

# Snohomish County Marine Resources Advisory Committee Meeting

## Meeting Summary

July 21, 2021 6:30-8:30PM

\*Meeting conducted via conference call/video\*

<b>MRC Members Present</b> Mike Ehlebracht, Chair Tom Doerge, Co-Vice Chair Tim Ellis, NWSC and LIO Rep. Julie Schlenger Kip Killebrew Brienne Townsend Michael Kundu Andrew Gobin Laura Gurley Sara Maxwell <b>Absent</b> Natasha Coumou, Co-Vice Chair (excused)	<b>Staff</b> Elisa Dawson, SWM Senior Planner and MRC Staff Alex Pittman, SWM Planner and MRC Staff <b>MRC Ex-Officio Members</b> David Bain, Citizen Susan Tarpley, Citizen <b>Others</b> Traci Sanderson, Citizen Phil Salditt, Citizen Kendall Norcott, Citizen Susan Curtis, Citizen Jonathan Robinson, WSU Snohomish Beach Watchers Jonathan Hallenbeck, Northwest Straits Commission Paul Schlenger, Environmental Science Associates Carson Moscoso, Snohomish Conservation District
<b>Summary of Decisions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The MRC approved the June 2021 meeting minutes.</li></ul>	
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Northwest Straits Commission Meeting:</b> July 30</li><li>• <b>Oil Spill Webinars:</b> July 14, 28 and August 18</li><li>• <b>Kelp Monitoring:</b> July 22, 23 and August 9, 20</li><li>• <b>MRC August Picnic:</b> August 18 at 6:30</li><li>• <b>Next MRC Meeting:</b> September 15 at 6:30</li><li>• <b>Forage Fish Monitoring:</b> July 28</li></ul>	

### Welcome and Introductions

MRC 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 June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 MRC Meeting Summary. Tom Doerge seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### MRC Pilings Project Update – Presentation by ESA Consultants

Paul Schlenger, with Environmental Science Associates, provided a presentation on Phase 2 of the Pilings Project, which has focused on stakeholder engagement to explore options for removing pilings inventoried in the Snohomish Estuary during Phase 1 of the project.

In this phase, the MRC began implementation planning with public and tribal piling owners to facilitate voluntary removal. Based on the inventory and prioritization results of Phase 1, the MRC selected five areas to focus initial stakeholder discussions for removing pilings. The areas were selected based on multiple considerations, including concentration of creosote- pilings, concentration of high priority pilings, and ownership by public and tribal landowners. For each area, a fact sheet was prepared to summarize the project and effects of pilings in the estuary.

The MRC convened meetings with public and tribal landowners in the project area. The first stakeholder meeting was a group meeting to introduce the project, answer questions, and gauge interest in removal projects. All public and tribal stakeholders with pilings in the project area were invited and attended. The public and tribal stakeholders who participated were Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Port of Everett (Port), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), City of Everett, City of Marysville, Snohomish County, and the Tulalip Tribes.

Paul shared some key takeaways from conversations with each stakeholder:

- **DNR:** DNR is an ideal partner, in part because they have all the permits and extensive experience. Some pilings on state-owned aquatic lands may be associated with an Aquatic Land Lease and may be the responsibility of a lessee.
- **Port & Corps:** The Port is open to participating but needs to keep pilings that have mitigation value for them until they can receive credit for them. The Port has some projects upcoming which will remove pilings as mitigation. Other upcoming projects involving dredging are unlikely to be able to include piling removal because different equipment is needed. The Corps has a functional training dike on a Port-owned parcel. Otherwise, the Corps has no piling uses in the estuary that would prevent pilings from being removed.
- **City of Everett:** The City of Everett plans to remove many pilings in the Public Works Yard high priority area as mitigation for an upcoming project.
- **City of Marysville:** The City of Marysville has upcoming projects along their waterfront where piling removals and/or replacements may occur. All pilings in the stretch between Interstate-5 and State Route 529 will be removed at some point for mitigation credits.
- **Snohomish County:** The County can get piling removals on the 2023 Surface Water Management work plan if the benefits rank high enough. There are potential opportunities to include piling removal in other projects being considered for North Spencer and Smith Island. Small piling removal projects could be funded if there is an end-of-year surplus.
- **Tulalip Tribes:** All pilings within the Tulalip Reservation are under the Tulalip Tribes' regulatory authority regardless of parcel ownership in the parcel database. Before approving piling removal, the tribes will want to consider whether they will have future uses of the pilings. The Tulalip Tribes have been in discussions with DNR on diffuse creosote-removal, especially in the Quilceda estuary. Removal of the high density of creosote-treated pilings near the Quilceda estuary is of interest for the tribes.

