



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, January 9th, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

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While this is a virtual meeting, a public meeting place is available at the San Juan Island Grange at 152 1st St. N in Friday Harbor for those without mobile phone or internet access.

9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC December Retreat meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on Northwest Straits Initiative Definition- <i>Sasha Horst/Lucas Hart</i>
9:25 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Discussion- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven</i>• MRC Youth Member Proposal Next Steps- <i>Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria</i>• Review/Approval of MRC Subcommittees and Work Plan from Retreat- <i>Sam Whitridge</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Revisit Tribal Partnerships Subcommittee discussion- <i>All</i>• San Juan County Representatives on Local/Regional Boards- <i>Sam Whitridge</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Stewardship Network○ Salmon Recovery Council○ Ecosystem Coordination Board• Planning for MRC Projects for 2025-2027- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Report on MRC Member Interviews- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Update on J35 (Tahlequah)- <i>Frances Robertson</i>• New Vessel Distance Regulations for SRKW- <i>Frances Robertson</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelp exhibit at SJI Museum of Art- <i>Christina Koons</i> • MRC subcommittee updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i> ○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i> • Other subcommittee updates
10:15 AM	Presentation: OPALCO Tidal Generation Project- <i>Krista Bouchey, OPALCO</i>
10:45 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:50 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:50 AM	LIO Agenda –<i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA Funding Model Overview and Discussion- <i>Katie Johnson</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LIO Comment Letter on EPA Funding Model • Planning for February LIO Meeting EPA Funding Model Discussion- <i>Katie Johnson</i> • Revisit San Juan LIO Structure and Executive Committee- <i>Katie Johnson/Sam Whitridge</i>
11:30 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:30 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning/Overview of 2025 Salmon Recovery Grant Round • Cancellation of 2025 Salmon Recovery Conference
12:00 PM	Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Paul Andersson, Matt Arata, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Patti Gobin, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Craig Smith, Beth Tate, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Krista Bouchey, Stacy Bumback, Audrey Coyne, Cameron Fisher, Marta Green, Russel Guerry, Lucas Hart, Katie Johnson, Justin Klure, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Nicole Lobodzinski, Laura Pitts, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Sam Whitridge

9:03 AM **Convene MRC meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:03 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:04 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC December retreat minutes** *MRC members*

Dave moves to approve the agenda, Olivia seconds. No additions or edits. The agenda is approved
Sandy points out an error in the Retreat Minutes under Tribal partnerships; rather than a youth group, there is a separate nonprofit organization, the Coast Salish Youth Coalition. With that correction, Dave moves to approve the Retreat Minutes. Christina seconds. All in favor, the December Retreat meeting minutes are approved

9:07 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC** *Christina Koons*

Lucas: The reauthorization didn't pass. Senator Murray is evaluating next steps for the current congress. We have made some progress – got it through the commerce committee.

Christina: MRC conference was a success and a joy, glad that staff could attend, hope more can attend next year.

Dave: what are the implications of the reauthorization not passing?

Lucas: status quo. We have champions like Senator Murray who will continue to ensure we have what's needed for operations. This is about elevating status to a federal program. We secured ongoing programmatic funding

• Update on NW Straits Initiative Definition *Lucas Hart*

In September, NW Straits Retreat attended by the Commission and Foundation, inclusive of MRC reps and staff. Discussed definition together with consultants. There was confusion about what the Initiative is, who it comprises and what it does. Agreed on a definition proposed at the retreat: "The Northwest Straits Initiative is a community-led collaboration dedicated to protecting and restoring the marine environment of northwest Washington. It is composed of the NW Straits Commission and seven locally based Marine Resources Committees. Together they identify and address priority NW Straits marine conservation issues." The key is the second sentence about the structural element. Next discussion on Whidbey Island Jan 31st. Commission created the Foundation as a non-profit. But they became separate, and now Foundation has their own board. We're updating the definition to reflect the current structure. Funding to MRC's from the Commission won't change. We can still have partnerships and contracts, but defining the decision-making body of the Initiative as comprised of the Commission and MRC's.

9:21 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Discussion

Karin Roemers-Kleven

We've been provided with resources. Ready to start meeting as subcommittee to develop DEI concepts within our MRC, in our policy and in our recruiting practices. We'll discuss outreach, meeting announce-

ments –perhaps minutes should be translated. Please send us any ideas you have! Christina, Olivia, Sandy are interested in joining

9:25 AM • MRC Youth Member Proposal Next Steps *Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria, Kailey Genther*
Sam & Katie will bring this to the MRC and then to Council. We'd like you to review and send us back comments.

Sam: last week sent out with meeting packet the concept of the youth membership idea. Seeking MRC support

Kendra: we can share the intention with Council; to make it stick we should open the committee membership and that's done by resolution. I'll work on that with Sam and Katie. This is the second committee with a youth member

MOTION: add two youth members on MRC. Lovel seconds. All in favor. Intent is approved, wording to be refined

9:33 AM • Review/Approval of MRC Subcommittees and Work Plan from Retreat *Sam Whitridge*
Approve both the subcommittee list and the workplan (due as deliverables to NWSC). Sam sent these out
Sandy: confirm Jeff Dyer is still interested in serving on subcommittees as an interested non-member. Jeff was an invaluable member of the oil spill prevention and spill response preparedness subcommittee
ACTION: Sam will send Jeff the table of listing MRC subcommittees to gauge his interest

o Revisit Tribal Partnerships Subcommittee discussion

Frankie: we sent letters to all 14 tribes; the letter introduced that SJC is interested in more formal engagement in consultation policies. Seeking opportunity to create those policies with each individual tribe so we can tailor it to each of their wishes. We've had one response from Lower Elwha Cle Elum Tribe; I'll send out a reminder soon. I put the question back to the MRC as to interest and what MRC hopes to get out of a Tribal engagement subcommittee. Who would lead? What would it bring at this point, given that we don't know yet what the different tribes want.

Who's interested? Sandy, Matt, Kailey, Mike R., Beth, Patti, Lovel, Olivia (penciled in).

Patti: This is a great idea but doesn't necessarily need to be a subcommittee. Tribes will be at the table if they want to be, it's essential that they're here. This is our homeland, there's a Treaty with the USA and needs to be inclusive. We can work together or fight in court. The indigenous people are special to this land so how to engage more tribes? I haven't been as engaged lately, but MRC is important to me. It was so important to Terry Williams. If you send the invitation out to all tribes – you may need to call them all

Frankie: aim to have as many weighing in on decisions. Want to build more formal consultation frameworks, find specific contacts and what they want to be involved in. One barrier is within the framework of MRC membership

Patti: in the Tulalip, the invitation came to the Chair. But then how to get them to the table in a busy world? Maybe the MRC hosts a coffee or a lunch in the SJI's, some kind of open house- what is the MRC? An overview. Need to make them feel welcome and aware of what it really is. Our lifeways in the islands are unique. Getting people to the table is the hard part. Need to make them aware of what's happening with marine resources. Frankie, if you need help of who to contact let me know and we can make that list. You need to start calling

9:54 AM • **San Juan County Representatives on Local/Regional Boards** *Sam Whitridge*

With respect to the following three groups:

o Stewardship Network of the San Juans – Phil Green was our rep consistently attending monthly meetings and reporting back. Meetings have an in-person option at the Parks building but also virtual via teams. Ten or

so people attend. Includes, Friends of San Juans, Conservation District, Whale Museum, Coast Salish Youth Coalition, etc.

Karin may be interested depending on time commitments. <https://www.stewardshipsanjuans.org/>

o Salmon Recovery Council and Ecosystem Coordination Board

Sam: Cindy Wolf was our rep for both of these and Sam was the alternate. We have two new Council members

Kendra: committee assignments will be made during their retreat. Jane Fuller has expressed interest in the MRC

Sam: the rep doesn't need to be a council person, that's just historic – it was Jamie Stephens then Cindy. I can continue to be the alternate

Karin: can we table this until we have more structure in the council?

Yes

10:01 AM • Planning for MRC Projects for 2025-2027

Sam Whitridge

Coming up on another biennium and NW Straits Commission grant. There will be an RFP released later this month. We'll need to submit our project list for the next biennium. Think about what projects we want on the table. Some core projects like PFSS (Plastic Free Salish Sea) and DV (Derelict Vessels). Amount per project depends on number of projects, about \$25K. Now we're at the stage of general ideas, we'll discuss and refine budgets, we have until May.

Kendra: caution the group that there are several ongoing projects, must ensure those can either continue or wrap up before moving onto the next. And that there's alignment with the MSA, not expanding too much. With new federal government resources may get tighter so need to be cautious about expansion, stay on topic and on-core.

10:07 AM • Update on MRC Member Interviews

Sam Whitridge

Karin, Adam, Katie and I conducted interviews yesterday. We interviewed three candidates, all strong. We're excited about the applicants. *(more on this below at end of the meeting)*

10:08 AM • Update on J35

Frances Robertson

J35 gave birth around Christmas and by New Years her baby was dead. It's happening again, she's still carrying her calf after a week. The new regulation is now 1000 yds from whales, this will be pushed out at the boat show later this winter and we can use volunteers there. Aiming to shift attitudes and behavior around whales in the Salish sea.

Adam: is this law for transients as well as residents?

Frankie: they remain 200 yds as per federal regulations. But if you can't tell, you need to treat them all like residents. That's the message for rec boaters. Commercial whale watch boats can distinguish between ecotypes.

-more details about the timing and verified sightings by Soundwatch, NOAA etc.

We can't determine cause of death without examining the calf; that won't happen unless J35 releases it

Karin: and we also have Wild Orca out there looking for scat samples

10:15 AM Presentation: OPALCO Tidal Generation Project

Krista Bouchev

Introducing the team – Russel Guerry is the manager of engineering and operations, manager for this project
Justin Klure – I'm providing project management support.

Stacy Bumback – I'm a consultant helping with coordination with Tribal nations and cultural resource work

Cameron Fisher – I'm with 48 north solutions, biological consultant

Nicole Lobodzinski – consultant supporting coordination with Tribal nations and cultural resource work

We're working on local tidal generation and ways to make our grid more reliable and fossil-free. Tidal power because tides move on a regular basis. We use most of our heating in winter when solar power is least available.

Project Overview: now we're in phase 1, assessing Feasibility. Site characterization, community outreach, economic analysis, and technological qualification. And Tribal outreach and communications that precede formal consultation.

Several partners, including PNNL. Several sites shown to have enough flow. Rosario strait and eastern Blakeley identified as the least risk area. But still years ahead in this investigation. The technology of this unit has been in place in the Orkney Islands, Scotland. Russel details some specifications in terms of dimensions, power output, etc.

Cameron: Site characterization; OPALCO and UW using a seafloor and a mid-water system for assessing flow, ambient sound, also picks up any fish tags. More details about surveys done with these instruments in Fall 2024.

Justin: Project permitting; this falls under jurisdiction of FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission), includes hydro and wave-generated power within navigable waters. This group is the federal lead for hydro-power projects. All other permits funnel up through federal process. OPALCO is applying for a 'pilot project' i.e. short-term research-related, not commercial. We've used many years of data and independent/objective environmental risk analysis, plan to identify where studies and monitoring needs to occur over the life of the project. Notice of intent to file with FERC in July 2024. Draft License Application Submittal will happen in April 2025, Public Comment Period in summer 2025. Potential Future Phases – FERC process will continue with final licensing in 2026, additional environmental studies. At least 5 years before any action. Our current project information lives on this webpage and will continue to be updated, <https://www.opalco.com/quick-fact-opalco-tidal-energy-pilot-project/2022/11/>

QUESTIONS

Craig: Is it scalable? feasible to have more units and what would be costs, environmental impacts of that?

Russel: we want to study one as a pilot, it's experimental. The grant money comes within range of feasibility

Karin: Two questions – first to clarify, what percentage of power would this contribute?

Russel: There are annual loads, but varies by season and time of day. Extreme range between 15-90 megawatts. Used estimates to get at approximately 20%

Karin: and how are you measuring impacts on marine life? Whales, impacts on seafloor, etc.

Cameron: For this area there are listed species (marbled murrelets, some salmonids, whales, etc.). We go through ESA review with the federal services/agencies in charge of those species, investigate presence and maintenance of operations (how will system be deployed and retrieved, etc.). Federal services will decide about adverse effects

Karin: local activists concerned and should be included on all phases, not destroy what we've been trying to protect

Cam: We'll be working with Federal agencies and state equivalents (WDFW, DNR) and ensure there are comment periods, public outreach etc. Need to rely on local experience when it comes to data like orca sightings.

Frankie: I'm the marine project manager for SJ County. My post-doc dealt with turbine noise around the SJI's. I'm curious about a pilot being chosen to take place in a designated Marine Stewardship Area. There are many species and habitats struggling here. From a monitoring standpoint, what are long-term plans? We are fortunate to have SMRU here in SJI's, global leader in this area, you should consult with them if haven't already. And what's OPALCO's expertise in deployment and maintenance? Is that all covered by grants or are costs covered by membership?

Russell: the grants cover capital costs. But we've been operating in this marine environment since the 1930's, serve multiple islands and handle subtidal cables. We have technical expertise in certain areas

- Cam provides some details about noise effects, less than the effect of tanker noise because it's a passive system

Justin: acoustics is at the top of the list for permitting and ongoing monitoring

Krista: any further questions – please reach out to communications at OPALCO.

10:53 AM • Kelp exhibit at SJI Museum of Art

Christina Koons

Upcoming exhibit about kelp at the San Juan County Museum of Art, September-December 2025. Collaboration between art and science. I sent out a pdf about it. Wondering how MRC can be involved and help promote

Karin: do they want volunteers, what do they need? ACTION: Christina will reach out to Betsy Peabody to ask

10:57 AM • MRC subcommittee updates

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

Planning a Marina roundtable. Anyone connected with folks who would be interested, please let us know

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie

Johnson

nothing to report at this time, yet to meet in the new year

o Seagrass Protection

Beth Tate/Katie Johnson

Frankie: as it pertains to vessel impacts, we have a contractual obligation to count vessel traffic throughout the winter at our spots we've been monitoring. On good weather days, please do your boat counts – get that data.

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Adam Parrott/Kari Koski

Kari: follow up from winter storms. Removed five boats in last month; many were from the watchlist from prevention patrols. We were able to elicit responses from boat owners on ten different vessels. Must secure funding to continue patrols. We'll do those in Jan/Feb as weather allows, let Kari know if you're interested

o Oil Spill/ERTV-

Sam Whitridge

Lovel: At end of Inslee's tenure, proposed a budget for 2026-27. He didn't say the budget needed to include an ERTV, but he was in meetings to advocate for that as an oil spill prevention resource. There was a letter urging the governor to address the issue and a response. Lovel can share those two letters via email. And recent article by Tom Banse in Salish current, more information there about transmountain pipeline project <https://salish-current.org/2025/01/03/more-canada-crude-is-coming-but-trade-war-could-hamper-flow/> We should schedule a meeting to discuss the increase in this traffic, that can happen at a subcommittee meeting

11:04 AM **Adjourn MRC meeting**, Dave moves to adjourn, Sandy seconds

11:16 AM

Convene CAG Meeting

CAG Updates/Business

Sam Whitridge

• Planning/Overview of 2025 Salmon Recovery Grant Round

We're expecting close to our usual allocation, something around \$300K and then we will get another round of Riparian funding but won't know for a while exactly how much. Process starts by soliciting proposals. Site

visits will be a month earlier this year in the first week of April rather than May. Hope for good weather. Moved earlier due to Salmon Recovery Conference originally scheduled for May

- Cancellation of 2025 Salmon Recovery Conference

Happens every two years, brings together folks in salmon recovery across state, Frankie would have spoken about vessel impact work. But due to budget shortfalls, we're focusing on projects

Sam will send Letters of intent once they're in and TAG will start its review

Dave: unrelated to CAG, question about amount of material generated from vessel-crushing event?

Adam: material was taken away by a contractor. We tried to go down there for a site visit

Kari provides more details about the contractor and the breakdown of what was taken. We learned since then that that company may be under some litigation, always a concern. It's a challenge to find a solid vendor/good option for who to work with. Worth spending more time looking into best possible endpoints for this material.

11:26 AM Circle back to MRC interviews

Rich Newhart FH Port Commissioner, Joey Ullman from JenJay on Orcas, and Charles Bookman on Lopez, scientist, transportation expert, and consultant. We were very impressed with Charles Bookman and his background and knowledge, expertise in management, work with congress. We also liked Joey, brought a lot of enthusiasm, diving experience. We'd like to consider offering him a position on the TAG to weigh in on salmon projects. And for Rich, we'd like to offer him a position on LIO to maintain that port representation on our marine advisory committees.

Karin: what impressed me most about Charles was his kindness, didn't seem to be big on ego but a team player.

Adam: I liked all three. Charles has so much valuable background and abilities. Joey is very grounded in the work underwater, unique perspective, very realistic about what can be accomplished within regulations.

Sam: next, MRC recommends an individual to County Council for approval.

Christina: should we vote on your recommendation today?

Sam: yes, if you're ready, or we could send out resumes/applications if people wanted to do more review

MOTION: Lovel moves we recommend MRC appoint Charles bookman. Adam seconds. All in favor.

Sam: and to bring up diversity, we realize all three applicants are male but we are also interested in island diversity

ACTION: Kendra is taking a CWAC recommendation to Council for Jan 12th, can bring this as well

Olivia: if there's a way to involve Joey, we could really benefit from his enthusiasm (Sandy and Karin agree)

Sam: TAG is one way to get more formal involvement, and we need more members there, especially younger ones. But we can also encourage him to sit in on MRC meetings

Kari: back to the kelp exhibit, I'm so excited! I'd love to be involved in any committee, and make some kelp cocktails

Olivia: I think it would be great to have a kelp/science panel with folks from PSRF, the labs, Samish, etc. as part of it

Mike: the kelp exhibit is exciting; don't they have a meeting room there? Could we meet there and have a tour?

Karin: yes, we can ask about that. Their new director is very interested in collaborating

11:45 PM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees **MRC-CAG-LIO** **Meeting Agenda**

Thursday, February 6th, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

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9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC January meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons
9:20 AM	Presentation on Working with the Northwest Straits Foundation- Don Hunger, NWSF Executive Director
9:40 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome new Marine Advisory Committee Members- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Discussion re: MRC projects for 2025-2027 grant- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Revisit OPALCO Tidal Energy Project and possible MRC comment letter - <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Update on MRC role in Orcas Landing Marine Interpretive Area next iteration – <i>Susan Eshelman</i>• Dept of Ecology Shoreline Master Plan Rulemaking, MRC Comment Opportunity- <i>Barbara Bennett, Island County MRC</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i> ● Other subcommittee updates
10:45 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:50 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:50 AM	San Juan LIO discussion regarding the EPA Puget Sound Funding Model Proposal- <i>Peter Murchie, EPA and Larry Epstein, PSP</i>
11:20 AM	LIO Business agenda – <i>Katie Johnson/Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSP Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> ● Review nominations for San Juan County seat on the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) ● Early planning for San Juan Local Forum at August Leadership Council Meeting
11:40 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:40 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nominations for San Juan County seat on the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council ● 2025 Grant Round Letter of Interest Review Process
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Patti Gobin, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Kimbal Sundberg, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Angela Adams, Barbara Bennett, Katherine Combs, Susan Eshelman, Kirsten Feifel, Marta Green, Krista Harrington, Sasha Horst, Don Hunger, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Peter Murchie, Dana Oster, Jessica Owens, Frances Robertson, Joey Ullman, Daniel Vekved, Sam Whitridge, Jeff Whitty, Marjorie Wonham

9:01 AM **Convene MRC meeting**

Adam Parrott

9:02 AM **Public Comment**

Lovel: FYI here's info about a bill that has a hearing tomorrow in the Senate: <https://sanjuans.org/hb-1652-and-sb-5519-a-simple-solution-to-pollution/>

9:03 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC January minutes**

MRC mem-

bers

Dave moves to approve the agenda, Sandy seconds. No additions or edits. The agenda is approved. No edits to the minutes, Dave moves to approve the January minutes. Sandy seconds. All in favor, the minutes are approved

9:06 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC**

Sasha Horst

We had a commission meeting, highlights included: adopted some meeting norms, science advisory committee planning another virtual workshop in October, we discussed the definition of the NW straits initiative Christina: NW Straits Initiative Norms for Courageous Conversations, 'The norms will help to ensure that we have effective ways of addressing harmful remarks & miscommunications in a productive manner; also helpful tools for navigating difficult conversations. The NWS Commission Executive Committee has reviewed these and referred them to the NWS Commission for consideration as guiding principles for conducting Commission meetings.'

9:09 AM **Presentation on Working with the Northwest Straits Foundation**

Don Hunger

How to collaborate with MRC's, giving this presentation to each MRC –our staff and board, how to collaborate. Don introduces Board of Directors (includes Doug McCutcheon), board members serve 3-year terms. Staff includes Don as executive director, Lisa Kaufman is Director of Programs, Jason Morgan is Marine Program manager, and several others. The purpose of this talk is about how we solicit funds; we don't gift directly but we can help raise funds. Don is the lead grant writer with the foundation, we get funds when there are specific grants we can secure. These funds aren't in conflict with anything from the commission, these are for extra needs, small projects

Olivia asks about the process for application for funds, Don clarifies –for 'incubator' ideas, you have an idea and need to know how to fund. Think of the foundation as a fundraising partner. Starts with identifying the project

Charles: what's the competition? Is this just MRC's?

Don: all fundraising within NWSI is for MRC's. Sometimes partner among MRC's, not for independent organizations. Feel free to call or email with project ideas. Don 360-739-9909 or don@nwstraitsfoundation.org

9:23 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

• Welcome new Marine Advisory Committee Members

Sam Whitridge

Welcome to Charles Bookman and Joey Ullman. Charles on Lopez, new MRC voting member added a couple weeks ago. Joey is on Orcas, works for Jenjay, joining the Salmon TAG. MRC is full and we wanted to bring Joey on – here now as a nonvoting member and we'll reevaluate down the road
Charles: thank you. I live on Lopez. I have a broad ocean background and I love applying that to local issues
Joey: thanks everyone. I have a background in biology, invertebrates, connections with FHL, I'm glad to be here

9:28 AM • Discussion re: MRC projects for 2025-2027 grant

Sam Whitridge

Sasha: process for grant, next steps. Over coming months, submit proposals by May, meanwhile we'll discuss them and make sure questions are answered, then move forward with grant agreements. Three sources of funding (State, NOAA, and EPA through Puget sound partnership)

Frankie: NOAA federal funding that's already secured, given current uncertainty, is there risk of it being revoked?

