|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MRC Members Present Julie Schlenger, Chair  Brie Townsend, Co-Vice Chair  Sara Maxwell, Co-Vice Chair  Natasha Coumou, Past-Chair  Tim Ellis, NWSC and LIO Rep  Phil Salditt  Franchesca Perez  Andrew Gobin  Richard Strickland  Allan Hicks  Dawn Presler  **Absent**  Cory Champagne, Alternate  Heidi Stewart, Alternate | **Staff**  Elisa Dawson, SWM Senior Planner and MRC Staff  Joycelyn Blue, SWM Planner and MRC Staff  **MRC Ex-Officio Members**  David Bain, MRC Ex-Officio Member  **Others**  Laura Gurley, Port of Everett |
| **Summary of Decisions**   * The MRC approved the January 2025 meeting summary. * The MRC approved the Letter of Support Policy | |
| **Upcoming Events**   * March 19th MRC Meeting online via Zoom * Forage fish monitoring at Picnic Point and Meadowdale – March 20 * Forage fish monitoring at Howarth – March 15 * NWSF Graduate Research Showcase Mach 29, 2025 at Padilla Bay | |

**Welcome and Introductions**

MRC Chair Julie Schlenger opened the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting at 4:30PM.

Julie introduced herself and asked for self-introductions of the meeting participants. After introductions, she read the Snohomish County Tribal Acknowledgement.

*“We acknowledge the original inhabitants of this place, the Sah ku mehu* (Sauk-*Suiattle Tribe), the stuləgʷábš (Stillaguamish Tribe), and the sduhubš (Snohomish) Skykomish, Snoqualmie and their successors the Tulalip Tribes. Since time immemorial, they have hunted, fished, gathered on, and taken care of these lands and waters. We respect their sovereignty, their right to self-determination and honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. We will strive to be honest about our past mistakes and bring about a future that includes their people, stories, and voices to form a more just and equitable society.*

*With this tribal acknowledgement, we open our time together by honoring the ancestors whose feet first knew these lands, and whose paddles still know the waters of what we now call Snohomish County.”*

**Approval of MRC Meeting Summary**

Tim Ellis made a motion to approve the January 2025 meeting summary. Phil Salditt seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Letter of Support Policy – Elisa Dawson

The Snohomish MRC receives requests for letters of support for projects within the marine waters of Snohomish County. To be considered for a letter of support, partners must work with one or more Members of the Snohomish MRC to find a project Lead to bring the letter forward. A MRC Member Lead must facilitate the process of gathering MRC approval for the letter of support. This document is intended to provide clarity on the approval criteria, authorization process to be followed, and timing required in completing a letter of support.

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson provided and reviewed the updated draft Letter of Support Policy text that had been edited based on the discussion at the January MRC Meeting. The MRC reviewed the draft Letter of Support Policy and had a discussion, agreeing that the updates resolved the concerns from the January Meeting.

Tim Ellis made a motion to approve the proposed Letter of Support Policy, Andrew Gobin seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Kayak Point Signage – Natasha Coumou

A subgroup met in December to review edits for the Kayak Point signs. Natasha brought copies of the updated draft signs for Kayak Point and discussed their current status. The Tulalip Tribes’ graphic design department is working on drafts for all 9 of the interpretive signs that will be installed at Kayak Point Park. MRC members reviewed the signs and gave their initial feedback. One comment about the signs was wondering if the colors would fade. Natasha is going to check on how similar signs have held up.

The signs will continue to be edited by the Tulalip Tribes graphic design staff. Natasha expects to have proofs of all 9 signed by mid-March.

MRC 2025-2027 Grant Projects Discussion – Elisa Dawson

The MRC discussed a list of ideas for the MRC’s upcoming 2025-2027 NWSC funds. Project ideas included:

* Continue with community science monitoring.
* A project focused on derelict vessels – creating outreach materials about the work we’ve done, reaching out to people about vessel turn in, making a plan for vessels left in the estuary.
* Create a marine report card for Possession Sound
* Complete a shoreline armor analysis similar to Island County.
* A project focused on nearshore restoration. Possibly doing a priority areas analysis, or focusing in on a specific capital project
* Marine Vegetation work, including identifying no-anchor zones to protect eelgrass.

