

**SAN JUAN COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE (MRC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 7, 2011 8:30-10:30 a.m.
Islanders Bank Community Meeting Room
225 Blair Street
Friday Harbor WA 98250**

Members Present: Steve Revella (Chair), Laura Arnold, John Aschoff, Rene Beliveau, Barbara Bentley, David Loyd, Barbara Marrett, Kit Rawson, Ken Sebens

Members Absent: Gregg Dietzman, Michael Durland, Johannes Krieger, Jim Slocumb, Jonathan White, Tina Whitman

Staff: Janice Biletnikoff, Jeff Hanson, Helen Venada

Guests:

Janet Alderton, Orcas Island
Stefan Brager, The Whale Museum
Phil Green, The Nature Conservancy, Yellow/Low Islands
David Hyde, San Juan Island
Susan Key, MRC Monitoring Coordinator
Pat Miller, San Juan Island
Barbara Rosenkotter, Salmon Recovery Coordinator
Richard Steinhardt, Orcas Island

Discussion: “Review of Project List and Potential Funding Opportunities,” by Joan Drinkwin, Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF)

Presentation: “Gravel Road Conversion,” by Rachel Dietzman, San Juan County Public Works

Upcoming Events

- MRC regular meeting, September 21st, 2011, 8:30-10:30am, Islanders Bank, Friday Harbor
- Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference co-hosted by Environment Canada and Puget Sound Partnership, October 25th-27th, 2011, Vancouver B.C. (www.salishseaconference.org)
- Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Conference, December 2nd and 3rd, Northwest Maritime Center, Port Townsend [see <http://www.nwstraits.org/Whats-New/Meetings-Events/2011-MRC-Conference.aspx>]

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Revella at 8:30am.

Minutes: Minutes of the August 17, 2011 meeting were approved as read.

Policy subcommittee update: Laura Arnold said that at last week's meeting the subcommittee discussed the MRC policy directives to the County Council on the Marine Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas section of the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) update. There was discussion on the need to communicate, again, that there has been a lot of recognition by the Council of the importance of protecting marine resources in San Juan County. Laura added that Kit prepared a written

summary introducing the topic, including documents adopted by the Council. The issue of marine riparian buffers and their protective value for ecological functions was also discussed by the subcommittee; buffer width and the need to recognize more than water quality benefits need to be recognized in County Code. Laura said that Tina Whitman explained what to avoid in future shoreline armoring, summarizing the ecological functions of beaches and the structural and biological effects of armoring. Specifically, Tina advised when to avoid new armoring for new development, recommending softer approaches rather than rock or concrete walls.

Barbara Bentley said that CAO and Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update issues (e.g. land use designation /riparian definitions/ value of ecological services) seem to overlap but definitions seem to differ; she added that the two update processes seem to be moving on separate tracks and asked if the MRC could help to prevent duplication of effort. Rene Beliveau explained that the two regulations are legally separate, with separate funding and different update processes. He said that CAO will inform SMP and the SJC Community Development and Planning Department will do what it can to assure coordination of the two processes. Laura reiterated that recognition of the protective role of buffers cannot be ignored. Kit said that the MRC advises the Council and attempts to inform its own membership as much as possible; he added that the MRC is trying now to explain some marine habitat concepts that seem to have been misunderstood in order to make clear that the value of shoreline buffers goes beyond water quality. Barbara Marrett added that mitigation should be for the greater public good, not for personal gain.

David Loyd pointed out that the low shoreline on the Islands used to be covered with fallen trees; we're operating with a new baseline now, he said. Steve requested that members read Tina's draft letter that was emailed to them earlier and then to send comments to him for the Council presentation on September 12th at 10:45am. Laura noted that there has been previous discussion on the draft by the full group.

Motion: David Loyd moved, and Barbara Marrett seconded, that the draft letter be moved forward. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation: “Review of Project List and Potential Funding Opportunities”

Joan Drinkwin, NWSF Program Director, explained the Foundation's process for responding to the new funding structure and the role that NWSF can play to help the seven MRCs accomplish their goals. She distributed copies of the spreadsheet of 2011-13 MRC projects, describing each and noting requested funding (before the loss of federal re-appropriation) and potential funding sources (non-NWSC). She introduced the list to lay out what the various MRCs want to do, as a starting point, noting that there is a need to be more proactive now, using a variety of approaches. Project specifics are required and she summarized other criteria that include, for instance, for projects and policy programs to be MRC-led. NWSF can help provide support for projects that would not happen without MRC funding, Joan added. Laura said that the MRC needs to maintain project administration and asked how to include that in project funding requests.