Sasha: our plan is to proceed as we've laid out in our timeline and adapt as needed. We'll continue moving forward

Sam briefly lists current projects with submerged aquatic vegetation and marine stewardship vessel work.

Olivia: potential new project ideas;

- develop signage for 4th of July Beach and potentially other beaches to inform visitors about ecological value of eelgrass as well as traditional/cultural value, also generate excitement and support for marine conservation. Eelgrass ecology signage, but also kelp maybe by cattle pass, signs highlighting mussels or other habitats

- small signage at Jackson beach near dog poop dispensers, encourage folks to take a bag and clean the beach.

- from January MRC meeting, someone mentioned the kelp exhibit at SJI art museum. We could have a kelp science panel there, a kelp film screening. These ideas were on page 12 of the kelp pdf sent out last month

Mar: This summer's ocean science-arts workshop at FHL would be interested in collaborating on kelp art projects! Please email me if interested mwonham@uw.edu

Lovel: In terms of eelgrass signage Friends of the San Juans' has already partnered with SJC MRC and other groups for signage at SJC ports and marinas. And in terms of signage at dog poop dispensers, Clallam County MRC coasters included a fact about the amount of dog poop just among licensed dogs in their county. And it's not just on beaches, it's everywhere

Adam: reminder that signage at Jackson beach needs to be by permission of the port

Frankie: NPS has been interested in adding signage related to shoreline habitats also.

Charles: SJC Parks has put several eelgrass signs up at public access points. They are very helpful.

Sam: any other thoughts on those ideas or any other ideas we want to consider for this biennium's project list?

Kailey: are we still working on the building down at Cattle Point?

Katie: yes, I've been working with DNR on that, stay tuned – more to come

9:44 AM • Revisit OPALCO Tidal Energy Project and possible MRC comment letter

Sam Whitridge

Any follow up thoughts on that presentation or advisory actions we'd like to take as an MRC?

Charles: I attended the meeting on Lopez. They are in an environmental assessment phase, probably premature to take a stand on size/scope etc. They are 'floating' preliminary ideas, not specific, and it's entirely grant-funded

Dave: My sense is that it's a long-term aim, will play out over several decades. One option is for the MRC to indicate that the County should have a keen interest in how things develop, indicate wish to stay informed.

Adam: in the presentation they gave to us at the MRC they mentioned the noise impact

Charles: they don't have data yet. But OPALCO has a problem; they buy power from Bonneville and they get an allotment. But during cold snaps we're using an excess of that allotment, need to buy more on the open market.

Dave: I'm cognizant of the concerns for the marine environment, but appreciating our future needs and the need to consider all avenues seems valuable, link to a presentation I saw on this topic

<https://vimeo.com/858816026>

Lovel: this type of turbine is not permitted in the States, I think there's some grant money but I'm curious what matching funds the utility has to provide

Charles: I presume staff costs are provided by OPALCO. About noise, in this system the turbine is moving at the speed of tidal flow, not high-speed. It'll be spinning at the same rate of the current speed through Rosario straits

Frankie: tidal power development is still in very early days, not yet running at commercial scale. Only one commercial-level operation in Scotland. There have been numerous studies done, mostly in Europe around the UK, looking at effects of tidal turbines on marine life as well as the pilot in Snohomish County. That project had massive cost overruns and significant objections from Treaty tribes. But this is super early days

Matt: It keeps coming up is that this isn't a good place for this because of all the endangered species. So if not here, where could this work? We're cut off from main power grid unless we have more submarine cables. Other issues come up if we can't make it work. We don't have enough capacity to run the power we need in the near future.

Frankie: the reality is that tidal energy is best placed in high energy locations where there is inevitably high biodiversity, https://www.pnnl.gov/publications-reports?keywords=tidal%20energy&field_document_type=All

Patti: we haven't had much engagement, this is still an unknown to the Tulalip and it affects our lifeways. Next steps, Staff will keep in touch with OPALCO, keep abreast of the project and inform the MRC

10:04 AM • Update on MRC role in Orcas Landing Marine Interpretive Area next iteration *Susan Eshelman*
I work with Environmental Stewardship as a technician, I do GIS work for ES and the Clean water utility and riparian and nearshore vegetation work. The Orcas interpretative areas is a ¾ acre parcel. The MRC was involved in 2021 with some of the improvements at that time. From 1885-1949 it was a warehouse, store, etc. Then some infrastructure fill, an old dock (Susan shares photos over the years). Public Works and ES have put in several walls, in 2010 an Orcas Landing Master plan. Susan shows photos of more recent revegetation, native plants and plugs. This spring should be lots of wildflowers blooming. Mural in 2021 – historic lead paint was removed. This mural was commissioned with MRC help. The request was put out, MRC did a scoring system based on a set of values established by the Orcas Landing Maser plan. It's been four years, it was meant to last 5-10 years. It was done on six total plywood panels. We'll probably stick with these measurements, but next mural on aluminum panels

I've modified the last RFP somewhat; I can send that out and MRC can discuss what they want for next mural
QUESTIONS

-Susan clarifies funding, RFP should go out in next few months to take advantage of all funds available. But flexible, could go out by June. Most RFP's are 90 days. Maybe more flexible with small 'artworks'.

Dave: is the RFP to develop something that's going to be put up six years from now?

Susan shows mural conditions in 2021 vs. 2023. But we'd like to preserve this work, possibly restore it and move to a different location. We're still working on who would remove this one and install the new one

10:17 AM • Dept of Ecology Shoreline Master Plan Rulemaking, MRC Comment Opportunity. *Barbara Bennett*

I want to mention the signage we have in our wharf in Coupeville, we'd be glad to talk about materials and display strategies, etc. Our signs have been up for 15-20 years, must be maintained but still carrying their messages

I'm here today because the Dept. of Ecology is holding an opportunity for comment on shoreline master planning legislations, open for another month or so. Then a long process ahead for reviewing what they do. The question of domain over shoreline comes up constantly. The shoreline management program designates 200' upland as the area it addresses, often overlaps with private property and negotiation with owners is a parcel-by-parcel process but ecological processes need a long range of shoreline. I wrote a comment to Island County about our concerns: "While the shore friendly program is well-tailored for parcel by parcel strategy, this strategy isn't sufficient to achieve no net loss in ecological functions. Shoreline resilience requires a more comprehensive approach..."

We have a study showing that 90% of new armoring has been done without a permit, a small percentage was done even though a permit was refused. That's since 2016 when comprehensive plan was updated the last time.

We've tried to articulate the importance of shaping how the shoreline is regulated. Does shoreline management program have the authority to be more restrictive on privately property or does owner have the last word? This came up in our SILS meeting last fall, wondering if we could inject some influence in the rule-making process

Charles: the shoreline boundary, which in WA goes back about 50 years, is a very powerful permitting tool. It's administered in SJ county by the dept that does construction permitting.

Sam: we did our Salmon recovery chapter update a few years ago, tried to integrate it across county departments.

Lovel: I could connect you with Tina Whitman who's also working on comments to address this legislation

<https://sanjuans.org/course-correction-needed-for-rapidly-changing-shorelines/>

<https://sanjuans.org/wp-con->

[tent/uploads/2022/11/SanJuanCountyArmorChangeAnalysisandRegulatoryReviewProject_2022_FriendsoftheSanJuans-1.pdf](#)

[tent/uploads/2022/11/SanJuanCountyArmorChangeAnalysisandRegulatoryReviewProject_2022_FriendsoftheSanJuans-1.pdf](#)

Joey: as a biologist who writes a lot of permits and reports, the main disparity that I see is that we must operate on data that's 20 years old in a dynamic area. In terms of hands-on perspective if we could have more updated data about these species we care about in the parcels we're working in. how to incentivize getting new data?

Barbara: comments should be directly to the committee, not to me. Accepting comments now, the sooner the better, but maybe through March they'd still be accepted. I just wanted to encourage each locality to do this

Mike: I feel the elephant in the room is the enforcement aspect, when so many projects aren't being permitted. What's the State response, is it in the shoreline management act itself?

Barbara: it's really delegated down to the most local level

Dana Oster: Adding Island MRC's armoring analysis too! [071724-shoreline-armoring-survey-and-permit-analysis.pdf](#)

10:46 AM • MRC subcommittee updates

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

I spoke to this earlier with updates to Cattle Point

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Katie Johnson

Save the date for Spring GICU (Great Islands Clean Up), April 26 on SJI, Shaw, and Orcas and April 12 on Lopez

Monthly beach cleanups continuing, March 2 beach clean-up at Jackson

o Seagrass Protection

Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

The NPS sponsoring virtual science symposium, Feb 11-13. I'll circulate that information

Frankie: as it relates to vessel impact work, encourage members to get out and do boat counts on good weekends throughout the winter. It's a grant deliverable, we're compiling that data. I've been doing it out on the water as we're able to do marine patrols. Garrison Bay, Westcott Bay, Odlin County Park, Blind Bay, Eastsound

Christina: about the kelp exhibit coming up at county art museum September-December. I spoke with Betsy Peabody and she's interested in the MRC engaging. Ideas we talked about include a kelp soiree, kelp-tinis, a panel discussion, many ideas related to the MRC's work. Should we form a small subcommittee of folks interested in working on this? I've passed on Mar's interest to Besty and they're planning to meet. Karin and Kari are interested

ACTION: if interested, contact Christina –“it can be a disappearing task force”; circle back next meeting with a list

10:55 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge

Lovel presented at Task Force meeting, share link: <https://vimeo.com/1052354576> , <https://cenv.wvu.edu/speaker-series/commercial-shipping-impacts-and-risks-salish-sea>

There's a hearing coming up in subcommittee that would require ships to use less fuel and would eliminate the use of scrubbers, talked about in Lovel's presentation, also advocated for an ERTV. The subcommittee is trying to wrap up a summary of a handout that can be distributed as needed to address the effectiveness of the Ecology report.

10:57 AM o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Kari Koski

Finishing up now with dismantling of five boats moved in storms, working on database and priorities for 2025. We have 8-10 vessels on that list now I'll share with the subcommittee, two immediate vessels I'm working on now.

I will attend the 3-day workshop at the end of this month on the topic of derelict vessels and debris, really looking for solutions of where to put these vessels to avoid landfills. Working with County Sheriff's office and with Port, bumping up against some legal and safety issues so want to have better protocols

Look for a fun article coming out soon on the story of the El Capitan!

11:00 AM **Adjourn MRC meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees
MRC-CAG-LIO
Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 6th, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
In-Person at San Juan Island Grange
152 First St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

While this is an in-person meeting, a virtual option is available via Teams for those who cannot attend in person:

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

Dial in by phone

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[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 117 069 420#

9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC February meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons
9:20 AM	Presentation: Introducing Moorbuoys- Tyler Clark, Founder, Moorbuoys
9:35 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion regarding federal funding cuts- <i>Kendra Smith</i>• Planning for MRC projects for 2025-2027 NWSC grant- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Update on Marine Managers Workshop and Marina Operators Roundtable- <i>Katie Johnson/Frances Robertson</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i>○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i>○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other subcommittee updates
10:30 AM	Presentation/Discussion: Opportunities for MRC Engagement and Recommendations Related to Vessel Impacts- <i>Lovel Pratt and Frances Robertson</i>
10:55 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:55 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
11:00 AM	LIO Business agenda – <i>Katie Johnson/Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSP Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> • Early planning for San Juan Local Forum at August Leadership Council Meeting • Debrief on February presentation on the EPA/LIO Funding Model
11:40 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:40 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Review of 2025 SRFB Letters of Interest • Planning for April 3-4 Salmon Recovery site visits
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Paul Andersson, Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Patti Gobin, Brian Goodremont, Olivia Graham, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Craig Smith, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Katherine Combs, Tyler Clark, Paul Cline, Vincent Feliciano, Jane Fuller, Rich Goodhart, Marta Green, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Dana Oster, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Joey Ullman, Sam Whitridge, Marjorie Wonham

9:04 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:05 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:06 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC February meeting minutes** *MRC Members*

Sandy moves to accept the agenda, Olivia seconds, the agenda is approved.

Lovel had a few edits for the February minutes to clarify some wording on page 2 around Friends of SJ's eelgrass signage, she added the video link to her presentation at the task force meeting

Sandy moves to accept the minutes with those changes, Matt seconds. All in favor. The minutes are approved.

9:07 AM **Introductions around the room**

9:14 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC** *Sam*

Feb 28th there was a Commission meeting. The NW Straits Retreat is scheduled for April 3-4 at Padilla Bay, that'll be commissioners and MRC staff – Katie Johnson will represent us (same dates as salmon recovery site visits).

Puget Sound Day on the Hill, April 29-May 2. The reauthorization of NW Straits Initiative will be a top priority.

Skagit MRC is collaborating with Swinomish, NW Straits Foundation and other partners on a derelict crab pot removal in Skagit Bay. They'll be using ROV's and staging a demonstration with Oceanbotics in Cornet Bay

Dave: is NW Straits affected by budget cuts in WA?

Sam: the reauthorization is a concern, and other concerns. We'll talk about MRC grants in business updates.

Kari: is some champion from our region going to Day on the Hill?

Sam: we should discuss, Frankie? Jane?

Jane: former councilmember Wolf attended both of last two years. If you feel there's value in my going, I would respect that. Contemplating strategically who shows up to that event is important. I'd go as a representative of the MRC but also as a County Councilperson representing all the environmental interest in the county

Lovel: best person would be you as Councilperson, you can network with other representatives, great if you went

Frankie: Jamie also attended as a Councilperson. Christina will not be able to attend.

Kari: should you meet with folks who have gone before to help prepare?

Lovel: there are staff at PSP who coordinate Day on the Hill and the schedule, I can send you that contact info

ACTION: Lovel and Christina will spearhead helping prepare Jane

Sam: I'll send Jane some information as well, help with registering etc.

Jane: I'll plan to connect with Jamie, and I'll look forward to hearing from Lovel, Christina, and PSP contact

9:24 AM **Presentation: Introducing Moorbuoys** *Tyler Clark*

More boaters visit the SJI's every year and mooring supply hasn't kept up with pace. Moorbuoys is a mobile app to connect boaters with buoys. We think we can save eelgrass by using existing buoys. Existing Resources = 114 state park buoys, about 50 at Sucia. But across SJC there are 1800 existing buoys, just need to ensure they're properly inspected & maintained. Action plan: first step is community engagement. Presentation on Lopez last month. Step

2, enroll all the buoys in a maintenance program. Step 3, coordinate with DNR. Step 4, Launch mobile app in May 2025, working with the developer of Ferry friend. Like a vacation rental site, every buoy will list inspection date and minimum water depth/max vessel length (capped at 45'). You can filter by features, like nearby restaurants. We want to collaborate – diagram shows overlap of MRC's initiatives with Moorbuoys' goals e.g. monitor vessel impacts, buoy usage data, etc. We believe our mission promotes DNR's to encourage public use, ensure environmental protection, and foster water-dependent uses. support@moorbuoys.com

QUESTIONS

Q: how do buoy owners sign up?

Tyler: if people have a private buoy, they can register it under a master license that authorizes it for rental. We wouldn't replace a buoy unless necessary. We'll make sure it's inspected and up to par

Q: how would we access usage data?

Tyler: we can collect, filter and provide data in whatever way is useful to County/MRC in a logical format

Frankie: I'm interested in the intersection of boating with sensitive habitats. How this is different from OnBuoy?

Tyler: we're developing the app first, they don't have an app yet. We're focusing on SJC and using a first-come first serve model. We offer hourly rates, flexible pricing for buoys. Flexible check-in and checkout times.

Dana: We are in early days launching a shared www.AnchorOut.org webpage to display all the voluntary no-anchor zones across WA and BC and help with boaters best behavior. We have OnBuoy and Dockwa both currently listed as potential buoy rental resources. We can add a link to Moorbuoy as well once its running

Frankie: we counted 1800 mooring buoys in 2022, and we know more have been installed since then, probably c2000 now, that's a third of all the mooring buoys in WA. Based on data provided by DNR, 800 or so are authorized. The majority are unauthorized and pretty hinky. We've been doing field surveys to verify aerial image data. Many are at questionable depths. Do you have a means of verifying if someone applies that they have all their permits?

Tyler: part of signup is buoy authorization number is required; owner name needs to match.

Frankie: difficulty of getting permits for mooring buoys. We'll need to look into removal of mooring buoys that aren't in appropriate locations and that aren't up to specifications

Joey: I facilitate a lot of buoy permitting in SJC. The big problem is even with a DNR number, county, state, and federal permits (including Army Corps of Engineers) are also required. Applicants can get a DNR number before federal processing and that's where most buoys get stopped by Tribes who are saying no now to all buoys. It's a complicated process. Removing mooring buoys is difficult – pulling up buoys is going to require complex equipment

Jane: Joey's comments speak to the broader look that needs to be given to this whole initiative. Identifying buoys, is that the fundamental scope of the project County was undertaking and was that completed?

Frankie: to date, we've undertaken mapping using aerial imaging of mooring buoys in the county. Now we're doing field verification, comparing with satellite imagery and doing a change analysis. Friends of SJ's did a shoreline infrastructure study in 2009 to look at where buoys have been put in and removed with special attention to sensitive habitats. As Joey said, Tribes aren't permitting mooring buoys because overshadowing infrastructure chips away at their tribal rights. They've been requesting a statewide mooring buoy tracking database. Trying to get a handle on which are authorized and what new ones are getting put in

Jane: what about enforcement? Whose responsibility is that?

Frankie: there's none. DNR has one enforcement officer for both terrestrial and marine. They have no capacity. A larger mooring buoy system may take a legislative push to get DNR the capacity they need

Joey: Jenjay has about 200 clients that are hung up – they have their DNR numbers but their buoys are not permitted without national approval through Army Corps.

Kari: I question how the app won't be used for nefarious purposes. Also concerned about shorelines without public access, and there's no public transport – many neighborhoods and places where boaters can't go ashore

Tyler: There isn't a way now to keep boaters off private buoys. But we won't share GPS coordinates until payment plus we'll have the registrations and credit card number for the boat on the app, we have ways to deter them from

not vacating the buoy. And as for shoreline access – every buoy in the app will say whether that's included or not and plan around that. We're also working with places like Fisherman Bay that have lots of buoys – working with dock to identify a tie up place. People are already doing it in an unauthorized way.

Joey: curious about standards for inspection. Many different designs for buoys. How to standardize service?

Tyler: we're talking with Jenjay, you guys are a great service. Every buoy will be dived within Park standards

Jane: It seems this is worthy of an MRC subcommittee to do more robust problem identification and explore the scope of how this county's MRC/Dept. of Environmental Stewardship could engage in addressing the problem.

- The public talk on Moorbuoys in Friday Harbor will be at the San Juan Island Library 5:30 on April 10th

Patti: mooring buoys are a great topic for Tribes and everyone to problem-solve together. We face the same issue in Tulalip. It impacts our treaty fishing rights. Frankie, let's work on this, try to pull a meeting together

Frankie: yes, that's where we're headed next with this buoy assessment work

Jane: considering scope of this issue, it may need a subcommittee to address it. now seems a ripe time to move.

ACTION: add this to agenda for the next meeting, creating a subcommittee around buoy network

Frankie: Tyler, we should connect offline, especially if the MRC stands up a subcommittee dedicated to this issue.

10:07 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

- Discussion regarding federal funding cuts

Kendra Smith

The marine program is predominantly grant-funded. It's a combination of state and federal grants, including the LIO and NW Straits grants. These are congressionally approved funds, as is NOAA funded work for salmon recovery. A lot at stake at federal level. Need to consider how to fund the marine program going forward. Kendra describes the current funding situation for the marine program and how to cover staff –likely need to cover a shortfall of \$150K or so from federal funds. talked to the Auditor about how to migrate away from being a grant-funded program. The idea of the Marine Pass was to be a potential revenue source. It's a good time to migrate to a new funding model.

Craig: it occurs to me that this Moorbuoy app could generate funds, adding fees that go to County (like tourism tax)

Dave: seems important to educate more about the services the MRC and staff provide to help with advocacy

Tyler: Craig - If we get 800 buoys on the Moorbuoys app, a \$5 tourist fee, over 100 day peak season = \$400,000.

Jane: Recently at conference in DC, we were asked by congressional representatives to report how we're being affected. Please share with Jane if critical processes are being impacted. The state financial situation is worse than Governor Ferguson realized, there will be state cuts. I'd like to be in touch about the sourcing of your funding

10:26 AM • Planning for MRC projects for 2025-2027 NWSC grant

Sam Whitridge

Quick update on grant-planning for the next biennium. RFP released this week for MRC proposals. The discussion of state/federal funding gets at core MRC support grant. There are federal EPA and state shoreline funding and separate 2-year grant from NOAA. Olivia had some great ideas. Now is the time if you have project ideas to suggest.

We have some core tasks continuing – The derelict vessel program, PFSS, eelgrass protection work which includes vessel monitoring. Funding the marine managers workshop, marine stewardship outreach related items, etc.

Kailey: is Cattle Point interpretive signage still in the works?

Katie: Working to get in touch with DNR, they're in charge of state facility. They'll find out about that this summer.

-Full proposals due May 29th, leading up to that we have consultations/discussions around projects, refining

Dana: the RFP also has helpful project and funding criteria that are important to review for project development.

Opportunity for consultations with the NW Straits science advisory committee on one of our projects, time for those meetings in May and June. Proposals don't get finalized until August so they can be tweaked as needed

10:33 AM • Update on MMW and Marina Operators Roundtable

Katie Johnson/Frances Robertson

Thinking about how to proceed with a Marine Managers Workshop, especially with travel ban.

Katie: for marine operators, a lot of enthusiasm but more available in late fall so we'll continue toward that end

- MRC subcommittee updates

10:34 AM o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

WA Seagrass crab team is looking for more members, if interested Katie can send you info

Karin: Cindy and I want to set up a meeting with you, because the other part of outreach needs to be about reaching out to underserved or uninvolved groups of people

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson

Monthly beach cleanups are going great, YCC picked up at Jackson last week. We have cleanups on each of the next three months. GICU (Great Islands Clean-up) on Lopez April 12th, then Orcas/Shaw/SJ on the 26th.

10:36 AM o Seagrass Protection

Katie Johnson

Please help with vessel surveys, even a data point of zero is useful. Count opportunistically at site locations. Our MRC has been invited to participate in North Sound vegetation strategy lunch, happening April 2nd. To hear about DNR's implementation process for marine veg projects, and network with other folks around the North Sound.

