday each month, 5pm-7pm at the PW Civic Building, Garden Level Conference Room
- [Clallam MRC Meetings](#): 3rd Monday each month, 5:30 pm to 7:30 PM at Port Angeles Board of County Commissioners Hearing Room, located at 223 E 4th St, Port Angeles.
- [Jefferson MRC Meetings](#): 1st Tuesday each month, 6pm-8pm at the Port Commissioners Bldg, 333 Benedict St, Port Townsend.
- [San Juan MRC Meetings](#): 1st Thursday each month, 8:30am-11:00am at The Grange, 152 First Street, Friday Harbor.
- [Island MRC Meetings](#): 1st Tuesday each month, 3:00pm-5pm at the County Annex Building, Coupeville. Sometimes the meetings are held at the Camano Island Library (848 N Sunrise Blvd).
- The next NWSC meeting will be a WebEx on [May 31](#) at 11:00am.
- June 28th NWSC meeting in Everett we will need to present one of our projects.

Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) Report: *Jay Lind*

- Nan McKay is the newest Foundation board member.
- The NWSF is asking the MRCs to create a wish list of projects that we would like to get funding for.
- The MRC Opportunity Funds deadline for the Innovation Fund (\$10,000) and for three fellowships (200 hours each) has been extended to [June 1, 2019](#). Awards must be spent within a year. Fellowship funding must be spent by December 1, 2019.
- The NWSF applied for and will likely receive \$10,000 from Shell Puget Sound Refinery to help support the Kids on the Beach program from September 2019 - September 2020.

Project Status & Discussion

- [Fidalgo Bay Day](#): Fidalgo Bay Resort has been reserved for next year's Fidalgo Bay Day on [August 24th, 2019](#). Planning is currently underway. Paul met with Taylor Shellfish who agreed to donate shellfish for complimentary samples.
- [Bowman Bay Restoration](#): Monthly plant maintenance work parties with the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group will take place from 10:00am to 1:00pm on the following dates: May 17, June 21, July 12, August 16, and September 20. The work party schedule has been posted on the MRC website and in "The Wave."
- [Forage Fish Surveys](#): Surveys continue at our restoration sites and index sites at Ship Harbor, Samish Island, and Similk Bay. A school group will be visiting Camp Kirby in October and has expressed interest in science related activities. Pete offered to assist the school group with conducting a forage fish survey if they are interested. Pete and several other volunteers will also be working with Island View Elementary School to conduct a forage fish survey at Fidalgo Bay on June 14. It will be the school's third year participating in forage fish surveys at Fidalgo Bay.
- [Kids on the Beach](#): 25 volunteers assisted 50 eighth grade students from Conway with beach activities at the Fidalgo Bay Resort on May 1 and 50 eighth grade students from La Conner at Lone Tree Point on May 2. The Science Symposium for both school groups will take place on May 10 at Padilla Bay.
- [Pinto Abalone Recovery](#): The Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) divers completed surveys in Skagit County over the last three months. Paul went out in the field with the PSRF and WDFW dive crews to set up two new outplant sites in the western Fidalgo Bay area which were seeded with approximately 1000 abalone of two year classes. They also installed new underwater camera setups to see what kind of predators are interested in the abalone. So far they have observed a lot of interest in the abalone from kelp greenling, but no smoking guns. They are looking into installing some bait traps with abalone to see what kind of predators they attract.
- [Olympia Oyster Restoration](#): Sampling season is starting up again. Paul retrieved two of the 20 cultch bags in Fidalgo Bay to monitor. So far the results indicate there was low to moderately low native oyster settlement last year. Volunteers will collect the rest of the cultch bags to monitor oyster settlement in Fidalgo Bay soon and will deploy 20 new cultch bags that will be monitored next year. Paul gave a presentation on the Olympia Oyster Restoration and Pinto Abalone Restoration projects as part of the Salish Sea Stewards training program. Paul went out with Whatcom MRC to help with their native oyster restoration project in Chuckanut Bay. So far it looks like the Olympia oysters have had good recruitment and survival rates.
- [Kayak Kelp Surveys](#): An MRC kelp monitoring workshop was held [April 18](#) at the Maritime Center in Port Townsend. Two of our kelp survey volunteers, Brad Smith and John Freeto, attended the workshop on behalf of the MRC. A conference call has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, 3-4pm to discuss motorized boat kelp monitoring. MRC

members can contact Dana Oster if interested in participating in the discussion: oster@nwstraits.org. Surveys will likely start up again in June or July.

