

# Snohomish County Marine Resources Advisory Committee Meeting

## Meeting Summary

December 15, 2021 6:30-8:30PM

\*Meeting conducted via conference call/video\*

<b>MRC Members Present</b> Mike Ehlebracht, Chair Natasha Coumou, Co-Vice Chair Tim Ellis, NWSC and LIO Rep. Julie Schlenger Andrew Gobin Laura Gurley Sara Maxwell Kip Killebrew <b>Absent</b> Michael Kundu (excused) Tom Doerge, Co-Vice Chair (excused) Brienne Townsend (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> Kendall Norcott Kyra Wolf, Student Teagan Fogg, Citizen Richard, Citizen Jennifer Keene, Snohomish County Surface Water Management Jonathan Robinson, WSU Beach Watchers Carson Moscoso, Snohomish Conservation District Jeff Whitty, Northwest Straits Commission Leah Robison, Northwest Straits Commission
<b>Summary of Decisions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The MRC approved the October meeting minutes.</li></ul>	
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Next MRC Meeting:</b> January 19</li><li>• MRC forage fish monitoring January 19 and 20</li><li>• MRC Virtual Symposium with the NWSC January 20 at 3:30PM</li><li>• Starlight Beach Walk with WSU Beach Watchers January 28</li><li>• MRC Mussel Watch Retrieval January 31</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

Natasha Coumou made a motion to approve the October 20, 2021 Meeting Summaries. Laura Gurley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### Discussion of Potential MRC Code Revision (SCC 2.800)

Elisa Dawson opened a discussion of the MRC's membership terms according to Snohomish County Code (SCC) 2.800. Elisa explained that the impetus for this discussion was a discussion with Stillaguamish Tribal staff on options for Tribal Representatives to serve longer than County Code currently allows. Elisa drafted text for the MRC to review, the additional text shown below in red:

*All positions shall serve three-year terms, except for the initial terms which shall be established by ordinance. A member shall not serve more than three consecutive terms on*

*the committee, unless they represent (d) local tribal governments and are selected by the tribal government to serve as representative.*

The MRC discussed the draft text. Several questions were asked about representation on the MRC in general. Several MRC members expressed interest in wanting to look at SCC 2.800 more in-depth in terms of representation. After a short discussion, the MRC decided to table the draft text and plan a larger discussion of MRC representation at a later date. MRC Staff will work with the MRC Executive Committee to schedule either a special meeting or retreat opportunity for a longer discussion in 2022.

### **Discussion of Tribal Land Acknowledgement**

Mike Ehlebracht opened the discussion by noting that the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) has adopted a Tribal Lands Acknowledgement and is encouraging MRCs to consider them as well. The MRC first reviewed Tribal Land Acknowledgement language at the November MRC Retreat. During discussion at the November retreat, it was communicated that the preference of our tribal partners would likely be to use the NWSC tribal acknowledgement, or the version of this acknowledgement adapted for Snohomish County Tribes. The NWSC has approved the following text for their statement:

We acknowledge the land we're on today is the ancestral homeland of Coast Salish and Makah people and has been since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights and access to resources, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These nations include the Lummi, Nooksack, Samish, Swinomish, Tulalip, Stillaguamish, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Jamestown S'Klallam, Lower Elwha Klallam, and Makah Nations.

Prior to the December meeting MRC Member Andrew Gobin shared an adapted version for the MRC to review that is specific to the Snohomish MRC that he is asking the MRC to consider as an option for their Tribal Lands Acknowledgement, shown below:

We, the Snohomish County MRC, acknowledge the lands and waters where we operate today constitute the ancestral homelands of the Tulalip Tribes and the Stillaguamish Tribe. We are committed to working with these sovereign tribal governments to promote effective stewardship of Snohomish County's marine waters, habitats, species, and shorelines in order to support their Treaty rights and access to resources, and to honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water.