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Kari Koski

I just attended national conference with Towboat and debris program – looking at vessels' end of life. They had a lot of good ideas, I came back with some Follow up from winter storms. All work done for the six boats we worked on, getting reimbursed from state. Looking forward to a clean green boating season.

10:40 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge

No specific updates, but the upcoming presentation will touch on that more broadly

10:41 AM short break

10:47 AM **Presentation/Discussion: Opportunities for MRC Engagement and Recommendations Related to Vessel Impacts**

Lovel Pratt and Frances Robertson

Friends of SJ's mission is to protect the Salish Sea. Today plan to discuss upcoming opportunities to advise County Council (list of specific items). I have a pdf of this presentation with links to all the source materials. Why are we concerned about impacts? Salish Sea region has 8.7million people, projected to be 10.5 million by 2040. That increases vessel traffic because goods are transported on the water. Lovel shows map of vessel traffic coming through Salish sea. All the ships going in and out of Port of Vancouver circumnavigate our islands. That's Canada's biggest port, 29 different terminals. One project causing impacts is the completion of the Transmountain pipeline expansion in May 2024, it'll triple the output of oil. It all goes through Haro Strait and Boundary Pass. This material is like oily sand diluted with a toxic material to enable it to flow through pipes. Map showing refinery in BC plus five in WA state. Vessel traffic route included in permit is completely to west of SJ's. But there is a pipeline coming from Sumas to the refineries in WA. So, some traffic is crossing from Victoria/PA directly to WA state. That tanker traffic is using our anchorage areas, waiting for a berth up in BC. Some tankers are in offshore drift as one map image shows. Between May and November there was a 930% increase in shipment of crude oil by tanker. There's an ERTV (Emergency Response Towing Vessel) at Neah Bay. If a tanker is at risk of running aground and recreating an oil spill, the ERTV would go to its aid. Map shows area the ERTV could respond to – not effective in Haro Strait/Boundary Pass. An ERTV stationed in either Sidney or Roche Harbor would be equally effective. Another component of our recommendations is a piece of legislation that didn't make it through this year. This is a bill that requires ships to use low-sulfur fuel, trying to address pollution. Scrubbers (exhaust gas cleaning systems)

are allowed to be used with heavy fuel. The scrubbers remove sulfur oxides and other pollutants from effluent that would have gone into the air and dump it in the water. About 80% of scrubbers are open loop, 1.1% of scrubbers are closed loop and don't always discharge into water. The remaining scrubbers alternate between modes. Scrubber use is increasing. 4k% increase in use from 2014 to 2024. These have serious impacts on marine copepods and bioaccumulates within organisms and magnifies up the food chain for all eaters of seafood

Question: are there any requirements/recommendations about fuel? What are cost difference?

Lovel: there's a global treaty dictating the amount of sulfur in ship's fuel but allows scrubbers. The sulfur content can be higher in open ocean than inland waters close to shore. The low sulfur fuel is more expensive than heavy fuels. Hopefully a cruise ship would use low sulfur fuel all the way from WA to Alaska. For a tanker traveling across the Pacific, this is just a small portion of trip. Not hard to switch fuels. California has a low-sulfur requirement for a decades and same ships are coming here and there. Every five years must review oil spill preparedness requirements to ensure they meet best achievable protection according to state law, WAC 173-182-030 (31) – definition of non-floating oils. Showing map, "planning standard area" – in SJC it's the same geographic boundaries as County. To meet our standard, need capacity to recover a certain amount of oil in a certain amount of time – must arrive within a certain amount of time. SJC contracted a study in 2015, assessed all resources.

Frankie presents: the MRC's involvement in SRKW protection and recovery efforts started early; in 1994, banned landing and launching of personal watercraft in the SJI's. In 2000, MRC sent Kari to Mexico for a NAFTA conference. This is where 'Be Whale Wise' for outreach to boaters was born. More key dates through Governor's Orca task force in 2018-2019 (see ES storyboard). As County staff, Participated on intergovernmental work group. Since 2018, piloted the whale warning flag (now adopted statewide). A lot of work has regional impacts. We completed the West side marine spatial planning study (MSA recommendation #H.2). Participated in many regional and local outreach efforts (i.e. Dock talks, boat shows, etc.). Other accomplishments include the new bill signed into law in 2023 to keep away from whales, went into effect this year. BAP (Best Achievable Protection) process in Ecology – submitted to explore funding strategies to ensure stability for SRFW in emergency oil spill response

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

-question and discussion about a 'tug of opportunity' and its capacity to respond

-additional issue of staffing/personnel who can operate the vessel. Requires a ready team

Jane: last December I attended the Islands Trust Council conference in Victoria. SJ County has had a MOU between our jurisdictions to cooperate on various things Former council member Wolf was online to speak to the ERTV issue. They passed a motion as a Council to commit to collaborating with both SJC and Tribes in the area to advocate for an ERTV. They feel Tribal voices are incredibly powerful on this and would help leverage this issue on both sides of government. Based on this presentation, there's enough happening we should organize a one-day meeting to workshop how we can collaborate in strategic ways. I think the time is ripe to organize a working meeting with cross-border partners and Tribes on how collective voices could be made louder. Learn from each other on what's being done on oil spill prevention. Many things Gulf Islands are doing to prepare for smaller spills.

Lovel: the Neah Bay ERTV is paid for by ships that call to ports in WA but available full time to any vessel in distress, that means it's responding to vessels from Canada. There does need to be transboundary coordination

Adam: do we want an action item out to facilitate Jane's idea? Follow up on contacts to organize as the MRC?

-and can we still influence the agenda for the Marine Managers workshop?

Katie: in August LIO is meeting with Leadership Council to share what's important to us. We shared this ERTV work with the ECB recently. This issue would be a prime thing to bring up with them. That's on August 20-21

Adam: should we work on a list of people and organizations we want involved?

Lovel: we have an ERTV subcommittee, should that group meet to discuss this before our next meeting? YES

Is there interest in being involved in the BAP process? There will be work groups headed up by Ecology

Marta: How does this opportunity translate into another action? I support Jane's suggestion, this should be a stand-alone meeting of important partners, especially Tribal partners. I think that should happen before the MMW

Adam: yes, that'll be your focus in the ERTV subcommittee meeting, to set up that meeting

Jane: when Governor Inslee made final remarks about budget, he was in touch with Canadian consulate about interest in pursuing an ERTV, also some discussion with Coast Guard. Now we have a new governor it's a good time to remind that it's a prescient issue, but it was left on the table in December. Maybe Lovel could share that letter from the Governor. If there's already a subcommittee on this, it's best for them to work on this

Lovel: Ferguson had identified some funding to work with Canadian counterparts. Agree, we need to reach out to Ferguson and to new staff in the Governor's office

Adam: for that subcommittee meeting, please bring to the MRC actual items we can move on, maybe a letter of recommendation for Council to send to the Governor or a list of action items to move on to advocate for legislation

Patti: We had a meeting this past week with Coast Salish chiefs, met with Tulalip to see if we could reenact Coast Salish gathering. If there's any strength in numbers, First Nations have a lot to lose here, need right people at table

10:55 AM **Committee member updates and any other business** *none*

11:48 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting** (LIO meeting 11:48 AM-11:58 AM)

11:58 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:58 AM **CAG Updates/Business** *Sam Whitridge*

11:58 AM • Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met last month to review 2025 SRFB Letters of Interest

- Planning for April 3-4 Salmon Recovery site visits

Reminder that this will take the place of our regular Thursday MRC meeting. There will be carpooling opportunities, I'll send out an email call for RSVP's. There won't be a boat, just a couple of ferry trips

Next MRC meeting will be the first Thursday in May, May 1.

12:00 PM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, May 1st, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

Dial in by phone

[+1 360-726-3293](tel:+13607263293),117069420# United States, Vancouver

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 117 069 420#

While this is a virtual meeting, a public meeting place is available at the Beaverton Valley Operations Center, 1609 Beaverton Valley Rd. in Friday Harbor for those without mobile phone or internet access.

9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC March meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates on NWSC Reauthorization Legislation/Puget Sound Day on the Hill
9:30 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning MRC projects for 2025-2027 MRC grant- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Discussion re: potential MRC Advisory Actions- <i>Sam Whitridge</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Revisit OPALCO Tidal Energy Generation Project○ Mooring Buoy Vacation Rental Businesses○ Federal proposal to curtail Endangered Species Act habitat protections• Upcoming MRC Volunteer Opportunities- <i>Katie Johnson</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Friday Harbor Labs Open House○ Plastic Free Salish Sea Monthly Cleanups○ Dock Talks○ Sailing with SJI Yacht Club• MRC subcommittee updates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i> ○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i> ● Other subcommittee updates
10:25 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:30 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:30 AM	Planning for San Juan Local Forum at August Leadership Council Meeting- <i>Tristan Contesse and Wendy Loosle, Puget Sound Partnership</i>
10:50 AM	LIO Business agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Forum Planning Discussions- <i>Sam Whitridge/Katie Johnson</i> ● PSP Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> ● Discussion regarding Healthy Shorelines Action Plan- <i>Katie Johnson</i> ● Update on upcoming May 8th Ecosystem Coordination Board Meeting/Island County Local Forum- <i>Katie Johnson</i>
11:20 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:20 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates on State/Federal Salmon Recovery Funding ● 2025 Salmon Recovery Site Visit Report ● 2025 Salmon Recovery Grant Round proposal review and next steps
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Paul Andersson, Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Brian Goodremont, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Beth Tate, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Victoria Compton, Tristan Contesse, Rich Goodhart, Marta Green, Sasha Horst, Katie Johnson, Lee Kirby, Jason Lim, Wendy Loosle, Jessica Owens, Kendra Smith, Heather Spore, Joey Ullman, Sam Whitridge, Marjorie Wonham

9:02 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:05 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:06 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC March meeting minutes** *MRC Members*

Sandy moves to accept the minutes as presented, Beth seconds. All in favor. The March minutes are approved.

Christina wants to discuss the kelp exhibit on the agenda under MRC updates, upcoming volunteer opportunities.

Sam has one scheduling item to bring up around the July meeting; it's currently scheduled for July 3rd just before the holiday weekend. Lovel moves to push the meeting back a week to July 10th, Brian seconds. So moved.

Dave moves to accept the agenda with additions, Sandy seconds, the agenda is approved.

9:08 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC** *Christina Koons*

Christina sent a recent email with meeting highlights and links. New chair and vice chair were elected; Jamie Stephens from SJI appointed to the Commission. WA Seagrass news about how they're tracking funding issues. Salish Sea institute held a workshop yesterday about successes and challenges in protection, the event was recorded. Green crab monitoring has begun. Frankie Robertson is in Washington DC now with Kari McVeigh. They met with Maria Cantwell and learned that the reauthorization bill has passed out of Senate.

9:12 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

- Planning for MRC projects for 2025-2027 NWSC grant

Sam

Whitridge

Staff and Olivia have been meeting to discuss grant proposal, moving forward with our core programs like derelict vessel (DV) prevention and marine stewardship. Planning a community engagement initiative around the MSA to foster a sense of ownership/place. Pulling together that proposal, I can share drafts with the MRC for feedback

Sasha: the State budget passed with MRC funding intact, assuming governor signs. First year of NOAA funding is already awarded, it's the EPA funding in year two that's still in question. But we're moving forward with plans

Kendra: can we include a strategy in the community initiative for long-term funding for the marine program? Focus on reducing our reliance on grant funding. For example, a marine discover pass for boats passing through islands. Some ideas may require State legislation. Also looking at possibility for local resources to support the DV program

Lovel: it's worthy of an in-depth discussion about different options to support this program long-term

Charles: Discover Pass is clearly a state program. Does that legislation need to be tweaked to include state parks?

Adam: can we put this on the June agenda? In our role as an advisory committee, put in some research

Lovel: I suggest we establish a subcommittee to investigate options and provide recommendations

MOTION: Lovel moves to create a subcommittee around project funding, Charles seconds. So moved

Charles: I can't dig into this until the latter half of July. I'll be on the subcommittee and take more of a lead then

Sam can take the lead on coordinating and scheduling an initial meeting. Kendra and Lovel are interested

ACTION ITEM: we'll add this to the agenda for June, subcommittee will meet before then

9:31 AM • Discussion re: potential MRC Advisory Actions

Sam Whitridge

o Revisit OPALCO Tidal Energy Generation Project

OPALCO has filed draft license application. Comment period open, extended until September

Lovel: I have concerns about the location of the project in Rosario Strait near major shipping lanes and ability of OPALCO to respond to emergencies as needed. I'll bring this up next week at Puget Sound Harbor Safety meeting

Heather: I represent Swinomish, we and the Tulalip were successful in extending this comment period due to the lack of tribal consultation. We plan to dig through their environmental assessment files and provide comments. We're concerned about effects on marine resources, habitat, tribal fishing, etc. There are a lot of potential adverse impacts. We're happy to coordinate responses and answer questions,

hspore@swinomish.nsn.us

David: We should send some recommendation to the Council. I'd be willing to help draft a letter with Lovel and Tina

ACTION: David will get in touch with Tina and Heather to coordinate about writing a draft

Charles: consider our posture with OPALCO, let's support their effort to solve a long-term power supply problem.

9:43 AM o Mooring Buoy Vacation Rental Business

Kendra: there are several folks contemplating use of private mooring buoys as a rental/lease/exchange program. Code 18.50.300E specifies against commercial use of private buoys. There's also an RCW governing private mooring buoys stating commercial use of these private operations isn't permitted. Any enforcement would be from DNR

Beth: one reason this isn't acceptable is because shoreline owners are granted a lease from DNR but commercial owners need to apply for a different kind of lease, so buoys used in this way would be out of compliance with DNR

Joey: those are called DNR registrations. If the buoy owner doesn't have waterfront property, there are different types of fees/licenses, but they can own a buoy. They must show a certain amount of residential use

Adam: they said they're working within DNR compliance by making membership fees, not rental i.e. 'sharing' buoys

Beth: Does the County have any code regarding commercial buoys or is it all about residential buoys? It's unclear from the WAC, it refers to residential and recreational

Joey: we don't have any commercial buoys; we have residential buoys that act as private aids to navigation, but they all have a DNR registration (i.e. lease)

David: buoys being used by private people but contracted through this process. May need new legislations or rules

Kendra details some of the risks. What if people stay longer than planned and it functions as a liveaboard, etc.

Joey: for the campsite analogy, it's not just like driving up and parking. There's some skill involved in attaching to the buoy and detaching, we'll need to deal with the issues that turnover of multiple users incurs

Heather: are most of the buoys that would participate in high density areas or are they potentially in remote places where there would be increased impacts to eelgrass?

Kendra: we don't know yet, it depends on who signs up, we have over 1800 buoys. But how many permitted?

Beth: we'd only allow helical anchors in eelgrass. So installation shouldn't impact, but transient visitors may impact

David: From March 6 MRC minutes, "Frankie: counted 1800 mooring buoys in 2022, and we know more have been installed since then, probably 2000 now, that's a third of all the mooring buoys in WA... 800 or so are authorized."

9:59 AM o Federal proposal to curtail Endangered Species Act habitat protections

Sandy: Services are considering rewriting the stipulations under the ESA which could do away with protections for habitats for endangered species. Comment letters due by May 19th, I'm willing to write a letter together

Lovel: I can provide a letter that Friends is signing on to that did an in-depth look

Olivia, Joey, Kailey: happy to sign on but don't have time to write it, want Sandy to send them information

Lovel: We're an advisory committee, we could provide a letter to Council to submit, not our own recommendation

Sandy moves to draft a letter of recommendation for Council to send; Karin seconds. So moved

- This would need to get on Council Agenda by May 13th, so the letter would need to be ready between May 6-8th

Sandy: in that case I need to rescind/strike that motion. Individuals can send in letters on their own

ACTION: Katie will send out information about this for people who want to write their own letters

Kendra: I believe the issue in the change of the ESA is the wording of "Harm"

Here is some more background around the proposed rule change that would rescind the definition of "Harm":

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/04/17/2025-06746/rescinding-the-definition-of-harm-under-the-endangered-species-act>. Comments must be received by May 19, 2025.

FYI see also <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/definition-of-harm-endangered-species-5094938/>

10:09 AM • Upcoming MRC Volunteer Opportunities

Katie Johnson

We track your MRC hours, I'd like to see more members get involved in outreach activities!

Lee Kirby: I met Katie at the GICU (Great Island Clean up) in the harbor and realized there's a natural alignment between our boats and islands without ferry service. We've planned a cruise for May 31st to Stuart to meet up and clean beaches. Then on June 1st Sucia, and on June 2nd Jones. Boats can help bring folks over for the clean up. Power Squadron will join us, we'd like to have more community & MRC involvement. Opening day for boating is also this weekend, I'd like to have a banner for PFSS. Contact vicecommodore@sjyc.com or papakirbs@proton.me

ACTION: can Lee please send out a written blurb about what you just described so we can send it around

o Friday Harbor Labs Open House

Karin: I will support the booth for FHL open house this Saturday May 3rd but need an extra partner

o Plastic Free Salish Sea Monthly Cleanups – first Sundays of the month, 11am-1pm

Visitors Bureau is doing this May 4th, June will be hosted by the Pride Foundation with a cookout after

o Sailing with SJI Yacht Club

Contact Lee Kirby, sign-up sheet for time slots

o Dock Talks

There'll be a sign-up sheet for this, encourage folks to give whales space. Dedicate time to community engagement

10:18 AM • MRC subcommittee updates

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

Will meet as a subcommittee soon. I met with DNR about Cattle Point interpretive center, they're waiting for approval of some funding. I put in an extension on our grant, so we have until next January to wrap this up. The MRC voted to add a youth engagement position, hope that goes to council on May 13th. The 2024 Annual report has been completed – you can see all the good things you've been up to, I'll share that with the group

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven

We had a productive meeting this week, thinking about some new projects. One is called "think before you shrink", using plastic to cover boats for the season. This theme is about looking at other opportunities for better coverage. Also, "cover your load" – still lots of open trucks taking garbage to the dump. We want to reinvigorate that project with a display at the Fair and at the July 4th parade. I've reached out to Becky for the fourth of July parade

10:23 AM o Seagrass Protection

Katie Johnson

Beth says the HSIL eelgrass project is kicking off and there may be additional shoots available for transplant Sandy: we had a great meeting last week on the collection of Hydrogen sulfide data

Olivia: HSIL starts in July, number of sites around the island, looking at various parameters with a variety of partners

Katie: and please continue to do shore-based vessel surveys in key locations. Even a data point of zero is important

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Adam Parrott

Sam: Kari gave an update on this program to county council in April, gave a talk at the yacht club. Started patrols in collaboration with Frankie doing concurrent mooring buoy surveys. Seven vessels of concern now on priority list. Mini-voluntary turn-in even last month, four boats turned in, all reimbursable by DNR. There was an emergency response to the Apache sailing vessel, it hit rocks in Cattle Pass. Helicopter rescue of two people, one fatality, vessel surfaced near Iceberg point. It was reported and the owner's insurance paid to have it towed and dismantled. DNR is at end of biennium for funding

10:27 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge

I worked with Frankie and Jane Fuller to provide materials to bring to DC so can incorporate it into discussions.

Lovel: we're meeting with Cantwell staff currently and this will be their main opportunity to speak on this issue. There was a presentation to Congress yesterday morning available online

10:30 AM **Committee member updates and any other business**

Lovel Pratt

Three updates, 1. In 2021, MRC partnered with Salish Sea institute to address growler navy jets noise. Friends is sending out an action alert, comments are open until May 13th. When they did their initial EIS in 2018, they said there were no studies on SRKW impacts, but then there was one in 2020 that documented significant

noise in the air and underwater. Staff could bring this to council's attention, or people could submit their own comments.

2. law in books saying a WA state pilot is required on any tanker going through WA state waters, but BC coast pilots have been allowed. This came up in session, I'll put a link the chat to that budget discussion

3. At the Board of Pilotage commissioners meeting, someone from the Coast Guard discussed staffing changes and how they're being engaged to redirect resources to border security. There are then less resources to make sure that recreational and fishing vessels are going to stay out of commercial lanes. This is a real concern going into boating season that there won't be the same level of oversight for vessels during key points in the season

Christina: the Saturday Sept 27th soiree hopefully sponsored by MRC at SJC Museum of Arts exhibit on kelp. Good opportunity for PR about the MRC. I reached out to folks who were interested in participating.

Karin: I am interested in leading the Kelp project for the MRC

Brian: there's a new passenger service under a County RFP, provides link

<https://www.sanjuansafaris.com/passenger-boat-service>

10:39 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**

Adam moves to adjourn, Lovel seconds (commence LIO meeting until 11:18 AM)

11:19 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:19 AM **CAG Updates/Business**

Sam Whitridge

•2025 Salmon Recovery Site Visit Report and Updates on State/Federal Salmon Recovery Funding

Grant round is in full swing. Some of you participated in site visits (actual and virtual). Three projects, one acquisition on Cascade Creek, one is an outer-islands land ownership assessment. And one is a Friends of a SJ's restoration project on Upright Head, Lopez.

Sam reviews the numbers, decrease of about \$70K in funding. We will have some riparian funding, still unknown how much. There may be some funds returning from the Jackson Beach project. PSP wants to pay for that project which frees up SRFB money that would come back into this grant round

In terms of federal funding. Administration and office of budget management regarding plans for NOAA, intent to implement significant cuts in next fiscal year, that would include the PAC SURF funding which is a huge portion of salmon recovery funding. Its loss would be a major blow to salmon recovery efforts, that's still a work in progress.

David: what about PSAR funding, not just SRFB?

Sam: that was funded at 60 million (Jason confirms amount), that's a reduction from last biennium but a decent outcome all things considered. Sam describes how PSAR funds are distributed.

Lovel: there was a proposal to put some PSAR money into general funds, that would have affected many projects. Thanks to those who reached out to legislatures and made sure it was known that money was obligated.

Sam: There were some salmon recovery funds from 2022 already allocated and being implemented, under contract. Thankfully there was a full court press on our legislators

• 2025 Salmon Recovery Grant Round proposal review and next steps

We're in the technical review process now. TAG met recently to review proposals. Determination of project approval comes next – final approval by TAG, and then CAG review in July and August.

