

Snohomish County Marine Resources Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary

March 17, 2021 6:30-8:30PM

Meeting conducted via conference call/video

MRC Members Present Mike Ehlebracht, Chair Natasha Coumou, Co-Vice Chair Tom Doerge, Co-Vice Chair Tim Ellis, NWSC and LIO Rep. Laura Gurley Julie Schlenger Mike Sadler Sara Maxwell Kip Killebrew Brienne Townsend Michael Kundu Absent Andrew Gobin	Staff Elisa Dawson, SWM Senior Planner and MRC Staff Alex Pittman, SWM Planner and MRC Staff MRC Ex-Officio Members Susan Tarpley, Citizen David Bain, Citizen Others Carson Moscoso, Snohomish Conservation District Betsy Newnum, Citizen Jon Baker, Citizen Dana Oster, Northwest Straits Commission
Summary of Decisions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The MRC approved the February 2021 meeting minutes.	
Upcoming Events	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webinar - Updates & Follow Ups on the Vessel Encounter Module (Oil Spills): March 24 at 1:00• Forage Fish Monitoring: April 14 and 15• April MRC Meeting: April 21 at 6:30	

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Mike Ehlebracht opened the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting at 6:30PM. Due to COVID-19 related stay-at-home orders, the meeting was held via conference call/video.

Mike introduced himself and asked for self-introductions of the meeting participants.

Approval of MRC Meeting Summary

Kip Killebrew made a motion to approve the February 17, 2021 MRC Meeting Summary. Brienne Townsend seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

MRC 2020 Annual Report

Elisa Dawson facilitated a discussion to solicit feedback on the draft MRC 2020 Annual Report. The draft report was sent out for MRC review a week prior to the meeting. Several changes were made to the MRC report and were identified as items for discussion:

- Thanks to Lincoln Loehr for the cover photo!

- A page with MRC members and photos was added. MRC Members were asked to let Elisa know if they would like to change their photo.
- Staff photos were added to the last page.
- The 2020 financials and volunteer hours presented in the report were discussed in detail.
 - MRC Members suggested several revisions to this page aimed at highlighting the efficiency of the MRC and how grant funds and volunteer hours complement funding provided by SWM fees to provide rate payers with substantial value relative to their investment.
- The addition of a tribal acknowledgement was discussed. Elisa will follow up with Kip and Natasha about potential language to include in this report, while the MRC will continue discussions about establishing an official tribal acknowledgement for the longer-term.

Elisa will work with Communications staff to incorporate edits from the MRC. The final Annual Report will be submitted as a grant deliverable in early April.

Plastic Free Salish Sea – Earth Day Planning Update

Mike Ehlebracht, Alex Pittman, Elisa Dawson, Mike Sadler, Brienne Townsend, Julie Schlenger, David Bain, and Heather T. (WSU Sustainable Community Stewards staff) met via conference call on March 4th to discuss further logistics for the Earth Day Plastic Free Salish Sea event idea.

The team decided that the trash collection/drop off time will be Earth Day, Thursday April 22 from 2-6PM. We are encouraging folks to go pick up trash along the shoreline that morning or afternoon, or they could even collect the day or two before, then bring their trash to our drop off locations to have the trash sorted. MRC, Beach Watcher, and WSU Waste Warrior volunteers will be onsite at each location to sort the trash and keep track of the weight of trash collected from the effort. We are also brainstorming a few ways for people to send in pictures of their trash which they can sort and weigh themselves at home, so we can crowdsource the information from folks who would prefer to just throw away their trash at home instead of coming to one of the drop-off locations.

Elisa is working with Meghan Jordan (PW-Communications) and we are making some marketing materials for the event. We will have some of those materials ready for sharing by 3/19. Additionally, Elisa is working with DCNR management to incorporate our event into a larger DCNR-Snohomish County Earth Day celebration.

We will be seeking volunteer to sign up for staffing the waste collection stations from 2-6PM on earth day:

District 1: Twin Rivers County Park

District 2: County Campus

District 3: Esperance County Park

District 4: McCollum County Park

District 5: Fairfield County Park

DCNR management is working with County Council to advertise the event and we should expect County Council to stop by at their respective locations on earth day. There will be a SnoCo staff member assigned to each one of these locations who will be responsible for making sure the

trash is properly disposed of at the end of the day. We want volunteers to be doing the main interaction/collection of waste.

European Green Crab Presentation – Natasha Coumou

Natasha Coumou, MRC member and Restoration Ecologist with the Tulalip Tribes, gave a presentation on European Green Crab and the Tulalip Tribes monitoring plan. MRC members were asked to review a fact sheet and the green crab story map created by Washington Sea Grant (<https://uw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=807fd68b00ab4f99be1cfc4b87bd5a4f>) prior to the meeting.