The MRC discussed Andrew's proposed text. While many members shared their approval to move this language forward for further review by the Tribes and Snohomish County, there were several questions the MRC would like to address upon further review. First, the MRC would like to ask for County and Tribal guidance on which tribes should be acknowledged. Additionally, the MRC discussed asking for guidance on whether to use the word "acknowledge" or "recognize" in their proposed text.

For next steps, MRC staff will be sharing the proposed language with MRC Members who were not present at this meeting for their review as well. Additionally, MRC staff will seek guidance from Snohomish County management on the question posed by the MRC and the text being proposed above. The discussion on the Tribal Lands Acknowledgement will continue at the January 2022 meeting.

## **2022 Annual Work Plan Discussion**

Alex Pittman gave a brief overview of the draft revisions to the format and structure of the MRC Annual Work Plan, which were made in response to comments received from the MRC via email and discussion at the November Retreat.

The largest change to the workplan was the addition of 1-pagers made for each subcommittee which breaks down staff tasks and MRC Member tasks. Alex waked through the various projects/subcommittees to solicit comments from the MRC to finalize the work plan. There was a more focused discussion to finalize some key areas of the work plan, including outreach related to plastics/beach cleanups and stormwater additions to the workplan. The MRC provided several pieces of feedback, including in the future ideally adding the number of hours and specific times each of the subcommittees tends to meet to help give members a better idea of each subcommittee. MRC staff noted that the Annual Work Plan is expected to serve as guidance to the MRC for their yearly work and does not limit or require the MRC work for the year. It is expected that there will be things that will change on the workplan each year. The MRC Members thanked MRC staff for compiling this document and shared their approval to adopt this document as their 2022 Annual Work Plan as-is.

Laura Gurley made a motion to approve the 2022 Annual Workplan. Kip Killebrew seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Alex reported that we will solidify subcommittee membership for this workplan in January, and asked MRC members to be thinking about projects where they would like to participate and/or lead in 2022 in preparation for the January meeting.

## **2022 MRC Leadership Discussion**

Mike Ehlebracht explained that MRC Leadership will be voted on at the January 19, 2022 meeting. This is still a discussion period, and nominations and official positions do not start until the January 2022 MRC Meeting. Currently, the MRC has the following people serving in the leadership roles:

- **Chair:** Mike Ehlebracht
- **Co-Vice Chairs:** Tom Doerge and Natasha Coumou
- **LIO:** Tim Ellis, alternate is currently vacant
- **NWSC:** Tim Ellis, Julie Schlenger as alternate

Chair Mike Ehlebracht will be reaching out to the current Leadership panel to see if they are interested in continuing their role. MRC Members are encouraged to reach out to Mike Ehlebracht or MRC Staff Elisa Dawson or Alex Pittman prior to the January MRC Meeting if they are interested in pursuing a leadership role.

## **Project Updates and Announcements**

- **LIO:** Tim Ellis was unable to attend the November 4<sup>th</sup> LIO meeting, so Mike Ehlebracht attended in his place. Mike reported that the LIO discussed the EPA funding guidance for the next funding round. Previous, funding was for a two-year timeframe. Now, funding will be for a 5-year timeframe. The LIO must select a specific project to work on and fund for those 5 years. The LIO has had one survey to determine the local priority for this 5-year funding. However, at the meeting they discussed the need to gather more information before deciding on the funding project. Next, the LIO will be sending out another solicitation for feedback in early 2022 to help guide the workplan.

- **Northwest Straits Commission:** Tim reported that the last NWSC meetings were on October 29 and December 10. There have been presentations on the Quiet Sound initiative to reduce vessel noise, as well as COASST, who is monitoring deceased shore birds. Additionally, the NWSC has been working to secure additional federal funding in 2022, and the MRCs are working on developing both local and regional projects that the funds would be used for. The next MRC Climate Change Symposium is on December 16.
- **Meadowdale:** Elisa reported that ESA Consultants is now under contract with Snohomish County to complete creation of a post-project monitoring plan for Meadowdale, gather additional project data, and help create a monitoring webpage for Meadowdale. The monitoring team (SWM, Tulalip Tribes, local high school groups with Joe Scordino, USGS, Blue Coast Engineering, UW, WDFW) met on November 29 to discuss data gathered so far and plans for monitoring once the project is complete.