11:31 AM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees
MRC-CAG-LIO
Meeting Agenda

Thursday, June 5th, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
In-Person at San Juan Island Grange
152 First St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

While this is an in-person meeting, a virtual option is available via Teams for those who cannot attend in person:

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

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9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC May meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons
9:20 AM	Discussion re: MRC Membership and MRC Volunteer Hours- Adam Parrott
9:45 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on NWSC Grant Submission for 2025-2027- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Discussion re: MRC Comments on OPALCO Tidal Generation Project- <i>Dave Checkley</i>• MRC members up for renewal in June 2025 (Karin Roemers-Kleven/Craig Smith)- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC Youth Position Update- <i>Kailey Genther and Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria</i>• Introduction to summer interns- <i>Katie Johnson</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i> ● Other subcommittee updates
10:40 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:45 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:45 AM	Presentation: Funding available for 6PPD Stormwater Research- <i>Madison Bristol and Shelby Giltner, Dept of Ecology</i>
11:00 AM	LIO Business agenda – <i>Katie Johnson/Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSP Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> ● Planning for San Juan Local Forum at August 20-21 Leadership Council Meeting ● Healthy Shorelines Action Plan Workshop (June 10th)
11:30 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:30 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update on Salmon Recovery Funding in 2025-2027 State Budget ● Update on San Juan 2025 Salmon Recovery Allocation ● 2025 Salmon Recovery Grant Round Update and Next Steps
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Rich Goodhart, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Craig Smith, Kim Sundberg, Beth Tate

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Madison Bristol, Paul Cline, Shelby Giltner, Michiko Graham, Marta Green, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Mike Kuperberg, Ava Martin, Frankie Robertson, Sonora Tate, Flora Vaught, Lola Walker, Annika Weber, Sam Whitridge, Jeff Whitty

9:03 AM **Convene MRC Meeting**

Adam Parrott

9:04 AM **Public Comment**

Frankie R.

As a member of the Whale Museum BOD, I'm introducing the new Director of the whale museum, Mike Kuperberg.

Mike: we just arrived to the Island but I've been working with museum for several months, excited to be here

9:05 AM **Introductions** around the physical and virtual rooms

9:11 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC March meeting minutes**

MRC Members

No revisions. David moves to accept the minutes as presented, Olivia seconds. The May minutes are approved.

David moves to accept the meeting agenda, Olivia seconds, the agenda is approved.

9:12 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC**

Christina Koons

NW Straits met in Clallam County. Hosted by the Jamestown Clallam Tribe at their Nature Center. The Commission will meet in the SJI's on Sept 25th, hope some MRC members can join. We also heard a talk about the Blue Schools initiative – ways to engage young people in marine issues. Now that we've created these two youth positions on the MRC, seems like a good fit. Nice to see an emphasis on eelgrass recovery and anchoring out. Also Betsy Peabody with PSRF will participate in the kelp exhibit at the art museum. Idea to host a kelp soiree on September 27th, some MRC members have already volunteered to help. MRC conference will be November 7th and 8th, in La Conner WA

Frankie: last time it was hard for additional staff to attend, we'd need to push to give Kari Koski the opportunity. We don't just have one support staff, we have a variety. It would be nice if there was an invitation extended to all of us

ACTION ITEM: Christina will look into getting everyone there

9:17 AM **Discussion re: MRC Membership and MRC Volunteer Hours**

Adam Parrott

We're here because of our passion for these islands, and their future is uncertain. Please all examine your own personal goals for being part of the MRC – now is the time to step forward and be a progressive force for our community. The staff's time is valuable, but there are many things they're shouldering that the membership should be taking care of, and it uses grant time that would be better placed elsewhere. We have many upcoming events that need volunteer support., Instead of sending around emails and hoping people sign up, let's make it an action item and keep members aware of what others are doing. Work to translate our passion into boots on the ground action. Katie has created a sign-up sheet. Please find something there you can commit to and put your name on it. Then each meeting let's have an agenda item to discuss what members are doing with volunteer hours. This will empower us to speak at Council and not just be spectators for what

our staff is doing. We need to be more specific, show the community how we support each other. We'll report for the first time next month on July 10th

Karin: It was so much fun it was to host the MRC booth at the FHL open house. We showcased projects like the DV program, creosote removal, etc. People left with lots of ideas and I felt like I had helped make a difference.

Adam: thank you! I want to share more experiences like that monthly. Interacting with community can make a positive impact. Hopefully this structure will help us do it more consistently so staff can work on important stuff

Frankie: County Council is new, there isn't the same focus or awareness of marine environmental issues. If they don't hear from community what priorities are then they won't know. There's real value in being able to share that with elected officials. We often don't think local governments have an impact on bigger issues at play but in fact they can have a lot of influence and can help drive things forward at a State and Federal level. That's been the case in the past, like with vessel regulations for whales. There's value in communicating who we are to the Council

Olivia: thank you for the inspirational and motivational words, that resonates with me and with other members here. But several members aren't here – I wonder if there'll be some message beyond what's in the minutes?

ACTION: Adam will send out message in an email along with the signup sheet electronically

9:28 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

- Update on NWSC Grant Submission for 2025-2027

Sam Whitridge

Grant submissions were made to NWSC last week. There was the shorelands grant (combination of state and federal funds), and the NOAA program one-time funding which is all federal. We submitted proposals for the regular MRC operational grant including running programs like Derelict Vessels etc. and general marine stewardship category. For the one-time grant (about \$75K a year for two years), we put in a proposal for an MSA plan community engagement effort. That MSA report was finalized recently and presented to Council a few weeks ago. This will take recommendations in that report and the fact that we're part of a MSA and make the community more aware of our strategies. Our main focuses are kelp and eelgrass, activities planned around that key objective.

About funding and federal funds, the federal funds are still pending and they make up about 2/3 of our funding. There's a meeting for MRC staff with NWSC coming up. waiting to see what happens with federal funding

9:34 AM • Discussion re: MRC Comments on OPALCO Tidal Generation Project

Dave Checkley

We decided it would be useful to comment to Council about this and I agreed to draft a comment letter. In doing so, I did some research. OPALCO has filed a notice of intent to the Federal Energy Regulatory commission to deploy a tidal generation device off Blakely Island in east part of Rosario Strait. Now the comment period has been extended to September 30th. The device is 85m in length, 3/5 of the device is underwater, each rotor has 15m blades, proscribes a circle of about 90'. It spins relatively slow, 9-11 revolutions per minute. This could produce a max of 2.4 megawatts, average demand of SJC in about 10 times that and peak demand is between 50-75 megawatts. The cable that runs to the mainland is rated for 80 megawatts. We're limited to that amount. There's an increased demand of power. OPALCO is investigating both solar and tidal energy. The device would be moored in about 90m of water, anchors drilled into the rock and it'll swing with the tide. Dave read extracts from the Swinomish and Friends of San Juans' requests for extending the comment period, describing impacts on species. The MRC's mission is to protect and restore species and habitats of the San Juans.

QUESTIONS

Beth: The environmental impacts are concerning, but I wonder if people have an alternative in mind. What would make us feel better about a project like this? And what are consequences of not moving forward?

Charles: I'd like to get some clarification about MRC role in this matter, it would be our recommendation to Council. Therefore, incumbent on us to add some credence to environmental concern but the County has an energy concern that the Council needs to address. We can add weight to existing concerns, but the County needs to work with OPALCO to take care of energy needs.

Frankie: I suggest we invite Heather Nicholson to present to the MRC, she has amassed a knowledge base about the kinds of data OPALCO is presenting to the community. Not against renewable energy, but need clear facts

Adam: If we want a presentation about this, it needs to happen in July so we can prepare something by August

ACTION ITEM: Frankie will try to secure presentation for July. Karin may have a contact for Heather Nicholson.

Lovel: looking holistically at the issue of energy in the County, there are restrictions in the code about where solar can be used. Friends is working to amend that. In this tidal energy proposal, it's important to look at how much energy it generates and how that compares with other ways. And how shipping and other issues like potential oil spill will be affected. In six days, there will be a new comment period regarding shipping and tug escort requirements in Rosario strait. Large tanker traffic will be transiting up Rosario strait

Adam: we're positive on our stance on the County needing to meet energy needs and looking for renewable/sustainable methods, but we have concerns regarding environmental impacts from this

Karin: we need to understand the difference between tidal generation vs. solar and wind

David: we can discuss the County's needs, but our role is to evaluate the effect on the marine environment.

That larger question, wind vs. solar etc. isn't the purview of this community. Rather, we're evaluating this particular proposal. I don't want to purport to advise council on something that isn't under our purview

Adam: but one of our comments could be that the County needs to look at other options

Craig: I agree with Dave but need to look at the portion that tidal power will provide, will it actually be significant and how will it compare with other means. Need holistic view to avoid NIMBY response

Karin: it's a cost benefit analysis. Need to understand the costs and impacts of this. Not confined only to this option

Olivia: isn't this within the realm of what environmental consultants could do? Could we bring in outsiders to do an assessment? This is a big issue, the idea of growing energy needs within our county.

Frankie: OPALCO has environmental consultants guiding their work now.

Lovel: it's my understanding that the experts supporting OPALCO are affiliated with the same people selling the equipment, not an independent environmental assessment

David: but a lot of federal agencies are involved like WDFW, I respectfully disagree

Mike: is Swinomish the only Tribe that commented?

Lovel: those were just requests to extend the comment period

David: they listed on the order of twenty tribes they sent this information, and likely 5-10 will provide responses.

Paul: for Lummi, something this size will impede our treaty rights. I'll leave it there until word from our leadership

Frankie: as we think about this, would behoove us to look at the project that was proposed for Admiralty inlet. That was also a pilot project, it didn't happen in part because of huge cost overruns. This is young tech, very expensive.

ACTION: we'll plan a presentation and discussion in July before recommendation to council

10:07 AM • MRC members up for renewal in June 2025 (Karin Roemers-Kleven/Craig Smith) Sam Whitridge

Two members whose terms are expiring this month. Craig has let us know he won't be renewing. We are extremely grateful to Craig and all his various contributions; hope you'll stay plugged in as your schedule allows

Craig: it's been a pleasure, I'd like to remain engaged as a member of public, attend meetings. I may rejoin when my health improves. I'm particularly interested in ERTV and OPALCO regeneration project

Sam: Karin is eligible for another term because her first term was a partial term. Are you willing to renew?

Karin: yes, definitely

MOTION: Lovel moves MRC recommend Karin be reappointed, Adam seconds, all in favor. Motion passes.

Sam: thank you Karin, we appreciate your willingness to serve. that leaves one vacancy. We interviewed Joey last cycle and offered him a non-voting position; Joey is not here today but he has been attending meetings regularly.

Adam: he has such a breadth of knowledge about permitting, spends time in the water, I think he'd be valuable

MOTION: Mike moves to add Joey, Karin seconds, all in favor. No opposition. Next step is Council approval

Sam: one other item, the role Lovel has been filling as rep for the Climate and sustainability committee.

Lovel: it's really great work, recent focus has been on the comp plan and draft climate element

Time commitment? There's some outside reading because of updates and participation in drafting the climate element. Meetings in evenings every other month, maybe a 5:30-7:30pm, mostly virtual and occasionally in person.

- if anyone is interested, please email Sam

10:17 AM • MRC Youth Position Update

Katie Johnson

Earlier in May, discussed youth position on MRC committee with Council and the fact that we're due for revamp of rules drafted over 20 years ago. So, we have the go ahead to draft new resolution including youth membership. Shout out to Flora and Lola for joining us, we have a good jump start on recruitment. Hope to formalize by fall.

10:18 AM • Introduction to summer interns

Katie Johnson

Sonora: born and raised on Island, excited to help with dock talks and some social media, community engagement

Ava: just finished first year of college, thinking of studying environmental science and/or international affairs.

10:19 AM • MRC subcommittee updates

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

We have an activity sign-up sheet, please commit and show up to engage with the public. We'll have the same booth for County Fair that we had at FHL Open House – information about our projects, whale flags, etc.

Frankie: we're talking about a scavenger hunt around the fair, various interactive ideas. We welcome ideas!

Olivia: we had a record turn out at FHL Open House with over 800 visitors. Please think about it for next year

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven and Katie Johnson

We've focused on getting plastic out of the environment but not on where plastic is coming from. One problem is open trucks with loads not contained properly. Idea to decorate old truck and run in July 4th parade with 'cover your load' message. Also want to acknowledge FH yacht club's major cleaning on outlying islands.

Katie: they went to Stuart on Saturday and Sucia & Jones on Sunday, people were very enthusiastic. They want to do it again/annually, maybe connect with GICU in fall/spring. They're looking for more volunteers

Karin: they also talked about inviting other yacht clubs which would be great way to spread the message

o Seagrass Protection

Beth Tate

Another possible eelgrass harvest opportunity out of Anacortes, from a dredging project in a marina. The CD and Jeff Gaeckle are also moving forward with some other restoration projects around here

Frankie: Olivia and I are kicking off eelgrass stressor project, HSIL -funded, led by WDFW and FHL, also the County, CD, and the Samish. County and MRC will be looking at impacts from vessel counts and aerial surveys

Olivia: project aimed at understanding a/biotic stressors because eelgrass is dramatically declining county and state-wide. We want to better inform conservation practices. We're kicking off July 1, lots of field work that month at six of our meadows around the archipelago and continued quarterly monitoring

Matt: what's the big picture on the boat counts? Are we counting boats forever?

Frankie: just keep counting! At Odlin we have anchor out buoys, original motivation was to monitor effectiveness there. Second aspect is comprehensive vessel impact assessment, now that's being mapped – detailed density analysis. Hope to present this at end of summer. This HSIL eelgrass stressor project builds on our vessel count data.

-brief discussion of a recreational pass, funding mechanism from recreational boaters to support the MSA as federal funding goes away. The recreational pass concept was brought up in our destination management plan previously, some kind of pay-to-play mechanism. Need to look at other sources of funding for important projects.

How do we capture revenue from folks anchoring out who aren't staying in hotels and paying LTAC in other ways?

Frankie: even boats coming into marinas don't pay into LTAC. These are visitors using island resources and leaving their waste behind, not understanding that we have finite resources

Rich: there is a tax portion paid by anyone staying at our marina that goes back to the State.

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Adam Parrott and

Kari Koski

We've been doing outreach, now transient moorage is coming in so we're suspending regular patrols for the season but if you see a problem, report it. Looking for sustainable funding mechanisms, most grants are federal.

Adam: any talk with DNR about a mass vessel turn-in?

Kari: we can do our own and keep it more contained. We just did a mini-turn-in event with the port for six vessels.

Olivia: in terms of sustainable funding sources, if you found private donors in the community can you accept funds?

Kari: yes, we have a donate button on the MRC website.

10:49 AM **Committee member updates and any other business**

Beth: Recent IOSA spill drill. I was impressed with the professionalism and organization. 50+ people involved.

Frankie: it was the first drill of this nature IOSA has held. Many partners involved, tribal and agency. Big success

Christina: a few years ago Frankie and I did the Hazmat training. They offer free training. Highly recommend it.

ACTION ITEM: Kari and Frankie can forward information about that training

Kari: can do it online, but great to train with other locals. Any further questions about that please contact Frankie

Lovel: Ecology is required to update their oil spill contingency plans requirements. This 5-year process is preceded by best achievable protection process. There are work groups looking at crude oils, at killer whale response, etc. It'll be a good opportunity to recommend some engagement to Council when the ruling comes out in 2026

10:57 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, July 10th, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

Dial in by phone

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Phone conference ID: 117 069 420#

While this is a virtual meeting, a public meeting place is available at the Beaverton Valley Operations Center, 1609 Beaverton Valley Rd. in Friday Harbor for those without mobile phone or internet access.

9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC June meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Sam Whitridge
9:20 AM	Presentation: Harmful Algal Bloom Research in Eastsound- Emma Timmins-Schiffman, UW
9:45 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MRC Membership Updates- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Update on NWSC MRC Project Funding for 2025-2027 and Contingency Planning- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Update on proposed MSA Outreach project- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• NWSC Meeting in San Juans on Sept 26th- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC Chair and Vice Chair Positions- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• OPALCO Tidal Energy Generation Project- <i>Dave Checkley and Karin Roemers-Kleven</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i> ● Other subcommittee updates
10:25 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:30 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:30 AM	Planning for San Juan Local Forum at August 20-21 Leadership Council Meeting- <i>Katie Johnson and Sam Whitridge</i>
10:50 AM	LIO Business agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSP Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> ● Healthy Shorelines Action Plan- <i>Katie Johnson</i> ● Stormwater Strategic Initiative (SWSIL) LIO direct funding for integrated watershed management- <i>Katie Johnson</i> ● Update on upcoming 3-year contract for LIO Capacity- <i>Katie Johnson</i>
11:20 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:20 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2025 San Juan County Salmon Recovery Grant Round Updates (Funding and TAG Rankings) ● Planning for MRC/CAG Scoring at the August 7th MRC Meeting
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Adam Parrott, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria,

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Paul Cline, Audrey Coyne, Gregg Dunphy, Jane Fuller, Rich Goodhart, Marta Green, Sasha Horst, William Hurley, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Katie Kowal, Jason Lim, Brook Nunn, Dana Oster, Frankie Robertson, Kendra Smith, Amy Sprenger, Jamie Stephens, Sonora Tate, Elaina Thompson, Emma Timmins-Schiffman, Sam Whitridge

9:02 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:03 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:03 AM **Approve meeting agenda** *MRC Members*

Agenda approved with no additions or edits.

Approve MRC June meeting minutes: No edits, Mike moves to approve minutes, Dave seconds. Minutes approved.

9:04 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC** *Sam Whitridge*

Christina attended and sent along updates, 2025-2030 strategic plan approved and it's on Commission's website

Derelict vessel return event planned for mid-July in Whatcom County in partnership with Port of Bellingham
The commission will be in SJ's for their meeting September 26, we'll talk about that in more detail later in agenda

Sasha: Our strategic plan is not on website yet but it will be soon

9:07 AM **Presentation: Harmful Algal Bloom Research in Eastsound** *Emma Timmins-Schiffman, Brook Nunn*

Brook Nunn: I'm in the Dept of Oceanography, Emma was trained in Fisheries at UW. We're doing genomic science on local fish & Bacteria. This was PhD work completed by Miranda Mudge (now looking for jobs!) There was a massive heat event a couple years ago. We're looking at phytoplankton and bacteria, interested in Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB's). Blooms are occurring more frequently and lasting longer and we've been unable to predict them. But there are many reasons to better understand these blooms for public health, better planning, etc. Microbiome (bacteria and phytoplankton) always present in the water column, it's diverse and has a fast rate of increase. We're looking at genomics (genes, or what the cell could do) up to proteomics (proteins and what the cells are doing). Informed by metabolites (i.e. dissolved chemicals) in the water. Proteins can be highly conserved. We look at peptide sequences and use mass spectrophotometry to see what bacteria are there and what they're doing. The goal is to monitor the microbiome and detect changes in peptide abundance to predict a bloom.

Fieldwork in Eastsound near hatchery Long Live the Kings, on Youngren family property, in a site with biannual HAB's. All data is open-source and available. Brook shows data from 2021, a *Chaetoceros socialis* bloom. Blooms in late May and mid-June. Before the first bloom, spikes of nutrients like silicate and nitrate, but not before the second bloom. We're analyzing pre-bloom days to identify peptides that could predict blooms, looking for the on/off switch that shows a state shift in peptide abundance. We used a Hidden Markov Model to visualize the state shift. Found 312 peptides that are in a non-reverting state shift preceding bloom initiation. Discovered 14 biomarkers that can predict blooms in the NW. they are among three different taxa of

bacteria. Each class shows state shift in bloom behavior. Next steps, looking at dissolved metabolites and water chemistry and state shifts prior to blooms. We could make a panel of biomarkers that citizen scientists could test for in water, similar to a COVID test. On August 8-10 we have an event planed on Orcas Island

QUESTIONS

Dave: I recently sampled from Lopez and got some common phytoplankton. *Pseudonitzschia* occurs in a thin layer

Brook: we expected that species and did depth profiles while sampling, *chaeto* is what bloomed in 2021. In 2022 there were different species present, a HAB of *Alexandrium*. These peptides are conserved across taxonomic groups and often with the same function. We hope peptides we identify will be present in other systems.

Katie Kowal: I'm from Jefferson MRC. You were collecting water samples every 4 hours for 22 days? How?

Brook: a team of two on shift every 12 hours. Brook describes field methods for collecting & storing samples

Kendra: what are the different processes in salt vs. fresh water?

Brook: we don't know what triggers the HABs, between bacteria and phytoplankton. There's a group of bacteria we're interested in (that feeds on saccharides produced by phytoplankton) that are present in freshwater

Jason: is one step in looking at biomarkers and toxins like domoic acid from *Pseudonitzschia*?

Brook: we want the opportunity to look at that if we catch a HAB with that species

Kendra: What might the work mean to total maximum daily load and listing water bodies?

- discussion about how information will be communicated if there are any human-generated markers showing up

Mike: what about temperature, did you take readings?

Brook: it was relatively stable throughout and didn't correlate with onset of the bloom

ACTION: Emma will send Sam a flyer about that event you have in August on Orcas, Sam can help spread the news

Greg: this work looks like it would be very helpful and informative to our community. GreggD@lumm-nsn.gov.

9:48 AM MRC Updates/Business

• MRC Membership Updates

Sam Whitridge

Joey Ullman will be our new member! Unfortunately he couldn't be here today, he & Olivia are both diving And Karin is getting renewed for another term on the MRC. That's going to council for approval in the next month.

• Update on NWSC MRC Project Funding for 2025-2027 and Contingency Planning

Sam

Whitridge

Status of funding as we move into next biennium: some funds from EPA are delayed. The amount delayed is a third of total funding for next two years' projects. We've been advised by NWSC to investigate contingencies. NWSC wants a list of priorities and contingencies by August in case full funding doesn't come through.

Sasha: some contingences for delays and some for funding that won't materialize, we'll keep you posted

Adam: will the contingency plan be available for us to read?

Sam: staff can look at it and then discuss at the August MRC meeting

-Sam reviews amounts for year one and two of NOAA and EPA funds to provide estimates of what's available

• Update on proposed MSA Outreach project

Sam Whitridge

We submit two grants to NWSC, project information was sent out to MRC with this meeting announcement. We also have money from NOAA. For the NOAA-funded project, focus on outreach.

