

Committee Members in Attendance: Cathleen Burns, Carl Davis, Megan Dethier, Jeff Dyer, Kailey Genther, Patti Gobin, Phil Green, Christina Koons, Lovel Pratt, Ivan Reiff, Laura Jo Severson, Beth Tate Kendra Smith

Ex-officio, County support staff, Marta Green, Frances Robertson, Jamie Stephens, Sam Whitridge

Members of the Public: Tom Cowan, Lucas Hart, Dana Oster, Mike Ramsay, Laura Rivas, Tina Whitman, Sandy Wyllie

8:34 AM **Convene Meeting** *Frances Robertson, Chair*

Begin with Coast Salish Acknowledgement: *Let us acknowledge we reside on the ancestral lands and waters of the Coast Salish people who have called this place home since time immemorial and let us honor inherent, aboriginal and treaty rights that has been passed down from generation to generation.*

8:35 AM **Citizen input** *none*

8:36 AM **Acceptance of December Retreat minutes**

Lovel made a few minor edits, Frankie will distribute those. Anyone else with edits please send them to Frankie. Lovel moves to approve December minutes as modified. Phil seconds. Minutes approved.

8:37 AM **Eelgrass restoration efforts in the San Juan Islands** *Mike Ramsey*

Aim to restore eelgrass in historic herring spawning areas, develop seeding method. Two locations: Westcott Bay and Blind Bay. Three restoration techniques: whole transplant, seeding via bag & buoy, and hand-seeding. Transplant method developed by Jeff Gaeckle, adults bundled and planted. BuDS – Buoy Deployed Seeding, methodology developed by Sandy. Deployed July 20 and 23rd, seed bags each contained 30 flowering shoots. Collected seed bags in September at which point seeds had been released. October 15 and 17th seeds hand-broadcast along transects.

Monitoring begins this spring, plan to assess density, viability, length of shoots on adult transplants.

QUESTIONS

Phil: what’s your definition of success for this project?

Mike: if we get around a 10% growth rate or better, and if there’s more density in adult plants. We

only have funding through 2021. Planning to seek additional funding to support more monitoring

Patti: Tulalip doing similar things. We have charitable funds you can apply for, need nonprofit status.

Mike: thanks, we all know how critical forage fish and eelgrass are to our ecosystem

Frances: last summer both those sites had very heavy boat usage. Is there any monitoring of boat counts? Could MRC help take that on as a variable to consider at these sites?

Sandy: we’ve been tracking vessel traffic in 5 bays in SJI’s since late summer.

Tina: Friends of SJ’s has a grant to do some anchor-out-of-eelgrass informational buoy marking. We are planning to use Bell Point at Westcott Bay as a site, hope that’ll be marked by next season.

Frances: I’ve listed Boat counts as a potential project for next grant round. This is one area we have ability to collect data, planning for sites at Bell Point and at Odlin. Jeff and Ivan can help.

Mike: I’d be glad to talk separately with the MRC about that and funding.

Lovel: is county discussing restricting number of recreational boats’ access in terms of anchorages?

Mike: need to bring State partners into conversation, like DNR. Legal avenue to restrict anchoring?

Tina: a workshop coming up, some coordination specifically on idea of permits for anchor-out buoys.

Frankie: workshop series, dovetail with Dana's transboundary eelgrass efforts with NW Straits, coordinated approach. We need to be prepared for growth in boating for the long term. Need to start figuring out how to address it in the County with infrastructure.

Patti: to be proactive is best. can't restore eelgrass in one year. Need to invite everyone to table
ACTION ITEM: Frankie to call Patti, find out how we could use what they're doing as a template.

ACTION ITEM: Patti to connect Mike with the right people and encourage staff to work with Mike.

Frances: I'll be in touch about subcommittee and taking on eelgrass or boat monitoring this year

Laura: Mike, I understand you're no longer with CD? Please get in touch with me I want to help too

ACTION ITEM: Mike will send Laura an email privately with cell phone info

Beth (in chat): I'm happy to help monitor eelgrass!

9:44 AM **MRC house keeping**

- Quarterly reports are due, please submit volunteer hours from October-December 2020

ACTION ITEM: send Frankie volunteer hours (email is fine). Time and prep for meetings, etc.

- MRC discussion on 2021 workplan and proposed projects

Frankie: I sent all of you copies of the workplan. (Frankie shares the workplan spreadsheet)

Level: ERTV effective analysis coming up, MRC help to provide outreach with results of that report?

Marta: early audience will be February/March. Final report should be done by April.

Frankie: I will be out of commission throughout summer. I will report for that quarter before I go. It will help if you all submit hours when asked. My capacity will be limited going forward, unable to do outreach at fairs and docks over weekends. If MRC wants those things, citizens need to take it on.

Filling in more blanks: Anacortes boat show not likely to go ahead, we can leave it blank or delete
Plastic Free Salish Sea just had first meeting and it was productive, Karin will update us in February.

Marine stewardship Planning – Frankie will arrange subcommittee meeting for that soon

'Catch more crab' education through NW Straits, we distribute flyers we are sent every year.

Members who continue to participate with green crab monitoring (Jeff, Kailey)

Forage Fish spawning surveys with Tina and Friends

Eelgrass and anchor-out monitoring, especially in areas where hope to put in navigational aids

Carl: you have abalone project which I've done nothing on. Put me on eelgrass instead

Also volunteer to help with eelgrass monitoring: Jeff, Christina, Kailey

Frankie: We'll set up a meeting with Mike and Tina, make a simple protocol that can give data

At retreat Ivan mentioned a more opportunistic count when boating by, that can supplement

Ivan: I'm also a pilot, I'd be happy to do some flyovers on a fixed schedule.