The MRC discussed the ideas and discussed which two ideas should be further scoped for the grant. It was decided that the Derelict Vessel subcommittee would further scope the derelict vessel ideas, and the Nearshore Restoration subcommittee would further scope the shoreline armor analysis idea. Both ideas will be further discussed at the next MRC meeting and the MRC will decide which idea to move forward. Final scoping will occur by May.

**Project Updates and Announcements**

* **NWSC – Tim Ellis** 
  + The Commission recognized Nan McKay for her contributions as a NWS Commissioner over her 11 year term as a Governor’s appointee, and her contributions to the Puget Sound restoration community throughout her professional and volunteer career. Nan termed off the Commission in late 2024.
  + The Science Advisory Committee is planning another workshop in their series, anticipated for October 2025. Stay tuned for more information about the topic and date.
  + The Commission adopted a set of Norms for Courageous Conversations. The norms will be used at Commission meetings to establish expectations and solutions for tackling difficult conversations. Commission staff will be following up with MRC staff to provide more details.
  + The Commission discussed the NWS Initiative definition that was proposed at the September 2024 retreat. The Commission recommended gathering additional information from the NWS Foundation to further inform the discussion.
  + Ginny Broadhurst shared information from the Salish Sea Institute on a recent speaker series event about Commercial Shipping: Impacts and Risks in the Salish Sea, featuring speaker Lovel Pratt from Friends of the San Juans and San Juan MRC member. A recording of the event is available online.
* **LIO – Tim Ellis** 
  + Any updates?
* **Starlight Beach Walk February 8 review – Joycelyn Blue**
  + Collaboration between Beach Watchers, MRC, and City of Edmonds
    - MRC Staff attended and set up the hot drinks station
  + Beach Watchers counted over 100 people in attendance
  + Many adults and small children excited to see the sea stars, anemones, and chitons
* **Marine Vegetation MRC Grant – Julie Schlenger** 
  + The consultant is currently working on updates to the marine vegetation memo to include information on Hat Island and Mukilteo areas.
  + The subcommittee is meeting tomorrow, Thursday Feb 20 to discuss updates to the marine veg webpages.
* **Kelp Monitoring – Brie Townsend**
  + The MRC Kelp Kayak-Based Monitoring Review meeting hosted by the NWSC was held on January 30 with an overview of trends from MRCs, Vashon Nature Center and Samish Indian Nation Department of Natural Resources. A recording of the session is available online.
* **Oil Spill Preparedness and Prevention Update – Julie Schlenger**
  + The Oil Spill subcommittee is planning to meet to discuss GRP updates.
* **Forage Fish Monitoring – Joycelyn Blue and Julie Schlenger** 
  + Monitoring has continued monthly for Meadowdale, Picnic Point, and Howarth Park.
  + Picnic Point and Meadowdale – Feb 13, March 20, Howarth – Feb 15, March 15
  + The 2024 data summary presentation with WDFW is currently being scheduled and will most likely be virtual.
* **Derelict Vessels update – Elisa Dawson**
  + Snohomish County, Port of Everett, DNR, and the NWSC are collaborating on hosting a vessel turn in event in February 2026. Planning for the event is starting now, the first meeting was held on Jan 22.
  + Next meeting is March 19. The MRC subcommittee, Stillaguamish Tribe, and Tulalip Tribe are invited to have representatives attend.
  + There is budget for vessel removal in 2025. MRC Members are encouraged to submit their suggestions for vessel removal by March 19, 2025.
  + Vessel recon scheduled for SWM staff on March 24/26
* **ORCA Partnership update – Elisa Dawson**
  + Snohomish County and the ORCA program completed their 2024 contract.
  + ORCA and SWM are currently in discussions about next steps.
* **Upcoming Events**
  + Forage fish monitoring
    - Picnic Point and Meadowdale –March 20
    - Howarth – March 15
  + MRC March Meeting will be online.
* **Other Updates?**
  + Richard provided an update about the possible letter to Snohomish County Council about critical areas. He asked if anyone else would be interested in leading the process, but there were no volunteers.
  + Phil reported that there will be a Showcase of Graduate Research: Salish Sea Conservation and Stewardship hosted by the NWSF on Saturday March 29 from 1-3PM at Padilla Bay. All MRC members and their guests are welcome.

**The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.**