- NWSC Meeting in San Juans on Sept 26th

Sam Whitridge

This is planned for the Grange. Does anyone want to lead on a presentation? The meeting is planned for 10am-3pm, but we'll follow the ferry schedule. Let's start thinking more about what we want to highlight there

- MRC Chair and Vice Chair Positions

Sam Whitridge

These positions are up for reelection. If you have interest or nominations, please reach out to me or Katie

- OPALCO Tidal Energy Generation Project

Dave Checkley and Karin Roemers-Kleven

I met with an OPALCO board member, Jerry Whitfield, and listened to a lecture about tidal-generated energy. There's an error in the application – it says there's a single-point anchor, but Jerry says it's a double anchor-age.

The benefits in this proposal are providing a path toward energy requirements. Tides are variable but predictable. It's successful in Scotland. Risks include collision with wildlife (whales, salmon, etc.) I feel these risks are acceptable. Next is traffic with marine traffic and this risk is significant. There's only 1.6 miles between Blakely and Cypress. And the other concern is Tribes, they're writing their own comment letter(s). I think there's a diversity of opinion among the MRC on this matter and I don't know how we'll communicate about that to Council

Gregg: please share the OPALCO slides from previous meeting

Jamie: Sam, if logistically possible, it would be great to have the September NWSC presentation on site

Frankie: I just met Heather Nicholson recently at an OPALCO open house. She shared the more detailed knowledge that she has been gathering regarding energy uses in the County

Adam: do we want to write an opinion letter as a committee? I liked how Dave put together a list of pros and cons and I think it's worth bringing up that inaccuracy about the mooring point.

MOTION: Matt moves the MRC write a letter to council outlining the issues around OPALCO tide project, even if it doesn't include a recommendation, just highlining pros and cons

Karin: the deadline is Sept 30, so could we delay decision until after we hear from Heather Nicholson? She's spent a good deal of time investigating OPALCO's options. I'd like to hear her opinion

Adam: does it work to table this motion until next meeting? Matt: yes

ACTION: we'll vote on a recommendation in August after hearing from Heather

Frankie: I'd like to help contribute to the letter based on my experience with the effects of tidal turbines

Jane: so the MRC is divided following the OPALCO presentation a few months ago?

Adam: in general, it's putting something in the water that could threaten the ecosystem. We're an animal-friendly group and some of us feel the impacts aren't well understood enough

Jane: it's helpful when Council receives something that looks like a recommendation, so if not, then a full understanding of pros and cons with as much balance as possible. We're concerned about future energy needs. It's unusual to send a letter that doesn't include a recommendation, and Council will need to decide on this

Kari: we're talking about a pilot for one device. But in your discussion with OPALCO, did you talk about how many devices would be needed to provide sufficient power? It would be an array of multiple devices in multiple locations

Frankie: I suggest that as we consider this, we learn lessons from failed attempts in the past. It would behoove the MRC to understand what happened with the Snohomish project and whether OPALCO has dealt with those issues

Jane: if it's been several months since you met with OPALCO, I'd consider compiling questions and maybe inviting OPALCO to August meeting to follow up

Adam: yes, we can work on that for the August meeting and hopefully hear both presentations and then make a decision. Maybe David could invite Jerry Whitfield

10:31 AM • **MRC subcommittee updates**

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

Thanks to everyone who helped recently with dock talks etc. And please everyone send in your volunteer hours!

For Cattle Point signage, DNR got funding to reinforce the building, planning to meet in August to discuss how to use it. We're on an extension for that grant funding, must be used by Jan 31st.

Sandy: any response on youth member proposal?

Katie: sent for review by counsel, hope Council will look at it during August meeting. Several students interested.

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson

Our Cover your load campaign didn't get off the ground in time for parade, but plans for next year. We'll have a litter critter lab at the Fair, making critters out of recycled materials. Many volunteer opportunities the Fair
ACTION: Katie will send around that schedule, let her know if you're interested/available

o Seagrass Protection

Katie Johnson

Thanks Charles, Dave, and Matt for submitting their vessel count hours. It helps add to our growing databank on this topic, even a datapoint of zero is helpful

Sandy: -we did a ceremonial transplant at picnic cove with coast Salish youth fellowship and NWIC. We have some funding now to do some seeding there. And, from the group we've been meeting with at the UW,

working with AIS and recreational boating, we have a nice report coming along that I'll share at some point

Frankie: we'll start test flights soon for the eelgrass stressor collaborative. SJC is leading the effort to look at vessels as a potential project, and it's a large collaborative effort with the CD and UW and others

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Adam Parrott/Kari Koski

We've entered the next biennium phase for DNR which has funding. We have a few vessels on our vessels of concern list that seem to be abandoned by out-of state. They are good candidates for removal and I'm starting that process. As we move into fall, it'll be more about get-your-vessel together and prevention

o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge

no update this month, that subcommittee hasn't met recently and Lovel isn't here. We'll talk a bit in the LIO meeting about a presentation Lovel will give soon, but nothing to share at this time

10:42 AM Committee member updates and any other business

Karin: I just had COVID; I was very sick. The strains coming to the island now from visitors can signify a major outbreak coming up. I recommend we're masked when we meet in person in September.

Marta: I have an update on Lovel's behalf, on June 11 the state board of pilot commissioners made a statement of change in rulemaking regarding tug safety. In 2020 the State required an additional tug escort on certain tankers in the Strait, they've contemplated whether to keep that program and whether to expand the area in which to require an escort. And that's what they decided – the area has expanded about 11% past Patos and into Georgia Strait. Comment period open through August 1. Additional expanded area will add \$1 million to the program. All the justifications commissioners gave also apply to Haro Strait. If you want more information, ask Marta or Lovel.

General webpage on tug escort rulemaking: <https://pilotage.wa.gov/oil-transportation-safety.html>

AND BPC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

<https://nebula.wsimg.com/413d7bb40c745c4838ce94c87ee209f7?AccessKeyId=F86D0A1E7A0091C2061F&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

10:48 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**

11:01 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:01 AM **CAG Updates/Business**

Sam Whitridge

- 2025 San Juan County Salmon Recovery Grant Round Updates (Funding and TAG Rankings)

Many CAG members aren't here so Sam will send this info out via email. Sam shares spreadsheet on screen showing projects with each amount requested, and spreadsheet showing allocation estimates of money available. Scores on projects need to be submitted by August 8th. Projects include the Cascade Creek Coho Preserve addition (top), the SJ C Outer islands landowner willingness (third-ranked), and the Upright Head Habitat Restoration (second-ranked). We have about a million requested, and just under a million available with a \$135K shortfall. If we want to fund all these projects, Sam will need to check with other salmon recovery lead entities about doing an allocation swap. That's standard and looks like it could work if that's what we decided to do

The other part of the process is the SRFB review members need to clear these projects in their meeting next week. From what I hear from our state grant manager, they're looking solid to be cleared.

- Planning for MRC/CAG Scoring at the August 7th MRC Meeting

Sam will send out proposals, scoring sheets, and criteria. The CAG's role is to view these projects from a socioeconomic perspective. It's best if you can send in scores in advance of the August meeting.

Kendra: I want to make sure everyone understands about the funds returned from Jackson Beach because the PSP offered funding for that through their mitigation process. The returned funds helped towards these projects.

11:09 PM • **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 7th, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

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9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC July meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	Northwest Straits Commission Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NWSC Meeting Report to MRC- <i>Christina Koons</i>• NW Straits Conference Planning- <i>Caitlyn Blair</i>
9:25 AM	Presentation/Discussion: OPALCO Tidal Energy Project- Heather Nicholson/MRC Members
9:55 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MRC Chair and Vice Chair Position Nominations- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC Liaison to Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Update on MRC Grants for 2025-2027- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• NWSC Meeting in San Juans on Sept 26th- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i>○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge/Lovel Pratt</i>
10:25 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:30 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
10:30 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final MRC/CAG Scoring and Ranking of 2025 Salmon Recovery Proposals
11:15 AM	Adjourn CAG Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
11:15 AM	LIO Business agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puget Sound Partnership Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> • Final Planning for PSP Leadership Council Meeting/Local Forum on Aug 20- <i>Katie Johnson</i> • Healthy Shorelines Action Plan- <i>Katie Johnson</i> • LIO Priorities for upcoming 3-year contract for LIO Capacity- <i>Katie Johnson</i> • Discussion re: collective topic for next LIO Action Planning process- <i>Katie Johnson</i>
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjourn LIO Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genter, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Beth Tate, Joey Ullman, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria,

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Paul Andersson, Caitlyn Blair, Gregg Dunphy, Jane Fuller, Rich Goodhart, Marta Green, Sasha Horst, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Heather Nicholson, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Shari Tarantino, Elaina Thompson, Annika Weber, Joe Weiss, Michael Weiss, Sam Whitridge, Jeff Whitty

Pre-meeting chatter: general accolades from those who saw Adam Parrott's excellent recent theater performance

9:01 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:02 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:03 AM **Approve meeting agenda** *All*

Agenda approved, no additions, approved as is

Approve MRC July meeting minutes *MRC Members*

No edits, Christina moves to approve the minutes, Kailey seconds. All approve, none opposed, minutes approved.

9:04 AM **Northwest Straits Commission Updates**

• NWSC Meeting Report to MRC *Christina Koons*

Christina couldn't attend, Karin was there briefly. It was in person in Whatcom County. Whatcom MRC presented on their eelgrass restoration efforts, information about that on their website. There was an update about the new SoundIQ website for MRC and Commission-related data –explore the soft launch and provide feedback.

• NW Straits Conference Planning *Caitlyn Blair*

Conference registration and website should be open by next week. Conference is Nov 7-8th in LaConner, Skagit County. We have a room block – talk to staff (Katie and Sam) about reimbursement. Caitlyn reviews some details for speakers and information at the conference. Planning to highlight kelp, an artistic element <https://bullkelp.info/>, and this year plan to allow guests of attendees to the keynote dinner Friday November 7th

Jeff Whitty: Josie will have a kelp art exhibit at the San Juan Island Museum of Art Sept 26 - Dec. 1, 2025

<https://www.sjima.org/exhibitions/kelp-reverberations>

Some discussion of costs for the conference. Questions about funding for the conference should be directed toward Sasha Horst. A virtual option for the conference will be considered for the future given future funding.

Christina: we'd really like to see a solution to being able to bring more staff people to the conference.

Caitlyn: there is a capacity limit, registration will largely be first come first serve so encourage registering quickly.

Frankie: could there be a round table about potential funding models? here at SJC we've evolved into a marine program, more staff working on projects than just a single coordinator. We'd like to share that model

Caitlyn: we've incorporated that, and I'll bring back that feedback, there's a session where we could include that
And we've reserved the Grange for our PSP meeting. It's an open meeting, all are welcome to attend. We'd love to see a presentation from your MRC on Sept 26th during the meeting, I will be connecting soon to plan that

9:21 AM **Presentation/Discussion: OPALCO Tidal Energy Project**
Nicholson

Heather

Karin introduces Shari Tarantino, Michael Weiss, and Heather Nicholson.

Shari: OPALCO isn't being very transparent with this tidal turbine. They say it's quiet but added to ambient noise it can reach pain threshold for killer whales. Rosario Strait is a thoroughway for SRKW and salmon.

Michael: Rosario isn't the main place where SRKW can be found, but some sightings and opportunistic foraging in that area. A 10-40 decibel increase in noise range would likely affect SRKW behavior.

Heather: With respect to tidal power net benefits are all in the negative, requires a lot of supplemental support. Power output is low and costs are high. Heather shares some facts from a UK study. Heather shows scale model of tidal turbine relative to actual orca size. OPALCO plans to deploy with incomplete information e.g. they show that ferry charging will become an SJC-load. But WA energy office in Nov 2024 didn't know where ferries would charge and say local needs would be prioritized. OPALCO asserts rolling blackouts are imminent. But NW Power and Conservation Council refutes idea that blackouts would be necessary and list of measures that would be taken first.

OPALCO blog provides reasons why more local power generations is required. But must consider the type of load being added and other available routinely used resources. Heather shares resources for this presentation.

ACTION: MRC members request a copy of Heather's presentation; Sam will send it out to all the committee

Heather: it should be fine to share my slides. It's just information. I'm not trying to criticize OPALCO

QUESTIONS

-some discussion of the effects of additive decibels and the work of Dr. David Baine on noise and SRKW

Frankie: OPALCO must be required to take field data on presence of animals before permitted to put any device in. And how many devices would be needed to make this commercially viable? Why a ten-year pilot, and then what?

Shari: they've said if this pilot does go through, they'd look to install four of five

Frankie: This is a good repository for published studies and reports for tidal energy; put tidal energy into the search function, [Research Publications | Pacific Northwest National Laboratory](#)

Jane: it sounds like MRC still needs to deliberate on how to advise Council. This presentation wasn't just critical of OPALCO's plans but also their estimates of energy needs. I encouraged you very clearly to invite OPALCO here to answer questions. Instead, we heard a presentation that pokes a lot of holes in OPALCO's projections. As a councilperson now I want to seriously weigh some of what OPALCO has presented. I feel we have some important future considerations to contemplate, we're being shortsighted if we don't consider energy needs ten years down the road etc. I value this body's viewpoints; consider your responsibility to weight a variety of points of view

Heather: we need to have accurate information from which to make decisions. I would suggest familiarizing yourself with the information in the presentation and contacting OPALCO directly with questions.

Dave: OPALCO would be pleased to provide information to the MRC. I propose we come up with questions in writing to present to OPALCO. The deadline for comment on the application is September 30th. After we hear back from OPALCO, we can come up with our list of pros and cons to provide to Council.

Adam: we had a presentation on this from OPALCO in January, that's what started this discussion, we're just split.

Lovel: the MRC exists to advise Council on marine issues. Although there isn't consensus, we can come up with a list of recommendations for the Council to focus on. I think we need to schedule an additional meeting for the entire committee. We don't need to wrestle with future energy needs so much as evaluating the impacts of this project.

Adam: if we are making a recommendation to Council we have a timeline. We want responses from OPALCO

Kendra: This would need to be done for September 8th Council meeting, so must prepare by September 1.

ACTION: Sam can work to schedule that meeting for the second half of Augst.

ACTION: Dave can work on a list of questions to present to OPALCO that we can circulate around to others

MOTION: Dave moves we hold a special meeting to discuss this in the second half of August. Charles seconds

Shari: Here's a letter we sent to the WDFW Commission in Dec. 2024,

<https://www.orcaconservancy.org/blog/growing-concerns-regarding-tidal-turbines-in-srkw-critical-habitat>

Heather: thank you, and there needs to be a clear cut trail of justification for doing this project and have it add up.

10:26 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

- MRC Chair and Vice Chair Position Nominations

Sam Whitridge

Adam and Karin have been in those leadership positions for a year now, they are both eligible for renewal.

Adam: I enjoy serving on the MRC, I'd be glad to continue

KARIN: I'm happy to continue as well as long as Adam is present for every meeting

MOTION: David moves Adam continue as Chair and Karin as Vice-Chair, Sandy seconds. All approve. So moved.

- MRC Liaison to Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee

Sam Whitridge

Dave has expressed interest and has attended the July meeting, and he's happy to serve as liason.

MOTION: Adam moves for Dave to be our liaison to this committee. Lovel seconds. All in favor, none opposed.

- Update on MRC Grants for 2025-2027

Sam Whitridge

For the new biennium we just entered, it appears our NOAA and EPA funding is being awarded for next two years.

- NWSC Meeting in San Juans on September 26th

Sam

Whitridge

We are invited to make a presentation at this meeting, any ideas and anyone who'd like to present?

Frankie: it may be good to present the vessel study we've been conducting and the map tool

Kendra: I'd also suggest advancing MRC's beyond being tied to grants, looking at strategies to support local funding.

ACTION: Caitlyn and Sasha can run those two concepts by the Commission; Caitlyn will connect and follow up

- **MRC subcommittee updates**

- o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

Summer interns have been leading dock talks and those are going well those, passing out whale warning flags.

Beth & I met with DNR to discuss Cattle Point signage. They're planning improvements to the building exterior

The MRC youth member resolution was passed by Council. We have a few good leads on applicants. Sandy and Kailey will conduct interviews, if you want to help please reach out. Our goal is to have new youth member start in October. We'd like to come back to September meeting with a recommendation (Karin offers to help!)

SJC fair is coming up, MRC will have a booth there in conjunction with ES. I'll send out an email with more information about times etc. Encourage everyone to stop by!

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson

Katie: PFSS is doing a litter critter lab at the fair Thursday at 2pm using recycled materials to make some fun critters. Save the date for the great islands clean up in the fall in October. Starting back up with monthly beach clean-ups.

o Seagrass Protection

Beth Tate/Katie Johnson

Beth: we're collaborating with Labs and DFW on their eelgrass stressor HSIL.

Frankie: did the first test survey flight for project sites, two more upcoming – testing methods for counting vessels.

Katie has been doing a fabulous job trying to get more vessel counts in – thanks to everyone submitting those. We've had some interest from some Orcas residents to help with that. Collecting these data is important.

Karin: SJI Museum of Art has a display on kelp. There will also be a kelp soiree, maybe some snacks and cocktails

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Kari Koski

We have had several Derelict Vessel (DV) & marine debris events in July & early Aug- resulting in 3 VTIP (voluntary turn-in program) and 2 DV removals and 3 significant marine debris removals from private beaches working with DNRs WA MDRP who are up in the islands through August. Getting excited for the Kelp Soirée in September!

o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge/Lovel Pratt

Subcommittee hasn't met, but Lovel will report some other information in next agenda item

10:47 AM Committee member updates and any other business

Lovel: There's a rulemaking process coming up in 2026, opportunities for making recommendations to Council etc.; a rulemaking to expand tug escort requirements. This is an important oil spill prevention measure.

Advocacy for an ERTV got complicated with current tensions between US and Canada, more challenging now.

Jane: back to that rulemaking and the potential for modifying requirements for tugs, if there's work Council can do in support of that please keep us posted. And want to reinvigorate that relationship with Islands Trust partners

10:52 AM Adjourn MRC Meeting, Convene CAG Meeting

10:53 AM CAG Updates/Business

Sam Whitridge

• Final MRC/CAG Scoring and Ranking of 2025 Salmon Recovery Proposals

Sam shares slides about the 2025 Salmon Recovery Grant Round. This was a complicated year with some funding uncertainties and other moving parts. There are three projects proposed (there was an additional eelgrass project from the CD that did not get passed by the TAG).

Sam shares allocation estimates. We have our allocation from Riparian funding and the regular annual SRFB allocation. Then we had an unexpected windfall because PSP was able to fund the Jackson Beach project, returning those funds. A small part of that went towards completing the funding gap in Friends of San Juans' Neck Point project. Then, we secured three loans from other lead entities – Stillaguamish Watershed, Island County, and Whatcom County. They all had funds they couldn't use and next year will be a PSAR year in which we'll have more funds and it'll be easier for us to pay back this amount.

Scoring: the TAG gave green scores on all three projects. They initially had some uncertainties about the Outer Islands Landowner Willingness process and there are some confidentiality issues. This was resolved by building in some oversight so TAG can ensure outreach is happening in locations where habitat is truly valuable. Sam shows combined scores for Benefit to Salmon and Fit to Plan. Column for socioeconomic benefit shows CAG scores – thank you for submitting those. Our scores shake out to show the Cascade Creek acquisition as the clear top priority, Upright Head Habitat restoration is second-ranked, and the Outer islands Landowner Willingness is third.

MOTION: Adam moves to approve submitting the ranked list for 2025 SJC Salmon Recovery proposals as follows, 1.Cascade Creek, 2.Upright Head, and 3.SJC outer Islands. Sandy seconds.

DISCUSSION

Jane: I note the price tag for the Upright Head restoration, that's the same organization that asked for the cost increase for the Neck Point project. Is a cost increase something you foresee with this project?

Sam: in this climate, costs are hard to predict but Friends generally does an excellent job. The Neck Point cost increase dealt specifically with discussions with that project's contractor

About the loans with other entities, we've done this before, it's fine if the money is intended for the same type of project. They are not interest-bearing loans, just documented with the RCO and SRFB

Kendra: it's also goodwill with money exchange, previously we've loaned our money to some of these entities. So it comes back around and this is one of the few times we've had to borrow back. As for Friends of SJ's – you look at that cost number relative to the size of the site and it highlights how expensive it is to bring an area back once rock is placed on it. Sometimes more costly to remove than it is to put in place.

Sam: that's why our Salmon recovery chapter prioritizes protection over anything else. And it's a testament to how we've built out the salmon recovery program that we need more funds now to support all our proposals

Calling the motion – all in favor of approving the ranked list as presented?

Lovel abstains due to recusal, all else in favor, nobody opposed. So moved

That brings this grant round to a close! Thanks everyone. Thanks, Sam, for all the hard work on a complicated round

11:13 AM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees
MRC-CAG-LIO
Meeting Agenda

Thursday, September 4th, 2025

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

In-Person at San Juan Island Yacht Club
273 Front Street, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

While this is an in-person meeting, a virtual option is available via Teams for those who cannot attend in person:

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

Dial in by phone

[+1 360-726-3293,,117069420#](#)

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 117 069 420#

9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC August meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons
9:20 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report from MRC Summer Interns- <i>Sonora Tate and Ava Martin</i>• NW Straits Conference Updates- <i>Sam Whitridge</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ San Juan MRC Collaborative Networking Activity Planning• NWSC Meeting in FH on Sept 26th- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Debrief from MRC San Juan County Fair Booth- <i>MRC Fair Volunteers</i>• OPALCO Tidal Energy Generation Project- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• Marine Capital Improvement Plan for MRC Review- <i>Kendra Smith</i>• MRC Youth Position Update- <i>Kailey Genther, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria</i>• Update on Cattle Point Project- <i>Katie Johnson</i>• Sept 27th Kelp Soiree at SJI Museum of Art- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i> ● Other subcommittee updates
10:30 AM	Member/Public updates and other business
10:40 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:40 AM	LIO Business agenda – <i>Katie Johnson</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSP Updates- Jason Lim ● Debrief August 20th Local Forum with Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council ● 2026-2030 Action Plan Topic Prioritization ● Stormwater Strategic Initiative: Local Integrated Watershed Planning Funding
11:30 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:30 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wrap 2025 Grant Round ● Update on future NOAA Salmon Recovery funding
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Paul Andersson, Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genter, Rich Goodhart, Brian Goodremont, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Joey Ullman, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria,

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Caitlyn Blair, Tyler Clark, Marta Green, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Frances Robertson, Craig Smith, Kendra Smith, Sonora Tate, Sam Whitridge

9:01 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:02 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:03 AM **Approve meeting agenda** *All*

Agenda approved, no additions. Dave moves to approve agenda as is, Sandy seconds. Agenda is approved.