ACTION ITEM: Ivan and Frankie will connect about some things he can do via flyover

Carl: I can cover Blind Bay with drone

Sam: Phil and Cathleen are working with me on chapter update.

Dana: may I join the eelgrass subcommittee meeting? We want consistent methods across MRCs

Level: also, Christina, Karin and I are interested in a symposium around growler noise impacts

Phil: what happened to that derelict vessel prevention program? I want to help with that

Frankie: I listed 4 core projects to start developing for next grant round so I can submit by April. I'll add few more options at bottom of workplan, but we need to discuss derelict vessel program.

Level: could these be identified as projects that will be set in motion if staffing/funding is secured?

Frankie: funding for this year has already been set. For this year, these would be considered pilots

Kendra: the workload for our team is already swamped. Even contracting out takes a lot of time
Christina: I liked Jeff's term of eyes on the water, I'm interested in PR

10:12 AM Derelict Vessel Report

Marta (shares slides): With weather over recent weeks we've had 14 derelict vessels. 3 required DNR and cranes. Of 11 others some still outstanding, some we won't have funds to pursue this year. 4 in last 10 days of December. That compares with only 2 vessels back in 2019.

(Marta shows photos of half-dozen or so boats and describes details of circumstances for each one.)

Marta: Need to work on tracking down illegal mooring buoys and somehow flag them. Frankie and I put together a notice which we would use to tag any vessel of concern (anchored too long, looks non-operational, etc.). Lets the owner know they have (typically) 30 days to deal

We need volunteers to patrol/monitor for boats and leave notices where necessary. This is important now when people are leaving their boats for the winter. We appreciate citizens' help
QUESTIONS

Carl: marina owners have responsibility for boats that are sinking within their marina?

Marta: yes, because every boat should have its own insurance

Carl: so you're looking for boats in anchorages and on mooring balls? I can help on Orcas, Blind Bay

Frankie: Derelict Vessel Program created by MRC member Barbara Merritt in 2013

ACTION ITEM: Please email Frankie with your preferences (*top 4 priorities*) for what you'd like to see in the work plan, we can bring this up again at February meeting.

We discussed eelgrass monitoring; Frankie will pursue that further with folks who are interested

Other two projects: False Bay Monitoring, Megan is interested, can provide match through FHL. plan to continue public surveys started last summer with Friends of False Bay group, Karin taking lead
And, Coast Salish Film Festival, Frankie and Patti can discuss this more next week

10:30 AM Phil moves to approve the workplan, Lovel seconds. All approve

10:31 AM **NW Straits Commission update & member updates**

Christina Koons

Last meeting we discussed Growler jet noise. Effects as far as Clallam and Olympic national park
We'd like NW Straits commission to host a symposium, panel discussion of stakeholders, scientists and navy. The geographic range of this noise pollution is in 4 of 7 counties in the Initiative.

I sent out links to research and media samples, Op-ed written by Whidbey Navy station commander
Do we approve of taking this to NW Straits Commission? AND, anyone want to join subcommittee?

Patti: can you include an invitation to the sovereign nations? We'd like to comment on this noise.

Jamie: with the symposium what do you hope the outcome is? Where will it lead us?

Christina: To have a regional dialogue based on vital signs for health in the marine environment

Lovel: to the extent we can engage the navy, they may be interested in mitigating the noise.

Jamie: I've been working on this with Lovel since she was on the council. All impacted counties have met with the Governor and with Derek Kilmer, Rick Larsen. Rick Larsen started live noise monitoring. On the independent study, we've been told the navy won't accept anything but their own study

Christina: the navy did collaborate on this research. I also serve on board of National Parks system and many there object to the jets. There's a lot to talk about, opportunity to expand the dialogue.

Lucas: From commission side and symposium series, we vote on topics, this spring doing climate. We can include this on that list to vote on for next topic. I heard there's also interest in oil spill work
Dana: for Oil spill follow-up we met with Marta and Lovel, hope to convene that at least twice a year
Christina: So this idea as an option would be in next round of symposium for the following year?
Lucas: climate series to be implemented in the Spring. Oil spill happening sporadically throughout. Another polling round for next series in early summer, then fall we could implement it
Lovel: our subcommittee should reconvene. Based on recent research and concerns among citizens we want to move forward on a symposium before next year.
ACTION ITEM: if anyone wants to join subcommittee, please email Christina

10:49 AM Christina moves to convene CAG, Phil seconds. Adjourn MRC and convene CAG meeting.
Sam: We are about to embark on next SRFB grant round, need approval on 2021 grant calendar. Last year changed to joint CAG/TAG scoring meeting (pre-Covid, to get everyone in same space) Since we'll be virtual this year, TAG wants to separate scoring meetings - have a session to focus on technical review and send that to CAG for to score for socioeconomic review.
I propose normal July MRC meeting; August - time for salmon recovery CAG scoring, finalize ratings. And, Site visits: virtual visits scheduled for May 5 and 6, first Weds/Thurs of May. This is a smaller grant round, anticipate 4 proposals to review. possible we could do in one day, but hold both dates.
Lovel moves to approve proposed timeline and scope, Phil seconds. All in favor, timeline is approved

Sam: The governor's budget was released a couple weeks ago. Shortfalls not as bad as expected
Laura: it is also an increase in the amount requested from last biennium
Sam: I'll keep you posted as move to next legislative session, budget adopted in late spring
Laura: if anyone wants to follow legislative session, Jeff Parsons gives weekly updates to Partnerships. You can get on that call, email me if interested
ACTION ITEM: Laura will send that info to Sam to distribute to the group

11:00 AM **Adjourn MRC and CAG Meeting**