Following Paul's presentation, the MRC asked questions and engaged in discussion about opportunities for moving forward. In response to a question about LIO funding, Elisa noted that the MRC currently has an ask into the LIO for NTA funding for piling removal. In discussing stakeholder questions about whether there may or may not be more creosote pilings than included in the inventory, Kip questioned whether there might be archival information available about who installed pilings, when, and whether they're creosote. While this is possible, anecdotal

evidence suggests that this is largely lacking. The MRC discussed options for a limited study to ground truth the creosote attribution and determine whether additional investigation is necessary.

### **Crabber Education and Outreach Recap**

The NWSF held their Crabber Workshop in partnership with WDFW on June 30<sup>th</sup>. 349 households registered for the event. The recording is available online and has received 130 views.

Volunteers with the MRC were out talking to crabbers at the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Boat Launch in Everett on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers spoke with approximately 800 crabbers and handed out supplies and outreach materials listed below. Thanks to all of those who participated: Brie, Elisa, Alex, Phil, Kip, Bob, Laura, and WSU Beach Watcher intern Rachel and other Beach Watchers.

Volunteers handed out:

- Packets with BMP rack cards, charts, rot cord, WDFW brochure
- More cotton cord, bait clips, crab gauges, Rock fish descenders

Snohomish County has also been posting social media posts, there was a press release, and radio ads on Everett's Greatest Hits KRKO, and Classic Country KKXA. The County's boosted social media post ran from July 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, and reached 2988 people, with 120 link clicks and 3 comments, for a total cost of 17 cents per click.

The MRC engaged in discussion about how best to engage with folks who claim that their pots are stolen, understanding that there is a greater likelihood that they have actually been lost. Suggestions centered on educating these folks about how many crab pots are lost in Puget Sound each year (over 10K/year), as they are likely unaware of how common this is.

There was discussion of the possibility of posting information at stores ahead of time and throughout the season. The MRC has conducted outreach like this in the past, but it requires a dedicated volunteer to restock supplies regularly and build relationships with store staff.

### **Project Updates and Announcements**

- **LIO:** Tim reported that he is participating in the Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO activity to rank the new strategies of the Action Agenda. This included a meeting to assign High, Medium, and Low assignments for 151 draft strategies.
- **Northwest Straits Commission:** Tim reported that at the last NWSC meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup> the Jefferson, Clallam, Whatcom, and Skagit MRCs presented their 2021-22 NWSC grant information. Other noteworthy items included a discussion of NWSC history, Skagit MRCs Salish Sea Stewards report, the NWSC Tribal Acknowledgement being vetted and ready for adoption, and an update on Green Crab monitoring.
- **Kelp Monitoring:** Tom reported that the Kelp team have begun surveying, including July 13<sup>th</sup> at Mukilteo and July 14<sup>th</sup> at Meadowdale. The Puget Sound Restoration Fund's Kelp Expedition visited Edmonds on July 19<sup>th</sup> for monitoring work, and Tom met staff from DNR while they captured drone footage of kelp in Edmonds on July 20<sup>th</sup>. Additional scheduled monitoring dates for July and August include the following:
  - **Edmonds Round 1:** July 22 or 23
  - **Edmonds Round 2:** August 9 or 20
  - **Hat Island (SWM Staff):** August 10 or 18

- **Forage Fish:** The next Forage Fish monitoring date is scheduled for July 28<sup>th</sup> at Picnic Point and Howarth Park. Meadowdale Beach is going to be closed for construction, and monitoring will not occur until after construction. Moving forward, monitoring will be consolidated into one day per month to include Picnic Point and Howarth Park. Volunteers are permitted and must follow the current COVID safety protocols.