Approve MRC August meeting minutes *MRC Mem-*
bers

Sam sent updated version including edits. Adam moves to approve the minutes as sent, all in favor. Approved.

9:05 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

• Report from MRC Summer Interns

Sonora Tate

I created a plastic free campaign for July. I increased both IG and FB support. We did a scavenger hunt for the Fair. My internship was extended another month. I'll do a couple marine patrols and work on derelict vessel messaging with Kari Working with Frankie on outreach for updated whale regulations. I'll wrap up with GICU on Oct 4th

-some discussion of Be Whale Wise flags; WA State Parks has plenty, we gave them out at dock talks, the Fair, etc.

9:09 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC**

Christina

Koons

At the recent NWSC meeting, we reviewed MRC projects. Christina shares a list of all seven MRC's and what they're working on. Conference in November, registration is open. There'll be a booth at the upcoming Wooden boat fest in Port Townsend. Bellingham had a vessel turn-in event, 29 vessels, 22 were deconstructed on site.

Adam: we did a vessel turn-in here two years ago. DNR has been working with different MRC's and counties.

Kari: The Derelict Vessel program is open year-round, a big part of our prevention arm is voluntary turn-ins.

Adam: the legality is that the owner must surrender. County can only touch it if it's an imminent environmental risk.

9:20 AM •NW Straits Conference updates

Sam Whitridge

Caitlyn: reminder that registration for the conference will be open until October 7th. Chat with County staff to ensure coverage for travel & hotel <https://www.nwstraits.org/2025-mrc-conference/>

There's a room block at the Fairfield Inn. Speaker bios are on the website. There will be a final agenda when it's ready before the conference. Registration confirmations and more information will be sent soon. The conference is November 7-8th, Friday and Saturday. Karin, Lovel and Sam plan to attend.

Based on the pre-conference survey, this year we'll do half panel sessions – one on Tribal governance, on is a land-use session with four speakers on different environments that connect with the marine ecosystem.

There's an additional session to be determined, and then two collaborative networking sessions. There will be an MRC-potential activity, looking at operational aspects of MRC's looking at challenges and sharing information.

o San Juan MRC Collaborative Networking Activity Planning

Sam: Would we like to see a certain project highlighted at the conference? I understand we'll have a station and then lightning talks to share our project with the whole group. Seems like vessels makes a lot of sense

Frankie: the recreational vessel survey due to the novel approach we took. We're continuing with the analysis now

Kendra: Looking at land use, but this is a marine program. The one gaping hole is the water and the water use. There's the shoreline management plan that's just about shorelines and docks. When it comes to mooring buoys and where to concentrate recreation and marine reserves etc. need to consider how we use our marine waters and documenting what's going on them. Boating impacts seems more important to talk about than forests and prairies.

Frankie: I wasn't planning to come because they only provide for one staff person. But I do have capacity within the vessel study funding, and I will have data to present to the NWSC September 26th (that's a public meeting). Boat counts are important, especially as part of the HSIL eelgrass stressor project. We can estimate boat densities. I've only found one other study in which this methodology has been used to look at objects and not animals

David: I'm all for what Frankie proposed. I think it touches on a lot of issues related to our local ecosystem.

Adam: I also like the idea of using this topic and I'm in favor of Frankie being there to deliver the presentation

Karin: can we clarify what land use means and what we're thinking about that topic?

Caitlyn: this topic didn't get in last year, the broad idea of diverse land use, more information on different ecosystems and how they affect the marine environment. Upland management and effects on marine waters.

Frankie: do you have anyone talking about SMP's? Island County MRC has been active. It's a key aspect of land use

Caitlyn: Yes, Island County talked about their SMP last year and their networking table will be on that topic. Last year it was about the process of how they got to the SMP, and this year is more of the actual SMP and what that looks like for future planning. Every year we send out pre and post conference surveys, please submit there

Kendra: I want to caution our MRC to stay focused on the marine environment. We have a land managers group, the CD working on forests, and people working on stormwater etc. The value of this group is focus on tending to the marine environment and on shoreline. We need to be strategic as funding gets tighter.

9:47 AM • NWSC Meeting in FH on September 26th

Sam Whitridge

Caitlyn: We'll start with a site visit at Jackson beach, then back to the SJI grange where the major portion of the meeting will happen, presentation from Frankie and some outer County commissioners may speak as well. Everyone is invited. Please let Caitlyn know if you plan to attend. Unfortunately, due to funding we can't provide lunch for all. Afterwards, we'll visit the kelp exhibit at the SJ museum of art. Museum closes at 5pm and our meeting ends at 3pm. Jeff Whitty and I will be at the soiree on Saturday

Sam: there are time slots for a County Council member and/or a Tribal rep to talk about their work with the MRC

We can see if Jane Fuller is available on the 26th and able to address the Commission

Christina: if we don't have a Tribal rep, we can use that time for something else?

Caitlyn: we have time in the agenda to accommodate both, but we'll figure something out. Bring questions to Lucas

Olivia: what's the benefit of MRC members attending that meeting? What role would we have if attended?

Caitlyn: presentations and opportunities to get involved. It's a way to be supportive, hear about what other MRC's are doing, opportunity to talk to other MRC members. The site visit is fun. It's great for us to get to know you

Christina: when meetings are held in MRC counties it's fun to see who shows up, opportunity for public comment.

Adam: we had a discussion earlier this summer about membership participation and this is a very low-hanging fruit

Kailey: can we get an agenda of the day? That would be helpful for planning schedule around work

9:58 AM * Debrief from MRC San Juan County Fair Booth

MRC Fair Volunteers

Adam: I had a blast! That scavenger hunt was so fun, interns did a great job, people were very engaged

KRK: I'll second that. It was well put together by staff and interns. All I had to do as an MRC member was show up

Frankie: The Green Village sometimes struggles with engagement, but we had a lot more this year. The booth benefits from people staffing it and activities. The word got out about Stewardship because of the jellybeans

Lovel: I think it would be good to get a variety in types of a booth. It's a disadvantage to have them all together

Rich: What if you could have a buoy manufacturer of the type we'd like to see installed at the Fair?

Adam: could we get a vendor in the Green Village for something like that? Like Matt Arata

Matt: I could do that
Adam: we can suggest to Fair planning committee; not promote buoys. But we can provide permitting information

Christina: Frankie has been staffing a booth at the Seattle boat show for years and that's evolved a lot

Joey: I can answer any questions about mooring buoy components or recommendations.

10:09 AM • OPALCO Tidal Energy Generation Project

Sam Whitridge

We met recently on this topic. I circulated a staff report for County Council. We tried to make it as concise as possible, thanks for all the feedback. The tenor of this report is that additional information is needed for Council to make a decision and to really assess the environmental impacts of the project. This will be on the Council's agenda on Sept. 8th and we'll see how they want to proceed. Thanks to Dave and Charles for all their work on this

ACTION: Sam will send a final version of what has been sent to Council.

Karin: do you need other MRC members at the County Council meeting?

Sam: it's always great to have other members attending, the agenda is still in progress so don't know exactly when

Lovel: there's always public comment at 9am

10:12 AM • Marine Capital Improvement Plan for MRC Review

Kendra Smith

Spending capital funds on various projects: Weeks Way Restoration on Lopez, Jackson Beach Restoration on SJI, Orcas Landing Marine Interpretative Area, and County Mooring Buoy system capital planning on Orca.

- Kendra discusses some details for what will happen this fall.

- discussion about how special the Orcas landing marine interpretive area is and Tribal involvement at its inception

Christina: could we convene a group of Orcas do-gooders to help clean up litter at site?

Kendra: Sam Martin has been planting some native vegetation and stewarding that

- And finally, the County Mooring system is a plan for the future, it'll be a pilot

David: is it for regulating buoys? Putting them in, taking them out?

Kendra: maybe all, it's a placeholder for future planning. This is a new item in the six-year CIP. it's slated for 2028-29

MOTION: David moves to approve the CIP, Olivia seconds. All in favor

10:26 AM • MRC Youth Position Update

Kailey Genther, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

In our last meeting we announced approval for a youth member. We've been interviewing youth members for the past month and we'll have recommendations for the October meeting. We advertised in various places, Sonora helped. We opened it to high school aged and young adult up to 25. In future, looking in summer isn't best

Christina: other MRC's are interested in this so if you could prepare a report about how you did it, I would share it

Katie: Jefferson already has one, so we go tips from them

10:31 am • Update on Cattle Point Project

Katie Johnson

Beth & I met with DNR folks about the funds they have etc. They're excited to work with the MRC. They're planning some construction to reinforce the building and add a door etc. So, our new plan is to add exterior signage. We'll get an extension of our grant; putting something on the outside will still fulfill the terms of our grant.

10:34 AM • Sept 27th Kelp Soiree at SJI Museum of Art

Sam Whitridge

It's invitation only. Do we have special guest list? Must check with Betsy about numbers. We want this to be open to MRC members. Kari wants to know if you have a specific person in mind that should be there

ACTION: Kari will send out more information, let her know if you're dying to come to the soiree

Joey: there's a cool project happening with the Hodin lab –sea star release coming up next week to benefit kelp

ACTION: Joey will talk to Sam about putting a presentation on the agenda for a future meeting

10:41 AM • **MRC subcommittee updates**

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

it was a great outreach summer; I just want to thank everyone who was involved

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson

son

GICU (Great Island Clean Up) on Saturday Oct 4th on Jackson Beach at 10am. No event at the brewery like we usually have in the spring but hope a lot of people will come. There will be coordinated events on different islands.

Adam: in the past the Port allowed folks to use their dumpsters

Olivia: is there a flyer for that? It's often advertised at labs very last minute, but we'll have fall quarter students here

ACTION: Katie will get that to Olivia shortly

o Seagrass Protection

Katie Johnson

Please continue counting vessels, even a data point of zero is helpful, photos are great, this helps the HSIL project

Sandy: points out the September edition of TideBites, an article about seagrass (Sandy will send this around)

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Kari Koski

We'll be starting up patrols again and meeting as a subcommittee soon, let Kari know if interested

o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge/Lovel Pratt

We should schedule a subcommittee meeting soon. Marta has information to present and wants closure for how to share concerns about Ecology's report on ERTV effectiveness to explain why we're not showcasing the report.

Marta: Lovel mentioned the ongoing rulemaking on the Rosario Strait tugs. She and I both submitted public comment in that process and recommended the Ecology risk assessment not be relied upon. The ERTV has been a long view, we've been fighting for it nine years, but want to bring this to the attention of new council people and legislators. I suggested to the Leadership council that they follow up on outgoing request of Inslee to focus on this issue and shared with them the fact sheet with some of our subcommittee's findings and conclusions. It's been 3.5 years since County sent a joint letter with Islands Trust to the Government of Canada. The Leadership council suggested they'd bring this up at their next meeting, looking at whether they could address this with Canada.

Marta pledges to follow this issue and continue to bring back information on this

FYI - an article about the tug escort rulemaking: <https://salish-current.org/2025/08/12/effort-to-dial-up-oil-spill-prevention-meets-pushback/>

- Other Subcommittee updates

Karin: October is Orca month and Oct. 18th is Orca Recovery Day. Shall we consider planning something?

Adam: whos' interested in doing something for that? - Karin, Brian, Frankie, Kailey, Adam

Frankie: we'll reactivate the SRKW subcommittee

MOTION: Christina moves to reactivate the subcommittee, Kailey seconds. So moved.

- Olivia will help on Oct 18th but can't help on the subcommittee

Paul: Stewardship network meets today; CD has done some orca recovery day work on the past.

ACTION: Karin will contact them

10:58 AM **Member/public updates and other business**

Tyler Clark from MoorBuoys shares screen to show platform for sharing unused existing mooring buoys.

Tyler: we're working with various partners. We've been presented two different options for how this could work,

1. Moor Buoys would purchase the buoys and lease them commercially
2. The individual owners retain their buoys and apply for their own commercial lease

There are pros and cons to both options. We're also looking at State legislation and County code and came up with the idea for a reciprocal sharing program. No rental fees. Buoy owners volunteer their buoy in exchange for the use of others or just for the benefit of the marine environment. This supports dv monitoring by keeping buoys in use.

Adam: will only buoy owners be able to be in this buoy share program? And are they paying a rental fee?

Tyler: no, any rec boater can be involved. And no fee –program will be free, we're looking into how to support it. We also want to offer people volunteering their buoys a free inspection as an incentive to ensure it's safe for use.

Lovel: does SJC support this?

Kendra: no, we've been directed to send notice along with DNR to notify them about commercial use

Tyler: but there is nothing prohibiting the conversion of recreational buoys to commercial use

Joey: if something happens to a boat, who is liable? The owner of the buoy?

Tyler: the terms and conditions are at the renter/user's own risk

Kendra: but they're not renting

Tyler: correct, they're reserving. There's no exchange of money

Brian: this feels more like a new business item that should be scheduled for a larger discussion

Adam: agreed, to be able to advise council we could use a longer presentation about the new business model

ACTION: Tyler can contact Sam about getting on the agenda for an agenda

Next update:

Lovel: heads up that Whatcom County issued a mitigated determination of non-significance at the gas facility in Ferndale, there's been an increase in vessel traffic in recent years and they want to increase it even further. They said they would require an environmental impact statement; now looks like that's not happening.

Friends of San Juans is looking at this. There was a vessel traffic assessment done but it was inadequate in several ways

Vendovi anchorage is south of Lummi island. This is Canadian tar sands crude oil. Friends will send out an action alert early next week. Lovel can work with staff to suggest comments to Council on this.

Note: sign up for action alerts with Friends of the San Juans!

FYI - Whatcom County MDNS for AltaGas' ALA Energy LPG terminal's 31 prior unpermitted projects and 2 new projects: Parcel Number: 390129428046, 390129495093, Address: 4100 Unick Road.

SEPA Case Number: SEPA2024-00052., SEPA Determination: [MDNS](#),

<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/102728/SEPA2024-00052-MDNS-Distribution-Packet>

Next Update:

Brian: SRKW spotted last night for the first time since July 16th on the west side, J & L's. Four different groups

Frankie: and there have been two disentanglements this summer of the same whale, Frankie describes the process.

11:19 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**

11:48 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:49 AM **CAG Updates/Business**

Sam Whitridge

- Wrap 2025 Grant Round

Wrapped up last meeting and put forth three projects for funding: The Coho preserve on Orcas (Land Bank), the Upright Head project on Lopez (Friends of the San Juans), and the outer islands landowner assessment. Funding board meets on the 16th of this month and makes final approval, then we can start with contracting etc.

- Update on future NOAA Salmon Recovery funding

Mixed information about funding from NOAA that goes to five states for salmon recovery funding. Those funds are still being held, pending review by the commerce secretary. Deadline of Sept 30th and if not released by then they're gone. Sam provides details on the funds and scrambling that may be available given this contingency. These are capital funds that fund the work (not capacity funds for staff which will be covered through summer of 2027).

Sam will keep this committee posted.

David: note, the Neck Point project was completed a couple weeks ago by Friends of the San Juans. Made a huge difference scenically but certainly also for forage fish and habitat-wise.

Lovel: it would be great if Tina could give a presentation about that with before and after shoreline photos

11:59 PM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, October 2nd, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

Dial in by phone

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Phone conference ID: 117 069 420#

While this is a virtual meeting, a public meeting place is available at the Beaverton Valley Operations Center, 1609 Beaverton Valley Rd. in Friday Harbor for those without mobile phone or internet access.

9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC September meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates- Christina Koons <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debrief Sept 26th NWSC Meeting in Friday Harbor• November 7-8 NWSC Conference
9:25 AM	Presentation: San Juan County Recreational Vessel Study- Dr. Frances Robertson, Marine Project Manager- San Juan County Department of Environmental Stewardship
10:00 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPALCO Tidal Energy Proposal/San Juan County Council Comments- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC Youth Membership Interview Updates- <i>Katie Johnson</i>• 2025 MRC Retreat Early Planning- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i>○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-Sam Whitridge/Lovel Pratt
10:45 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:50 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:50 AM	LIO Business agenda- Jason Lim/Katie Johnson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSP Updates • Local Forum Follow up • Healthy Shorelines: ECB, Action Plans, & SMA Rulemaking Open houses • '26-'28 Contract updates • SILs-LIO Meeting report out
11:30 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:30 AM	CAG Updates/Business- Sam Whitridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report out on September SRFB Meeting • Update on status of Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funding (PCSRF)
12:00 PM	Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, Paul Andersson, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Gregg Dunphy, Kailey Genter, Patti Gobin, Rich Goodhart, Brian Goodremont, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Craig Smith, Beth Tate, Joey Ullman, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria,

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Audrey Coyne, Jane Fuller, Marta Green, Katie Johnson, Kirsten Kane, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Sonora Tate, Sam Whitridge, Jeff Whitty

9:03 AM **Convene MRC Meeting**

Adam Parrott

9:04 AM **Public Comment**

Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

I want to remark on the sad passing of Jane Goodall and think about how important she was to science

9:05 AM **Approve meeting agenda**

All

No additions or edits, the agenda is approved

Approve MRC September meeting minutes

MRC Members

Sam received no edits. Kailey moves to approve the minutes, Sandy seconds. All in favor, the minutes are approved

9:06 AM **Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates**

Christina Koons

- Debrief Sept 26th NWSC Meeting in Friday Harbor

Sam: NWSC meeting in Friday Harbor last Friday, Frankie & I met the group at Jackson Beach for a site visit, discussed the creosote removal project and some future restoration plans. We also talked about how the Port of Friday Harbor is purchasing the cannery on the other side of Jackson. Jane Fuller kicked off the meeting with opening remarks. Frankie spoke about the vessel impacts survey project. We participated in the business meeting. Christina: from the business meeting, the commission has created a guidance document around funding activities, it'll be shared with staff. MRC volunteer kayakers completed all bull kelp surveys for 2025, data are being prepared

- **November 7-8 NWSC Conference** will be in La Conner. There's some concern about the cost of attending Kendra: we're fortunate that three marine grants have come through, but issues with the County budget. It would be great if anyone can pay their own way to the conference. There's no registration fee, costs are travel and hotel. Jeff: Happy to shuttle people from ferries if people want to walk on Adam: and note that we'll have our MRC/LIO/CAG meeting the day before the conference Christina: note the registration closes in five days on October 7th

9:17 AM **Presentation: San Juan County Recreational Vessel Study**

Frances Robertson

Frankie presents the same slides as at the NWSC meeting last week:

In 2020 summer, there were boats in places we'd never seen before in numbers we've never seen before. That motivated us to look at vessel use/presence in the County. Nearshore habitats are essential for juvenile salmon and other endangered and commercial species. Bull kelp beds have declined 30%. Traditional knowledge helps show where kelp has been in past. Boat impacts like anchoring affect eelgrass negatively. Example from Shallow Bay Labor Day Saturday, 259 boats but only 44 mooring balls. We need to better understand vessel density and impacts and overlap with key marine habitats. Focusing on aerial surveys from last summer; there were other methods not discussed here. Frankie describes aerial survey method with line transect surveys. Map shows 16 sites that are known hotspots, some are marine parks This is the first study to implement this type of distance sampling methodology to understand boat presence and density. We flew eight survey days between Memorial Day week-

end and late September recording vessel type and size, and inclinometer angle for the exact location of boats. Photos to compare later with survey data. Frankie shares analysis and results – July and August showed higher numbers than June and September with Labor Day weekend being the highest. All locations tracked similar pattern.

Frankie reviews the hotspots for highest vessel numbers. Highest density were Sucia and Stuart (both popular marine state parks), and Fisherman Bay on Lopez. It was difficult to survey west side of SJI due to proximity with Canadian air space. Map shows vessel density with respect to eelgrass, crab and forage fish habitat, and known mooring buoy locations. Incorporated habitat and vessel layers into an interactive map,

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/77c211111e2640918a2b28d7988f6ec1>

Conclusions: distance sampling methods were well-suited to estimating vessels at sea. Between 1200-1500 boats in SJC waters (not including marinas or private docks) equivalent of eight boats per county mile. Moderate overlap with vessel density in locations with varieties of important marine habitats. We're finalizing a density surface model analysis and sharing results with marine managers, exploring potential management options to reduce impacts

QUESTIONS

Charles: given the State Parks' role in being aggregators of boats, will you share these data with them?

Frankie: yes, they're in process of upgrading buoys at State Parks – they're key partners in this work

Joey: we're on contract with State Parks to replace 90 concrete-anchor buoys with helical anchors over coming year

Frankie: that update has been a multi-year process, they're also doing a mooring buoy tie-up system at Echo Bay

Joey: it's a linear moorage system, with a goal of saving anchor points

Frankie: Here's a link to the online survey for providing input to help prioritize areas for protection and restoration.

<https://forms.gle/8fPJXTDnehM1Lzh36>

- brief discussion about the linear moorage systems; boats don't always use them, it doesn't work for everyone

Past kelp surveys in 2006, then Samish has been surveying based on county's aerial imagery.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b9f979a547004c32a616b5319a6410c0>

- a little more discussion of history of kelp surveys in the SJI's and decline over time

There's a maximum depth where eelgrass can be found. We ask boaters to anchor in water deeper than 25-35' in order not to impact eelgrass (voluntary boater education). Recent surveys have been looking at outer depth range of eelgrass around the County, those results should be out this fall. Frankie shows map layers - deepwater edge off eelgrass at Echo Bay in Sucia in the interactive habitat map – in Shallow Bay the eelgrass extends further into bay.

Craig: how well do satellite data compare with line-transect?

Frankie: the problem with satellite data is hard to predict what you'll get, cloud cover. There's another type of radar imagery that's expensive. We have 20 years of monitoring data from DNR, but need historical eelgrass data

Beth: these data are interesting and important. In my experience most of our eelgrass beds are fringing like in Echo Bay. Looking into the future about how to manage vessel traffic and anchoring, maintaining that boundary will be important. Maybe not ideal to anchor in 35' but that's what we need to do. We know where that boundary is

Joey: 30' is a good mark for where to leave your anchor, people often have 100' of scope.

Adam: a lot of vessels don't carry more than 100-150' rode so that limits the depth they can anchor in 30' max

Adam: a lot of vessels don't carry more than 100-150' rode so that limits the depth they can anchor in 30' max

10:01 AM MRC Updates/Business

- OPALCO Tidal Energy Proposal/San Juan County Council Comments

Sam Whitridge

In early September, Sam presented MRC's initial report to the County Council, focused on the information we still needed in order to take a stance on the proposal. Council requested that I draft a letter that reflected the recommendations of the MRC. I shared that with the MRC, and it was submitted about a week ago.