- **Salish Sea Stewards:** There are 22 people taking the training this year. The final class and potluck will be held May 21 from 1:00pm to 5:00pm at Padilla Bay. Pete is organizing a 'volunteer program fair' at the culminating class. Class participants will get a chance to visit with representatives from different volunteer organizations. The potluck will start around 4:00pm. MRC members are invited to attend. We have finally reached full capacity with the Volgistics program for reporting volunteer hours. The Volgistics program is paid for and maintained by Padilla Bay. We will need to start looking into the possibility of expanding the Volgistics program in partnership with Padilla Bay. The date of the Salish Sea Stewards Planning Workshop has been set for June 13, 2019 at Padilla Bay from 9am to 4pm. Volunteer coordinators from other programs, Salish Sea Stewards, and MRC members will be invited to the workshop to share their insights. Joan Drinkwin will be facilitating the workshop. Joan is also working on the Needs Assessment survey that will be sent to volunteers prior to the workshop. Results of the survey and workshop will help develop the restructuring plan and recommendations that will be brought to the MRC for deliberation.

Stormwater Grant Proposal Update: Diane

Diane, Wayne and Pete submitted a proposal to the Northwest Straits Foundation for the Boeing Stormwater Grant. If approved, this will be a joint project between the Skagit MRC and the City of Anacortes. Diane and Pete will be the MRC Project Co-Leads. The proposal is for a total of \$10,000 and includes the following highlights:

- Identify five locations for rain gardens and/or bioswales in the City of Anacortes stormwater drainage system and develop conceptual designs for each project.
- Signage will be installed at a decommissioned dump site that will be repurposed as a bike skills course to increase public awareness and understanding of stormwater impacts and the benefits of raingardens.

Administrative Report: Tracy

- The June 13th MRC meeting had to be rescheduled because it conflicted with the Salish Sea Stewards Workshop. Per consensus of the Committee, the MRC meeting was rescheduled for June 18th, from 1:30pm to 2:30pm at the Skagit County Administration Building in Mount Vernon. The MRC's 20th Anniversary Celebration will follow just after the meeting at 3:00pm in the Commissioner's Hearing Room.
- 2019-2020 MRC Grant: State funding doubled from \$227,000/year to \$455,000/year for the 2019-2021 biennium and will be split equally between the seven MRCs. The MRCs will each receive \$65,000 state funds and \$26,000 federal for a total of \$91,000 per year. MRC Grant proposals are due June 6. State funds will need to be spent by June 30, 2020. The funds could be used to increase staff capacity, expansion of projects, or new projects. The consensus of the committee was to apply some of the additional funding to existing projects and the rest would go towards MRC Operations.

Miscellaneous Events and Announcements: All

- The Friends of Skagit Beaches will host a volunteer appreciation picnic on June 4th at Bowman Bay. Pete will bring a cake in celebration of the Northwest Straits Initiative's 20th Anniversary.
- Skagit MRC's 20th Anniversary Celebration will be held June 18th at 3:00pm in the County Commissioner's Hearing Room. Several folks will be invited to speak and the Commissioners will sign a proclamation. There will be cake in the lobby afterwards.
- The County, in partnership with State Parks and Padilla Bay, are working with an engineering firm to replace the failing tide gate at No Name Slough with a new structure designed to be more beneficial for fish passage and to accommodate sea level rise.

The meeting adjourned at 11:18am. The next MRC meeting will be held June 18, 2019 at the Skagit County Administration Building in Mount Vernon (1800 Continental Place).