Joan provided a brief background on the NWS Initiative: its makeup consists of seven MRCs plus the NWSC (with 7 members, one from each MRC), plus the non-profit NWSF. The Foundation is the fundraising and funds management arm and its Board of Directors are on the Commission. Kit said that a primer on the NWS Initiative would be a good topic for the December NWSC conference. John added that a discussion on specific guidelines based on successful past projects would be useful.

Barbara Marrett mentioned that the January 2012 event co-sponsored by the MRC and the Islands Museum of Art needs about \$1,000 from the MRC. She asked about the NWSI timeline for submitting

a loan proposal. Joan explained that this type of education and outreach project could be bundled with other similar components from different MRCs. Joan pointed out that grants take forever and other financial sources need to be explored (e.g. local sponsors, major donors); the NWSF can help with proposals. There was agreement that it is appropriate for volunteer MRC members, but not the MRC Coordinator (except for grants), to engage in fundraising activities.

Discussion: “Consideration of Impacts to the Marine Environment from Conversion of Gravel to Chipseal Road Surface”

Rachel Dietzman, SJC Public Works County Engineer, said that she is attending today's MRC meeting to offer Public Works' services to provide information and to conduct research so that the MRC can better advise the County Council on future road surface conversion projects. By way of example, Rachel circulated copies of various study reports from asphalt suppliers and the Forest Service regarding potential environmental impacts of road paving. Barbara Bentley said that the MRC needs to look carefully at the environmental implications of gravel vs paved roads, especially for projects in proximity to marine waters. Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) are one of the chemical compounds of concern.

Rachel said that PAHs are found in variable concentrations in products that are coal tar- or petroleum-derived. Sealcoat, a coal tar product, she explained, is produced by a destructive process from coal and has extremely high levels of PAHs and other carcinogens (e.g. benzene); its use for roads is no longer permitted in Washington state. Public Works' chipseal is an asphalt product distilled from petroleum; Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) on these products acknowledge that environmental impacts of PAH content is unknown.

Rachel said that the emulsions in these products consist of inert soap and water and contain no solvents to volatilize. She suggested looking at the Albina website to learn more about the type of surfactants in these products. Surfactants, Janet Alderton noted, are anaerobic; some of them break down into nonylphenols, which are known to be endocrine disruptors. It was noted that results of the December 2007 study done by Russel Barsh et al at two chipsealed road sites on Lopez Island were inconclusive and there has been no follow-up monitoring.

Rachel said that some considerations for Public Works' gravel road conversion program are road traffic volumes, cost of maintenance, and preservation of infrastructure. She touched briefly on the use of porous asphalt filters for road sediments, dust control products (lignin sulfate), and leaching characteristics of recycled asphalt products. Rachel noted that the recent chipseal project at White Point on San Juan Island was well received in the community.

There was committee discussion on confining a white paper from the MRC to marine environments to advise the Council on their decision making when controversial projects arise. Laura Arnold said that surface runoff can be mitigated by the installation of bioswales, grassy shoulders and ditches. The question was asked about the source of chipseal products and gravel and whether the chipseal products were made from recycled asphalt. Barbara Bentley asked about the use of permeable asphalt.

Rachel said that the chipseal process is to spray hot asphalt emulsion on the road surface and then to apply chip rock within minutes and roll it into place. Hot Mix Asphalt is batched like concrete and there are crucial compaction needs; special trucks are required for application. Lawson Construction, the only asphalt plant in the San Juan Islands but its product is too expensive for use in SJC. Rachel said the maintenance cycle is similar for both chipseal and asphalt surfaces.

Janet Alderton said that the Forest Service studies don't apply here (large semi-trucks vs passenger cars). Rachel disagreed and clarified that these Forest Service studies were for a variety of road types and that the science is sound. Janet added that the heavy metal content of the products used here should be analyzed and she requested a copy of the cost analysis on the recent Watmough Road chipsealing on Lopez Island; Rachel said it is available on the County's website.

Richard Steinhardt said that car runoff is a significant issue when looking at road chemical pollution; road surfacing is not the only source. He is from Texas where many studies on pollution from paved surfaces have been done.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42am.

Submitted by Helen Venada