We just received this response from OPALCO

10:05 AM - *Sam shares the letter on-screen, everyone takes several minutes to review it*

10:09 AM Discussion resumes

David: I found it a little defensive, I thought the letter from Council was in good faith trying to open a dialogue.

Charles: the Council's session was informative. Discussion centered on politics between County and OPALCO and not on the technical issues raised by the MRC. In this letter, they skipped over an important argument -that we need to see the technical results from deployment of the unit in Scotland. I don't see any efforts to address that.

Jane: For the last two MRC meetings I've been trying to encourage some dialogue with OPALCO about the project, so MRC can better understand the information and avoid putting them in a defensive position. I'm frustrated. I intend to speak with OPALCO about some of the concerns brought up by MRC. But I'm concerned I don't see a working relationship on issues of marine habitat. I'm interested in hearing what you think the MRC can constructively do to share more information in the Council. I fully supported the letter you drafted requesting information. And we need to fix this relationship, we need to be able to work with OPALCO on these critical issues

David: I agree that better dialogue is needed. My contact at OPALCO is willing to come talk to the MRC. It seems like creating a group that includes OPALCO and some of us and some of the climate sustainability people – getting together to talk about these facts on a regular basis. Meeting face to face in a relaxed environment. Please don't view OPALCO in an adversarial way, we're lucky to have them as our energy provider! But that doesn't preclude the need to be able to sit down and talk about energy into the future. We can't politicize it, it's too important

Adam: I think the defensiveness in the letter was about other attacks they've received like about some of the land-based projects. This may have been our first time asking for information, but they're braced for blowback. Having to defend themselves constantly is going to make them defensive. I love the idea of a larger group that could be created for OPALCO to have consistent communication with multiple groups

David: Comments have already been received from the Tribes, Friends, and numerous other entities

Kendra: There are several OPALCO board members on Climate and sustainability committee. Kendra provides examples of ways to help support OPALCO by providing land from Town/County for solar panels. Jane, I can help.

Kari: A problem I see is that OPALCO don't seem to communicate with the public early enough or very well

ACTION: Adam proposes a discussion at our next meeting about coming up with something to present to Council like this idea of a forum for OPALCO to communicate with other groups/agencies

Jane: thank you for that discussion. Let's see where we can take these ideas together in the coming weeks.

10:34 AM • MRC Youth Membership Interview Updates

Katie Johnson

Sandy: We recommend Lola from Orcas Island and Flora from SJI, Kailey can provide more details

Kailey: Flora is a senior at FHHS. All applicants were seniors. We hope they will stay on at least for the next year and we hope they'll stay on after that to fill the two-year requirement.

MOTION: Dave moves to recommend the two youth members join the MRC. Christina seconds

Now it goes to Council, in the meantime they can come and meet everyone & say a few words

10:38 AM • **MSA report progress**

Frankie: we have an approved resolution we'll take to Council next week to request their approval to adopt the MSA report and replace the 2007 report. That'll happen next Tuesday. If anyone's available to be there for the Council meeting, getting a resolution adopting this report is the final big hurdle to some great work from the MRC

Kendra: this is the time – if you want to make sure Council knows how much you care about the environment, any statement you can make in support of the work being done is important

Olivia: what's the best way to approach a Council person?

Frankie: write emails, letters, or go to Council in person or via Teams, at each meeting there's a public comment

Kendra: anything you can say around "thank you for supporting the marine program" is appreciated, about how important this work is. Frankie, you should give a presentation on the boat density work and relation to moorage

Frankie: We are presenting this resolution on Tuesday October 7th 9am meeting start with public comment shortly afterward, <https://www.sjcmrc.org/media/5iapjp32/state-of-the-msa-2024-1.pdf>

About the vessel and mooring buoy work, the County is sending a message out to mooring buoy owners on Monday surrounding the use of their recreational buoys. DNR has a letter under review that'll go out as well.

10:46 AM • 2025 MRC Retreat Early Planning

Sam Whitridge

We've held these in early December in lieu of our regular meeting. It looks like that would be December 4th.

Adam and Karin are interested in helping plan the Retreat

Sam: the main cost would be lunch; we pay that from our MRC grant

Christina: a main agenda item should be fundraising and looking at funding into the future.

- General approval for December 4th – we'll go forward with working on the agenda for the Retreat

10:50 AM • MRC subcommittee updates

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

We've been discussing an idea for Orca Recovery Day, Saturday October 18th - something to highlight the 1000 yds distance from whales, we can call it the 'dash for whales'; It's just a half mile. The race would start at 10:30, over by 11, and then an hour of table/presentation. Encourage everyone to bring their 'pod' (kids/families/friends).

- CD is ready to participate – Paul says it will be mandatory. Frankie reviews several other participants

Kendra: What about doing it on Jackson beach? either as a run, swim, or paddle??

- More discussion of location, the Gravel Pit vs. Jackson Beach. General consensus settles on Jackson Beach.

Need to speak with Port, already checked in with Island Rec.

Rich: I'm not aware of any conflicting events, talk to Todd down at the Port. Jackson has a wooden whale!

ACTION: Katie and Frankie will connect on this; Adam wants to help with planning

Marta: recommend contacting Commodore of FH Sailing Club Sam Johnston (salmon_sandy@msn.com)

Rich: Here you go Frankie, Todd Nicholson , Port Director 360-378-2688, 226

11:00 AM o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson

Katie: GICU (Great Islands Clean Up) happening this Saturday on four main ferry-served islands. Check out PFSS site for event details on your island. On SJI we'll meeting at Jackson, great nurdle hunt and sending folks out to other places. Sonora has done some great promotional videos. We'll talk about covering your load

Christina: any traction on getting a group to do some clean up at Orcas landing?

ACTION: Katie will reach out to Pete and see if they can get a crew going there

Christina: it may be a way to address some of the maintenance issues Kendra brought up before

Karin: did you get any response to the garden club?

Christina: I reached out, they were going to talk to their executive committee. I asked about plant maintenance – some of them are concerned about the steep slope there, they have older volunteers.

Joey: I am in the process of getting an Orcas Landing group together now. I will reach out to you Katie to confirm.

11:03 AM o Seagrass Protection

Beth Tate/Katie Johnson

Olivia: the kelp soiree was fun, so many familiar and new faces from the marine community. Kari did a stunning job with kelp drinks & pickles, lively & festive. And now I hope we can do a seagrass soiree sometime!

11:04 AM o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Adam Parrott/Kari Koski

Sonora and Kari are putting out information about fall storms coming up. Marine patrols are scheduled starting next week – derelict vessel patrols, mooring buoy monitoring. Heavy schedule over next few months

Adam is interested, anyone interested in participating should contact Frankie

o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge

I'll work with Lovel to set up a subcommittee meeting when she gets back

11:07 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**

11:15 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:16 AM **CAG Updates/Business**

Sam Whitridge

• **Report out on September SRFB Meeting**

Three projects (The SJPT outer islands, Friends of San Juans' Upright Head, and the Land Bank's Coho Reserve) were all approved. RCO (Recreational Conservation Office) in process of securing funds, and work can start this fall.

• **Update on status of Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funding (PCSRF)**

We learned a couple weeks ago that PCSRF came through. It seemed like potentially those funds wouldn't be released before sept 30 deadline, and amazingly RCO received the funds by sept 18th – 22 million.

That means full funding for the 2025 State salmon grant round that we just completed. Good news, means State doesn't need to borrow funds from next year's grant round to fund this year's

- One more quick item, annual salmon recovery meeting next week in Leavenworth, I'll attend and represent SJC.

It'll be good to get a broader picture and network with others from around the State, some valuable workshops

- This is the slow season with salmon recovery, but we'll pick up later this year, hope for a big grant round next year with PSAR funding Puget sound acquisition and research funds

11:20 PM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, November 6, 2025
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

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9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC October meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates- Christina Koons <ul style="list-style-type: none">• November 7-8 NWSC Conference
9:25 AM	MRC Updates/Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MRC Youth Members Introduction- <i>Katie Johnson</i>• OPALCO Tidal Energy Proposal/MRC Next Steps-Sam Whitridge• 2025 MRC Retreat Planning- <i>Sam Whitridge</i>• MSA Report/Update on County Council Presentation- <i>Frances Robertson</i>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i>○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i>○ Oil Spill/ERTV-Sam Whitridge/Lovel Pratt
10:05 AM	Committee member updates and any other business

10:10 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting Convene LIO Meeting
10:10 AM	Presentation: San Juan County On-site Sewage Systems (OSS) Project Update- <i>Katherine Combs, San Juan County Dept of Environmental Health</i>
10:30 AM	LIO Business agenda- <i>Jason Lim/Katie Johnson</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion/Decision re: Healthy Shorelines Action Plan Funding • PSP Updates • Report on 11/5 Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) Meeting
11:00 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:00 AM	Presentation: Recap of Recently Completed Friends of the San Juans Salmon Recovery Projects- <i>Tina Whitman, Friends of the San Juans</i>
11:30 AM	CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salmon Recovery Project Time Extension Requests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weeks Point Restoration ○ Eelgrass Mapping Project
12:00 PM	Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Rich Goodhart, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Kim Sundberg, Craig Smith, Beth Tate, Flora Vaught, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria, Lola Walker

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Elizabeth Butler, Melissa Ciesielski, Audrey Coyne, Katherine Dietzman, Marta Green, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Tina Whitman, Sam Whitridge

9:03 AM **Convene MRC Meeting**

Adam Parrott

9:03 AM **Public Comment**

9:03AM **Approve meeting agenda**

All

Kendra: I request an addition to the agenda - a budget update and request to pledge support. Approved, added.

Approve MRC October meeting minutes

MRC Members

There are no edits. David moves to approve, Beth seconds, all in favor. The October minutes are approved

9:05 AM **Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates**

Christina Koons

- November 7-8 NWSC Conference

Adam will be there, Katie and Frankie will represent staff, Frankie will present there about the vessel work

Christina: we didn't meet this month, the news is the conference. The agenda looks great, we'll report back

9:07 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

- MRC Youth Members Introduction

Katie Johnson

We have two new MRC members, our new youth members, Lola Walker and Flora Vaught.

Flora: I'm a senior at FHHS, I'm excited to be here and focus on issues involving the environment

Lola: I'm a senior at Orcas Island high school, I grew up sailing, I love the ocean and want to help protect it

We're excited for the youth representation, thank you for being here

9:10 AM **• OPALCO Tidal Energy Proposal/MRC Next Steps**

Sam Whitridge

Unfortunately, Jane Fuller couldn't attend today. Last month County Council had commented, and we had received a letter in response from OPALCO.

Kendra: there was a discussion at Council meeting about the dynamic between County and OPALCO. We're facilitating a Round Table about least-conflict solar siting, trying to help OPALCO. We think part of the reaction we received from them has to do with the frustration they experience trying to source energy and hitting wall after wall. That's planned for December 8th. To help extend an olive branch to OPALCO and work collaboratively with them, and then work toward something similar in the marine environment. Working at the staff level

Frankie: have there been any discussions of the submarine cables and contingency plans for when those need to be replaced? It's unrealistic to think we'll be energy independent out here. In our utilities we put things aside for capital projects down the road, we should be asking if that's happening for our submarine cables as well.

Beth: Is there interest in having more education about marine energy projects in general? I went to a workshop recently; many are working to assess impacts of marine energy projects. There are a lot of data out there.

-Frankie lists a variety of other resources, local and otherwise, marine mammal monitoring work, etc.

-more discussion of real risks/concerns and language used to address them

Charles: this discussion reflects the letter we sent, we suggested there were data out there that need to be looked at more. Our message was different than those from Tribes which were more negative in tone

-some discussion of individuals (suggested by Mike, Kendra) at OPALCO we could contact directly to build bridges

Adam: this has been a common topic in recent meetings, it could benefit us to have a subcommittee whose focus was communicating with Council and OPALCO and have representatives from OPALCO at our meetings.

Kendra: we're doing that with a Round Table forum with Climate and Sustainability, David Checkley is our rep there

David: I support that idea, but I feel the real need is for OPALCO to join with the MRC in an open discussion about tidal energy. I'm not in strong favor of another subcommittee. The Round Table is at the Council level and has equal representation from OPALCO. I think academic expertise is what's missing (the data Beth & Frankie referred to)

Frankie: don't want to hear OPALCO's sales pitch again. We're scientists and regulators with serious questions

Adam: so that that'll happen at the Round Table, but I'm trying to figure out what we as the MRC can do

Frankie: would the MRC be in a situation, and us as ES staff, be in a situation to facilitate that?

Kendra: I think we can wait until December 8th and see how next Council meeting goes. We need to pull together what we know from different sources. Does it add value for them to understand the concerns? Is there a way for us to navigate that with them in a positive manner?

David: I see a round table as allowing the heat level to be lowered, amicable discussion and develop trust.

Frankie: it's suitable to focus on the science but need to also acknowledge the impacts of these projects on Tribes' Treaty rights. We need to encourage OPALCO to go above and beyond in their consultations.

Beth: this may be an educational opportunity, I think OPALCO doesn't understand their obligation there

Frankie: I think there is also a general misunderstanding that Tribes are disproportionately impacted by these "green" energy developments. It is a broader issue that is coming up nationwide with renewable energy.

Lovel and Frankie both have suggestions for education on Tribal engagement for OPALCO

ACTION: Sandy will send this paper to Adam and Sam for circulation to MRC members, Austin, S., Wyllie-Echeverria, S. and Groom, M.J., 2004. A comparative analysis of submarine cable installation methods in Northern Puget Sound, Washington. *Journal of Marine Environmental Engineering*, 7(3)

9:37 AM Budget

Kendra Smith

Our budgets are largely grant-based. Kendra reviews current proposal amount, staffing cuts are possible. Our team is working dutifully – Sam, Frankie, and Katie have been bringing in grant money that will sustain us through 2027. We'll also be borrowing \$400K in float from the Clean water team. It's a loan we'll need to pay back. This idea is going to Council and we hope for support. I'll be presenting our budget on November 10th, anyone is welcome to come to the meeting and show support that would be appreciated. Or if anyone is willing to pledge support with donations, <https://www.sanjuancountywa.gov/1736/Donate>. That also helps instill in Council that there's local support for the marine program. Need to come right at beginning for public comment at 9am. My presentation is around 10:15am. This has been a lot of budget gymnastics, doing whatever we can to keep program going

Lovel: I'm curious, you're right that general funds are volatile but that's also where some opportunity can be found. Do you have any advice about what other areas we should be looking to for funding?

Kendra: we're fortunate for the grants we have. We have \$40K assigned to us as part of levy lid lift. There may be another one in 2026

-some note about what IOSA receives

ACTION ITEM: Lola is willing to help at the Council meeting as a youth voice of support

9:49 AM • 2025 MRC Retreat Planning

Sam Whitridge

Katie, Kari, Adam and I met earlier this week to plan the agenda for Dec. 4th at FHL. We plan to discuss fundraising writ large, tapping into resources for funding.

ACTION ITEM: Sam will send out the NWSC guidance document to help folks to consider ideas

Sam: we want subcommittees to come to MRC with a couple slides about what you've worked on in the past year, what's coming up for next year. I'll send out that request formally via email, with list of who's on subcommittees. The retreat is a good time to revisit those, see if we need reshuffle etc. We'll have an ice breaker, and lunch. It would be great to hear from a keynote speaker – a couple of ideas are discussed, e.g. Joe Gaydos
Lola and Flora would both be glad to offer a presentation from youth perspective

9:57 AM • MSA Report/Update on County Council Presentation *Frances Robertson*
Updates 2007 plan with this report, <https://www.sanjuancountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/33565/Resolution-35-2025-SJC-Marine-Stewardship-Area-Report> We want this to be adopted by Council, incorporate 2025 report. When the Shoreline Master code is reopened, we'll also be working with DCD on that and providing this document to them as a resource. One thing in our grant for next biennium as MRC is outreach to the community about recommendations in this document, reaffirming partnerships to move on the actions listed in the report. Tina Whitman reminded me that by listing which organizations are responsible for what, it holds them to account. Kari drills into me that when we talk about SJC from a marine perspective, we should be talking about the MSA – it's important that the County was designated as such. We need to keep talking about it in our messaging until it's commonly known. We live in a marine stewardship area, let's keep communicating it to our partners

10:04 AM • MRC subcommittee updates *Katie Johnson*
o Outreach & Education
Report back on the October 18th event, it was successful. Katie and Frankie both relate details of who was there. There were nine organizations, it was powerful reminiscing and excited about what we can build for next year

10:07 AM o Plastic Free Salish Sea *Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson*
Great Islands Clean up – Katie reports on people involved and total volume of material removed. There was a cool new video created by our interns about boaters not shrink-wrapping boats

10:09 AM o Seagrass Protection *Beth Tate/Frankie Robertson*
The HSIL stressor project is underway and collecting data. Vessel counts are continuing. Kari and Frankie completed first vessel-based survey in October.
David Checkley: question about American cruise line ship anchoring in Parks Bay. These are big anchors and chain, could have a large effect. The other issue is the noise that has bothered residents around Shaw.
Tina: I've looked at maps with approximate locations of those cruise ships and they are deeper than eelgrass/kelps.
Lovel: this also affects campers on Shaw. This is a great opportunity to look at this with Council, in comp plan -more discussion of issue of large ships like this one, how little they benefit local islands, etc.
Beth: sometimes smaller ships impact more. Large ships will only tie up at the breakwater.
Frankie: Craig Smith would be able to provide good input regarding anchoring impacts to the benthic environment. If I remember correctly, it takes ~3 months for the benthic habitat to recover from anchor scars. Do they know they are operating in a Marine Stewardship Area? How would the stewardship pass work for these cruise ships?
Beth: Likely they do not, or if they do, they might be using it as a selling point. Places like the Galapagos require these commercial activities to pay a fee for the use of the "park."
Adam: how did we get jet skis banned in county code in the 90's?
Frankie: required engaging with State Attorneys' office
Tina: there are new larger jet skis registered as boats- so we started seeing them last summer
Frankie: jet skis can operate in the county, but they can't launch or land from within the County. There is an annual group that travels up to Alaska via jet ski that does come through and refuels here each year.
Lovel: this could identify need for a subcommittee?

Kendra: Council has been hearing an earful from folks about frustration on this issue

Charles: this has been a fight elsewhere, the cruise ship industry worldwide, there are data we could pull together

MOTION: Charles moves we form a 'Cruise Ship' subcommittee with purpose of pulling together background information. Lovel seconds, SO MOVED, we have a cruise ship subcommittee

ACTION ITEM: Let's put that on the agenda to assign a lead and members at the retreat

10:25 AM o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Adam Parrott/Kari Koski

Kari says they continue vessel and land patrols, we're watching 12, six vessels of concern, removed three. There are two vessels in vessel turn in program with DNR. Sonora made new videos about preparing vessels for winter, etc.

10:27 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV

Sam Whitridge/Lovel Pratt

We need to schedule a subcommittee meeting; I'll work on that with Lovel. Schedule it for before the retreat

10:27 AM **Committee member updates and any other business**

Marta: I attended the PacStates/BC Oil Spill Task Force annual meeting yesterday. Very informative on US/BC recent and shared future challenges. A presentation on oil spill modeling in the Salish Sea that I'm following up on.

10:27 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting,**

11:01 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:02 AM **Presentation: Recently Completed Friends of the San Juans Salmon Recovery Projects** *Tina Whitman*

I'm going to talk about two completed projects and then where we're at with eelgrass restoration

On Shaw at Broken Point, we removed creosote piling. Relocated some structure landward. There were 28 horizontal feet of beach unburied. Shows how bulkhead structures cause more flooding issues. Now the owner has experienced fewer issues with flooding with natural berm. The natural beach is better for fish and people

- Kim and Mike have a couple questions about restoration and maintenance, including the planting that replaced the dune grass. The were salt-tolerant native species that will soak up water and hold soil together

Then another project at Neck Point was implemented this past summer. Moved 200 linear feet of rock bulkhead. Cleaned up intertidal. Kendra comments on how much better the beach looks.

Katherine: Shoutout to Matt Arata and Erin Graham and Levi with A1 Marine with their amazing work!

Tina describes the process of added complication due to current situation with federal funding

Eelgrass Research Update:

We're now at the point of gathering data with scientists, hope to be ready to share with managers, the community, etc. by Spring. But we're not going to make our December deadline. One reason is issues with scheduling our research vessel. There's a major mapping component, eelgrass mapping, land use impact, and then action plan. The mapping – in 2003 Friends, FHL and DNR partnered and we're doing it again 20 years later. Detailed transect surveys, surveying exact same lines as 20 years ago

Tina reviews details for specific sites and for how mapping and change analysis was done. Most declines are in shallow edges of bays. We're seeing dramatic declines across 16 sites, and just one showing increase

Elizabeth Butler: If you have room in your SRFB grant for AA&E you could bill us for some of that admin time working through the NFWF funding. The big picture: that effort ended up saving (hopefully) SRFB/PSAR funding that hopefully can be moved to other projects on the LE list. And if you could attach the ppts to the PRISM projects (or email to me and i will) these are great project summaries, and amendment requests summaries, too.

-More detailed discussion about some specific sites & patterns

Correlating data with other studies, as part of HSIL eelgrass stressor project. Higher levels of eelgrass wasting disease correlate with shallower bays. Spatial analysis to look at overwater structures, land and vessel use as they relate to each of the study embayments

-brief discussion of freshwater sources and related water quality as one land-use issue affecting eelgrass

Tina: those non embayment declines will also show up a bit in changes in extent through the countywide deep edge meander data that were close to finalizing- and its one of Drew and Olivia's/DNR longer time sites.

11:42AM CAG Updates/Business

Sam Whitridge

- Salmon Recovery Project Time Extension Requests: the Weeks Point Restoration and the Eelgrass Mapping Project (that Tina just discussed). MRC members who are also CAG members can vote

MOTION: Kendra moves to approve the extensions, Adam seconds. All in favor. Lovel abstains but supports.

APPROVED.

-some discussion of the Jackson Beach project, importance of telling that story for the County. OPALCO has been a good partner on the project.