Alex reported that WDFW has secured their WCC crew for another year, so the monitoring program will continue as it has after it appeared they may lose their crew.
- **Meadowdale:** Elisa reported that this project is currently under construction. The access road is having improvements done to accommodate heavy machinery onsite. On July 9 local politicians and advocates assembled for a tour of Meadowdale Beach. Among the speakers were U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell, state Sen. Marko Liias, Edmonds Mayor Mike Nelson, and Snohomish County Councilmember Megan Dunn. More information about this visit can be found in an Everett Herald article about the project and visit: <https://www.heraldnet.com/news/at-meadowdale-beach-the-salmon-will-return-to-a-new-estuary/>
- **Derelict Vessels:** Elisa reported that SWM will be posting four derelict vessels for removal in 2021. Additionally, two new vessels appeared at Howarth Park recently. Elisa is coordinating with the City of Everett Police Department to support their efforts to remove these vessels.
- **NWSC Shoreline Master Plan Advisory Group:** Alex is collecting notes on topics the Snohomish MRC subcommittee would like to investigate. Participating MRCs will be submitting a list of their top topics of interest to identify common areas of interest to focus on moving forward. The goal of this group is to try to coordinate the MRCs input on local SMPs and share ideas on how we can be involved. There will be future meetings to discuss additional SMP ideas and how MRCs can be involved in their local process.
- **Cleanup Event at Kayak Point Park on September 18<sup>th</sup>:** The MRC Outreach Subcommittee held a planning meeting for this event on July 15<sup>th</sup>. The MRC will host a beach cleanup event on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 9AM-12PM at Kayak Point County Park for International Coastal Cleanup Day. This event is in coordination with the WSU Beach Watchers, WSU Waste Warriors, and Zero Waste Washington, and will utilize the Escaped Trash Assessment Protocol developed by the EPA.
- **Oil Spill Workshops**

  - The Washington State Department of Ecology will be hosting free one-day event focusing on the various stages of a marine mammal response during oil spills on September 8, 2021. MRC Members are encouraged to attend.
  - The Oil Spill subcommittee has been attending Ecology's Model 101 Presentations and technical discussions on anchorages and probability. The subcommittee will meet in August to recap the webinars and discuss next steps.
- **August MRC Picnic:** Elisa said that the Mukilteo Rose Hill Christiansen Room has been booked for August 18<sup>th</sup> and is reserved from 5PM-9PM. Official start will be 6:30PM.
- **Port Susan:** Alex reported that Island County is leading the effort to apply to the UW Evans School Student Consulting Lab to support the effort to review new science relevant to Port Susan. Applications are due August 31<sup>st</sup>. Joint subcommittee members are providing comments on the draft application by July 28<sup>th</sup>.

- **Howarth Park/Nearshore Restoration:** Per the MRC 2021 Work Plan, a subcommittee meeting will occur in late summer to discuss opportunities and next steps.
- **Mussel Watch:** Elisa reported that WDFW will be doing another round of mussel monitoring in the greater Puget Sound in the fall/winter of 2021-22. Deployment is expected in November, and we will retrieve in January of February 2022. Edmonds Marine and Tulalip Bay are on the list. Might be adding more in Snohomish County. New volunteers need to register with WDFW: [Department of Fish and Wildlife Volunteer Program - Volunteer Console \(cervistech.com\)](#)
  - **Map of sites:** [2021-22 WDFW Mussel Monitoring Sites - Google My Maps](#)
- **Caroline Gibson:** It is with a heavy heart we heard about the passing of Caroline Gibson, who worked for the NWSF. In honor of the enduring legacy Caroline Gibson made to the Salish Sea, the Northwest Straits Foundation announced the establishment of the Caroline Gibson Scholarship in Marine Studies. It supports the next generation of marine conservationists through applied academic scholarships in science, policy and management for sustaining the Salish Sea. The NWSF goal is to establish a permanent fund for granting annual scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students.

**The meeting adjourned at 8:36.**