The primary focus at this time for Meadowdale is to get two monitoring cameras installed to take time-lapse photography of the site, and the create the monitoring plan. Additionally, the Tulalip Tribes intends to apply for additional grant-funds to help them complete their portion of the monitoring work.

- **Derelict Vessels:** Elisa reported that the contractor hired by the County has completed the removal of 4 vessels in the Snohomish estuary. Information about the vessels is now on the MRC website: [Derelict Vessels | Snohomish MRC \(snocomrc.org\)](https://www.snocomrc.org/derelict-vessels). Total cost of the removals in 2021 was just over \$114K.

Snohomish County has decided to pull their application for the NOAA marine debris grant because we were unable to get a contractor bid on the vessel Western Marine Construction in time for the application due date. We will try to get a bid again in 2022 and can try applying for the grant again next year.

- **Mussel Watch:** Alex reported that Mussel Watch deployment was completed on November 5 at seven sites throughout Snohomish County. Thanks to all who contributed to making this happen! The window for retrieval is January 27 – February 4. The best dates identified as options for retrieval are Thursday, January 27 (0' tide at 6PM) and Monday, January 31 (0' tide at 8:15PM). Alex to solicit MRC input on preferred date for retrieval, and the MRC was in favor of the January 31 date. Alex will work with Mike Ehlebracht to organize retrieval on January 31. Kip reported that the Kayak Point cage was lost and recovered by a Stillaguamish Tribe staff Franny Perez.
- **Port Susan:** Sara reported that we are currently under contract with ESA as our consultant for this project and MRC staff held our kick-off meeting with the ESA staff team on November 30 for initial scoping discussions. The Island MRC's application to the UW Evans School was accepted, and so we will have a student team working on this project as well. Next steps for Island County include working with the student consulting team and faculty to develop a final scope of work. Additionally, Anna Toledo, Island MRC Coordinator, accepted a position with DNR. Her last day at Island County was December 7. MRC staff are currently working with Island County staff to figure out how this might affect project progress. Finally, a Joint Island-Snohomish MRC Team Meeting was held on November 10. Cory Archer, the ESA Project Manager, was able to join and introduce herself to the team, and the discussion primarily focused on the stakeholder list and survey.
- **Forage Fish Monitoring:** Alex reported that November monitoring at Picnic Point & Howarth Park was completed on November 16. Meadowdale has also opened again for

public access, and Alex was able to sample at Meadowdale on November 22. The plan is to continue to monitor at Meadowdale while public access is available, which is expected to be through February. The site is expected to close again for a month or two in spring for the replacement of the culvert. Alex also noted that David Bain and himself were able to attend a Forage Fish Monitoring Training for MRCs, put on by WDFW and coordinated by the NWSC, on December 9. They are planning to hold this training again in late Spring 2022.

- **Marine Vegetation Monitoring:** In place of Tom, Mike reported that DNR completed marine vegetation monitoring from Everett to Edmonds this summer. Eelgrass was present at 21 out of 22 sites sampled, and at 192 of 224 transects sampled. The draft report from DNR is expected by December 31, with a final report due by January 31, 2022.
- **Nearshore Restoration:** Laura reported that the Nearshore Restoration subcommittee has been brainstorming text for a one-pager on the beneficial re-use of dredged material from the Snohomish River to help facilitate discussions about this prospective opportunity for nearshore projects. The committee will meet again in early 2022 to review the draft language and discuss formatting of the one-pager.
- **MRC New Member Recruitment:** Elisa reported that the application window closed on December 6, and there was a total of 15 applications, 3 of which either weren't completed for didn't qualify, and 12 qualified for review by the MRC Interview Panel. The Interview Panel held 7 interviews on December 13. A second interview day is scheduled for December 20.
- Laura announced that she is meeting with DNR on their Snohomish Watershed Resilience Plan. Elisa is working to have DNR present to the MRC about this work by DNR as well, hopefully in early 2022.

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