Natasha explained that the European green crab (*Carcinus maenas*) is one of the most successful and damaging invasive species in the world, and that its recent arrival along Washington's inland shorelines poses a threat to critically important estuarine ecosystems, including native species and shellfish resources, as well as critical wildlife habitat.

Green crab were first detected on the West Coast in 1989, in San Francisco Bay. They were most likely accidentally transported in seaweed used as packing material for live seafood or bait, and genetic evidence indicates they originated on the US East Coast. In the years since, green crab established robust populations on the west coast of Vancouver Island and continued to spread northward. In most estuaries on the coast of Oregon and Washington, however, green crab have typically only been periodically abundant. This trend could be changing, as in recent years, there have been more consistent sightings in some Oregon and Washington coastal estuaries.

Finding populations at the earliest stage of invasion offers the best chance of preventing and reducing damage from European green crab. To get ahead of a potential invasion, Washington Sea Grant's Crab Team launched an early detection monitoring effort for invasive green crab in Washington's portion of the Salish Sea in 2015. Each spring and summer month, Crab Team volunteers and partners systematically search a large network of sites that offer suitable habitat for green crab for evidence of invasion.

Natasha discussed the Tulalip Tribes monitoring green crab monitoring plan, which will begin in April and run through September. Modeling has identified four sites within Snohomish County that are at greatest risk for damage by European green crab if they arrive, and Tulalip will be focusing their efforts on monitoring at these locations.

Project Updates and Announcements

- **MRC Mentorship:** Mike provided a brief check-in and update on the mentorship program for new members this year. For each of the first three months of the year, each new MRC member is being paired with a veteran MRC member to meet.
- **LIO:** Tim attended the February 25 LIO Meeting. Tim noted that presentations were made on the LIO's efforts to address nearshore septic systems in northern Snohomish County and on the Quiet Sound Program by WA Maritime Blue. The next LIO meeting is scheduled for May 20. Tim will attend.
- **Northwest Straits Commission:** Tim reported on a number of items discussed at the February NWSC Meeting. Information was presented on the Maritime WA National

Heritage Site, and staff have made themselves available for potential presentations to individual MRCs. Lucas Hart (NWSF) noted that all noteworthy bills had cleared legislative committees and are moving forward. The External Relations Committee still includes \$910K in funding for MRCs. Peter Hasse with Skagit MRC noted that they have gotten 41 new Salish Sea Stewards on board. Jefferson MRC reported on a project to produce videos about people affected by climate change. Clallam MRC noted that their recent webinar on kelp monitoring was recorded and is now available.

- **Forage Fish:** The MRC is monitoring two sites at Meadowdale, two sites at Picnic Point, and two sites at Howarth Park on a monthly basis. Volunteers are permitted, and masks and social distancing are required but possible during this field work. The next sample events are scheduled for April 14 and 15. Contact Alex if you would like more information on these opportunities.
- **Meadowdale:** Contractors are in-place for 2021 construction, though it is currently unable to progress due to an agreement waiting for approval by BNSF.
- **Port Susan:** The Port Susan subcommittee met jointly with Island County MRC on March 16 to finalize the discussion on scope of work for each MRC prior to beginning the process of preparing grant application documents. The plan is for the draft grant idea to be reviewed and discussed in more detail at the April MRC Meeting.
- **Marine Vegetation Monitoring:** Elisa is working with DNR on getting a contract together to monitor from Mukilteo to Edmonds area in 2021. While it may not be possible to monitor all the way to the County line, any leftover areas can be captured in a follow up effort, along with Port Susan, in 2022.
- **Derelict Vessels:** Elisa noted that the NWSF contract for SWM to receive funds donated for derelict vessel removal was reviewed at the March 16 County Council Public Works Committee meeting. Alex and Elisa did initial recon field work in early March and are scheduling a conference call with the many stakeholders for mid April.
- **Starlight Beach Walk – WSU Beach Watchers Virtual Event Recap:** Susan Tarpley led a recap discussion of the Starlight Beach Walk, which took place on February 22. This was the first time this event had been held virtually, and there were upsides and downsides to this approach. There was lots of interest in the event, with over 70 registrations, though due to technical issues with logging into the webinar, a much smaller fraction of that was in attendance. There is interest in learning from these lessons and making adjustment for potential future virtual events, including potential summer follow up events.
- **NOAA Mukilteo:** Susan led a discussion about whether and how the MRC would like to respond to the recent announcement that the NOAA research lab in Mukilteo will not be rebuilt due to higher than expected contractor bids. The decision was ultimately made to forego official involvement by the MRC.
- **Volunteer Hours to Alex by April 2.**

- **Elisa out of office from March 19 – April 5.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30