Frankie: this discussion is making me think that one next step in the vessel impact work is to collect water quality samples at the sites identified as high-density. This might fit well for a Rose Foundation grant, but it might also be something to consider for the LIO money

11:48 AM Adjourn CAG Meeting



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee

MRC Annual Retreat
Meeting Agenda

Thursday, December 4th, 2025

9:00 AM – 2:15 PM

In-Person at UW Friday Harbor Labs*

620 University Rd, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

8:45 AM	Arrive/Meet and Greet
9:00 AM	Convene MRC Retreat- <i>Adam Parrott, MRC Chair</i>
9:05 AM	Member Updates and Public Comment
9:10 AM	“How-to” presentation on providing public comment as an MRC Member- <i>Olivia Graham</i>
9:20 AM	Discussion on fundraising planning and developing revenue strategies for MRC/Marine Program financial sustainability- <i>MRC Members</i>
10:35 AM	Remarks from new MRC Youth Members- <i>Lola Walker and Flora Vaught</i>
10:45 AM	Break
11:00 AM	MRC Work Planning for 2026- MRC Staff/Subcommittee Leads <i>Discussion of projects and work areas, Deadlines and key dates</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plastic Free Salish Sea• Derelict Vessel Prevention Program• Eelgrass Protection• Oil Spill Prevention and Response Preparedness/ERTV• Marine Stewardship• Vessel Surveys/Benthic Habitat Project• Advisory Actions (OPALCO Project, etc)
12:15 PM	LUNCH
1:00 PM	Presentation- Environmental Effects of Marine Renewable Energy- <i>Lysel Garavelli and Debbie Rose, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory</i>
1:25 PM	Q and A/Discussion
1:35 PM	Presentation- Tidal Energy Environmental Impacts on Marine Mammals <i>Dr. Jason Wood, Principal Scientist & Deputy Director, SMRU Consulting</i>
2:00 PM	Q and A/Discussion
2:15 PM	Wrap and Adjourn Retreat

****While this is an in-person meeting, a Teams link is available for those who need a virtual option:***

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genter, Brian Goodremont, Olivia Graham, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Beth Tate, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria, Joey Ullmann. Flora Vaught, Lola Walker

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Krista Bouchey, Gregg Dunphy, Jane Fuller, Lysel Garavelli, Russel Guerry, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Frances Robertson, Deborah Rose, Craig Smith, Kendra Smith, Taylor Smith, Daniel Vekved, Sam Whitridge, Jason Wood

8:45 AM Arrive/Meet and Greet, muffins & doughnuts!

9:05 AM Convene MRC Retreat *Adam Parrott, MRC Chair*

9:06 AM Member Updates and Public Comment
none

9:11 AM Introduction *Jane Fuller*

We have a meeting today with the Canadian group, Island Trust Council, we're reengaging our relationship going back to the 90's, new MOU. We'll bring up the issue of the ERTV. Sorry I can't be there in person for the Retreat.

And to put this meeting in county context. We'll have an extremely difficult budgetary time coming up in 2027, may need to let some staff go. Exploring other sources of revenue, updated Lodging Tax, working with Angela Broderick.

9:21 AM "How-to" presentation on providing public comment as an MRC Member *Olivia Graham*

I spoke in an October County Council meeting during the public comment period and I developed this guide with a few tips – it's a Word document, shared with MRC via email along with the pitch I gave advocating protection of marine resources in SJC. Must include name, role, island of residence, and complete in under 3 minutes

QUESTIONS:

Lovel: we should mention that we speak as an MRC member and we're not speaking on *behalf* of the MRC It's helpful not just to express concerns but to be clear about what you want council to do

Olivia: register before the meeting, no zoom option

David: announcement on county website, if you're meeting remotely, you call in at slated time

Jane: can also submit public comment online in a written document. You can be sharing news.

9:32 AM Discussion on revenue strategies for MRC/Marine Program financial sustainability
MRC Members

Sam: I sent out NW Straits Commission guidance on fundraising. We focused on this in the Local Forum

Kendra: we've been trying to make the budget work. I sent a memo about the transfer to cover the float for grants we have, that provided \$400K of relief to the current County fund. Also cut \$76K from our initial \$200K budget. We run two utilities, Water and Solid Waste. Some counties use those utilities to fund resiliency and climate change related work. On marine side with salmon recovery and LIO, a lot of freshwater work that ties in with clean water, so looking at migrating some things to Clean Water. Plan to go to Council to discuss revenue-generating strategies. e.g. Visitor tax, \$10/car would generate several million. In current legislature, can't tax vehicles going across county lines. But the MSA is a destination –a natural area which people come to visit,

could be an opportunity to bring in resources. We have some swag prepared with QR codes, donation landing page. Need more research about details around what service are we providing/what resource are we protecting – whether it's a donation or a tax

Beth: I vote to continue the conversation with PSP (Puget Sound Partnership). Affluent people needing to do mitigation are a resource; going through PSP decouples taking their money, and they need projects we have. maybe some of that money could even go toward salaries. The mitigation bank as it exists with PSP could be better.

Olivia: can you elaborate on what that process looks like?

Beth: through Army Corps of Engineers. Not all regulatory entities require the same things for mitigation. Federal system is streamlined with a calculator – pay the debt for the project they want. But historically that project was required to be local. If we can track that money we could use it, projects that were earmarked for PSP.

Kendra: now that calculator covers creosote piles and concrete armoring. We used that program for Jackson beach;

Lovel: curious about the scale of the funding that you think would be appropriate to be directed toward this region?

Beth: easily in the hundreds of thousands of dollars range, maybe in the millions depending on what's happening

Lovel: I'm hearing this could be the potential to pay for salaries. Funding an ES program rather than a project

Brian: can you explain the budget shortfall? Are some staff members depend on grant funding ending in 2026.?

Kendra: the ES dept. funds two utilities. The last few years we receive about \$200K from County and \$400K from float/reimbursement-based grants. We need to sign new grants to support the staff. We've cut that initial \$200 from County down to \$124. County Current needs to fund Emergency, Parks, and ES. Other departments (Sherriff, Courts, etc.) take most of County current money. We pay into the County for things like facilities, IT, liability insurance, etc. that our grants can't always cover. We need to be tight within our core of ES, don't want to be subject to reorganization. We are utility managers for environmental services (clean water and solid waste).

Beth: to say that an action effectively mitigates an impact, needs to have a value. What's the value of this program?

Lovel: you can calculate that in terms of quantifying environmental services.

Kendra: maybe an MOU with PSP to find and facilitate projects, like a service provider model. With an MOU they could pay into the mitigation bank or they're paying us to facilitate mitigation. Particularly with road-related projects

Kari: so environmental services (and salaries therein) are mitigation? Not just protection as mitigation

Olivia: considering some other initiatives Kendra mentioned, I'm in favor of some kind of ecotourism tax benefiting the MSA. What would it take for us to implement that at a County level?

Kendra: County has a limited ability to tax, but a fee is where it's at. Taxes go to a vote

Adam: we have a 'donate' QR code. Could we work with local tourism businesses? could direct donated funds?

Frankie: Discussion of raising funds needs to be for the County's environmental program, can't be for the MRC

Kari: we want a hybridized system with non-grant funding and that's why fees are such a good model. Look at what the MSA brings to the County and how this body and staff are needed to support it. Need a sustainable funding source of our own. People will keep coming here to enjoy the things we're trying to protect. It's a partnership. Need to work on crafting this message. We asked for a white paper looking at this

Adam: we're talking about putting a new process in place and funding needed by 2027. What's our time frame?

Kendra: we'll be going through the budget process again in December 2026 for 2027. Over the coming year, I'll

be moving whatever I can into the Clean Water utility. Up until 2027 we're covered. The way the Clean Water utility runs is that there are multiple year projects in the CIP, revenues are collected throughout the year from all over the County to fund those projects. Slightly different formula/rates for each island.

Charles: the legislature has a history of approving county-optional excise taxes (provides a few examples). In addition to the utility approach, we should consider the idea of a county-option excise tax

Brian: to fund program, the most seamless way would be to work with existing funds from an entity like PSP. I collect fees from guests every day. I feel like a tax collector and distributor for the State and my employees. I collect a conservation fee from my guests, needs to be communicated correctly. If you work with legislature to propose a fee for visitors, you'll get pushback if you don't come with support from business owners. We talk about why we collect the fee and where we're giving it. If you create a subcommittee, need to have some business owners on it.

Kendra: I hope we can find a way not to burden the business owners. Which is why we're interested in something like the discovery pass. Get them in Anacortes.

Brian: interesting to think about how people travel here and how to increase the audience. We currently have a slow decrease in visitors. And more day-trippers

Adam: it would be beneficial to create a subcommittee where we consistently talk about these things. Kendra would be on it, could have more focused discussions on this.

MOTION: Mike moves to create a sustainable funding for marine resource stewardship subcommittee

Olivia seconds. All in favor. Subcommittee members: Mike, Olivia, Charles, Adam, Flora, Christina

Kari: community members who aren't MRC members can be invited

Adam: we need to take Brian's advice and invite some business owners

Kailey: maybe we can also get someone from the tourism board (Kendra is on it)

Sam: we met with Jason Lim and he said their staff was interested in presenting about this at our January meeting.

10:39 AM Remarks from new MRC Youth Members- Lola Walker and Flora Vaught

Flora: I'm excited to be part of the MRC, I respect and appreciate the ocean environment. I want to use MRC as an opportunity to get more involved in conservation. I'm president of FHHS eco-club. I want to bring the experience of attending these meetings to my peers, e.g. I'm excited to share Olivia's advice on giving public comment.

Kendra: when you speak, your voice is worth 5x what an adult's voice would mean in that Council

Flora: a lot of people in the eco club are interested in going into politics

Lola: I'm a senior at OIHS, I'm a sailor and as such, have an obligation to help another sailor in distress. I see the ocean as being that sailor in distress. This is such a crucial decade for climate change research. I want to get my generation more excited to be involved in marine conservation. Also excited to learn from all the smart people here

10:43 AM Break

11:01 AM **MRC Work Planning for 2026**

MRC Staff/Subcommittee

Leads

• Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven

Beach clean ups in fall and spring, additional sessions with local hosts (review some past hosts). We hope for more involvement each year. More members need to come to these gatherings and give more input. For the Spring Great Island Clean Up (GICU), removed 3K lbs. of litter, many plastic nurdles.

Katie Fleming with County sanitation dept invited Ridwell program to come to SJC. Ridwell sorts and distributes material to different organizations. Sell plastic to trex decking

ACTION ITEM: Karin and Katie will make sure to distribute information about Ridwell

- Derelict Vessel Prevention Program

Kari Koski

Our subcommittee needs strengthening, more help with vessel and shore patrols. Prevention requires routine patrols, contact with boat-owners, follow-up and communication. Can aim toward voluntary improvement. Because of prevention, the number of vessels getting removed is going down. Still a lot of boat issues in Beaverton Cove. Need more eyes on shore. I'd like to do more talks in boat/yacht clubs. Get donations. Then also want input in an end-of-life-campaign for boats, honor people and their boats and their stories and figure out the best plan.

The stories are social components, lost jobs, health issues – folks pushed to live or store items in boats. The region has grown and there isn't room at the marinas or for moorage. Can't get boat lifted out at yard without insurance.

David: any discussions among boat-sellers and makers about incorporating end-of-life costs into sale of a boat? In Europe where there's no longer any landfilling of composite plastics, there are models for that.

Matt: our company is on the statewide DNR contract and once a week there's an issue with a boat. Standard call is for a 1980's 30-40' foot sailboat, also some that get washed up on shore

Frankie: the Puget Sound State of the Sound report just came out and they specifically called out the Derelict Vessel program with DNR. Talked about the legislation passed a couple cycles ago that increased capacity

ACTION: Frankie will send that report around

- Eelgrass Protection

Olivia Graham

Our eelgrass stressors project with partners in CD, FHL, County ES etc. we're gathering data to look at various water quality parameters, quarterly dive blitzes, all of last July and next July will entail fieldwork for that project. Frankie's aerial surveys to quantify boating pressure has been a big part of that.

Frankie: I sent an email last week to try to coordinate a weekend for a land-based vessel count blitz. Lopez has the most sites, we could rope in more help there. Need that off-season data. You can submit data from the kobo app

-brief discussion about possibility of marine program having their own boat and value of a fee-for-service model

Kari: our boat trips fulfill multiple goals – boat counts, eyes on shoreline issues, counting buoys, etc. It would be nice to have a flag to show that we're a government entity. Aerial vessel flights are once a month; Derelict Vessel (DV) surveys are a couple times a month between September and June.

Olivia: about land-based vessel counts – might that be a good initiative for the eco club?

Flora: yes, we have community service hours to fulfill

Sam: reminder that we have this one-time grant from NOAA and we selected kelp and eelgrass for the topic, that's an effort we'll need to start planning/talking about. That becomes available January 1

Sandy: my lab is teamed up with the Coast Salish Youth Coalition and Northwest Indian College to do an eelgrass restoration in Picnic Cove. We did a ceremonial transplant. And another project tracking boat traffic using AIS.

- * Outreach and Education

the primary activity in last year was getting MRC youth members. It can absorb the DEI and the whale-advocation

- Oil Spill Prevention and Response Preparedness/ERTV

Sam: this subcommittee doesn't correspond with a grant deliverable but it's been an important issue. There was a lot of momentum; Local Forum 2023 focus and presented at ad-hoc transboundary caucus, Cindy Wolf

was instrumental. Jay Inslee wrote a letter about this before leaving office. This year it's been hard due to budget issues and US Canadian relations. Lovel and Sam met with Jane and discussed continuing to advocate for an ERTV

Lovel: want to continue to advocate for an ERTV as a common interest between SJC and Islands Trust Council. Canada is talking about a new pipeline to Northern BC, and yet another new expansion of the current pipeline in the next 2-5 years (after last expansion in May 2024). This is a significant increase in tanker traffic coming directly into WA state to deliver to refineries here. Previous models have identified increased risk, but there's a clustering of ships coming out – ships anchoring (mostly at Vendovi island) while laden, those circumstances were never part of the model. The concern is that ships only have escorts when they're laden

David: It sounds like there may be renewed justification for having a better analysis with those considerations -more discussion between Lovel and David about strategies for follow-up from Ecology's problematic report. The MRC has already been involved.

Lovel: In 2026, Ecology will make a rule update to the oil spill contingency planning. Last year, they did a BAP (Best Achievable Protection) process; Frankie sent in a request for them to include plans for deterring whales from a major oil spill. I submitted comments advocating for more response for non-floating oils. Now with friction between Canada and the US we need to be even more prepared to deal with response on our shores. -discussion of some details for requirements for oil-spill response timing

Charles: Island Oil Spill Association is solid right now, they might be helpful in getting Ecology to come to the table

Frankie: I'm on the board of IOSA. They view themselves as an emergency-response organization, not prevention.

ACTION: Sam will set up an oil spill subcommittee meeting in January, they will select a chair at that meeting

* Marine Vessels and Infrastructure,

some discussion of what we mean by cruise ships – when they may be able to tie up in FH. Understanding of jurisdictions and recommendations to Council. Bright lights, noise, etc. This ties back to MSA use and vessel impacts

Lovel: will MRC be hosting a marine managers' workshop? Seems like a good place to bring this up as an impact

Brian: I see both sides, they bring revenue into County. But don't want them anchoring and destroying habitat. They don't tie up in FH because there's a sound ordinance in town of FH that prevents them from running generators at night. The message shouldn't be that we don't want them, it should be a message about how to treat sensitive areas and communicate expectations. There's an opportunity to for a dialogue.

David: we need discussion of policy and regulations around this, that's what the subcommittee will be about

Kendra: and just imagine if each of those visitors were paying for the privilege to enjoy this special place.

Lovel: and if they were told to anchor in designated areas in Vendovi...?

Brian: that would be an impact to economy in FH

Christina: when was the last MMW? Is there funding for that?

Frankie: there was one in 2020 and 2023

Sam: it could fit within the MRC engagement piece. The Marine managers workshop includes agency folks, Tribes ... it depends on what the topic is. The last one was specific to identifying an deprioritizing recommendations for the MSA. We'll have local organizations, County planners, Land Bank

Olivia: for the eelgrass HSIL, we built in funds for a collaborative workshop, planning for spring 2027. We'll have data to share.

SUBCOMMITTEE MAKE UP

PFSS: Karin, Adam, Sandy, Lola (interested in coordinating something with OIHS)

Derelict Vessel: Adam, Christina, Matt, David

Seagrass protection: Olivia, Beth, Christina, Sandy, Karin, Joey

Oil Spill Prevention: Lovel, Christina, Matt, Craig, David, Brian, Charles

Marine Vessels and Infrastructure (mooring buoys, cruise ships): Joey, Frankie, Kari, Olivia

Outreach and Ed (includes DEI): Sandy, Kailey, Beth, Adam

Sustainable Funding: Adam, Mike, Charles, Oliva, Flora, Brian

ACTION: Kari will send some interested non-members information about subcommittees

Olivia: comment for PFSS, Olivia made a contact with the Port about creating a sign at Jackson Beach about using poop bags to pick up garbage. But they want MRC to pay for it

ACTION item: we'll talk about this at the next PFSS meeting, Karin will loop Olivia into the next meeting,

Question: Kailey asks if Ballet school would host a beach clean-up, is there any liability involved?

Frankie: we offer release waivers

Brian: you should contact your insurance, see if you're covered for an event outside of studio and if not waivers

12:19 PM LUNCH

1:18 PM Presentation- Environmental Effects of Marine Renewable Energy *Lysel Garavelli, Debbie Rose*

Lysel: Introduction with reasons to develop marine energy, the amount of energy that can be produced from waves, currents, and thermal/salinity gradient. <https://tethys-engineering.pnnl.gov/photo-library>

OES -Environmental, international initiative for Energy Agency-Ocean energy systems, since 2010. The State of Science report, 2024 – summarized knowledge on environmental effects of using marine energy, includes the best available science and most current synthesis of understanding,

<https://tethys.pnnl.gov/publications/state-of-the-science-2024> Environmental effects of marine energy = stressors, or marine energy devices and systems that may cause harm to receptors. Receptors = marine animals, habitats, and ecosystem processes

Some examples of stressor-receptor interactions, with a green-to-red dial showing level of risk:

-collision risk, concern is the risk of rotating turbine blades causing injury to mammals, sea birds, fish etc.

We know Turbines rotate slowly with flow, no observations of these animals colliding with the device

-Underwater Noise, concern is disruption of marine animal navigation and communication, causing physical harm

We know so far, noise from these devices falls below the US Set action levels set in guidance by NOAA and BOEM

-Electromagnetic fields, concern that EMF's from subsea cables may affect animals that use natural electric or magnetic fields for orientation, navigation, or hunting. BUT we know impacts from these developments are low

-Changes in habitats; Concern that physical changes in benthic and pelagic habitats due to the presence of marine energy devices can lead to habitat loss, changes in species communication and more non-native species. BUT we can be careful with siting and small footprints

-Entanglement, concern that large animals can get tangled in mooring lines or underwater cables etc.

There will be no free ends of lines, no slack, and no entanglement incidences have been recorded yet

-Changes in Oceanographic systems; Concern for changes in flow or wave patterns, sediment transport, water quality, etc., BUT we know that individual devices don't create changes larger than natural processes

-Displacement; Concern that attraction, avoidance or exclusion triggered by animal's response (to large arrays) could affect populations. BUT so far there are no large arrays operating

Debbie: we know about effects of these devices, most environmental risk from these devices is pretty low.

Strategies for educating and publicizing this information, making science accessible and talking about the Platform, <https://openei.org/wiki/PRIMRE>. And Tethys including documents, <https://tethys.pnnl.gov/risk-retirement-evidence-bases>. and interactive tool, <https://tethys.pnnl.gov/monitoring-datasets-discoverability-matrix>; <https://tethys.pnnl.gov/management-measures>, <https://tethys.pnnl.gov/guidance-documents>

Connects stressor-receptor interactions, <https://tethys.pnnl.gov/mre-brochure> developed for new regulators etc., 25 pages instead of the several hundred page state of science report. Educational materials

<https://tethys.pnnl.gov/marine-renewable-energy-educational-resources> including a coloring book

Many international partners have contributed to this work

1:26 PM Q and A/Discussion

Charles: you said you have a meta database of monitoring databases. What percentage to you think that covers vs. the private utilities that aren't contributing?

Debbie: for everything that's funded by US, posting monitoring info in Primre is a requirement.

Karin: you mentioned that some devices are small, how big are they really?

Lysel: some could be 1-2 meters, but some much larger. Depends on the technology, that's generally.

Kari: we haven't been clear locally on the scale, still not sure what a small array vs. large array? And what's viable, how many small components needed in an array to generate usable energy

Lysel: it depends on the utility. There may be one device for an ocean salvation buoy, but for a remote community or island needing power would be 10 or more devices

Mike: Solar or wind arrays need to be near a substation to be effective. Is that true for tidal generation as well?

Lysel: no could have a wave-generating device to a buoy no substation needed but yes if it going to a coast

Jane: noticing the risk dial, it seemed the majority of them are pretty low. How is that risk measured?

Lysel: for example with collisions, we just don't know what happens to fish post collision

Debbie: for some risks that we have more information about, we can set the dial lower

Russel: thank you for your presentation. The PNNL Risk Register and PNNL teams' assistance with the OPALCO project was extremely helpful. If OPALCO continues, we look forward to the continued PNNL engagement

1:36 PM Presentation- Tidal Energy Environmental Impacts on Marine Mammals *Jason Wood*

Introduction with overview of SMRU consulting, established in 2006 as a commercial offshoot of the University of St. Andrews and the Sea Mammal Research Unit. It's an overlap of academia, industry and regulatory agencies. Assess and mitigate effects on marine mammals. Jason was an author on the OES: 2024 State of the Science Report, highlighted the paradigm of Stressor-receptor interactions, noise effects on marine mammals. Jason defines terminology displacement/avoidance/evasion – a scale from large distance to small. Displacement can mean displacement from an area, may be important from a tidal energy point of view. These units are usually in some kind of constriction or channel – that's an issue for the larger scale. That's defined as larger than six units (for which each unit could be larger than 10m). Avoidance can mean mid scale, on order of some numbers of meters, and evasion is last inches – moving to avoid a blade. Displacement hasn't been an issue yet because largest size array in Scotland now is 4-5 tidal turbines, that may be the biggest scale of projects yet. No evidence of displacement

What I'll talk about most here is avoidance. But as for collision, it's very hard to monitor in these particular sites.

- Marine Current Turbines (SeaGen) in Northern Ireland, it's a monopile with arms that went out to the side with a turbine on each that could be deployed. SMRU and PNNL studied the SeaGen project and asked, how

do harbor seals use this tidal inlet in both space and time and how does that behavior overlap with turbine ops? Does seal behavior change around the turbine and how does that change collision risk? Methods: tagged seals. A tidal system is a dynamic environment. Jason shows plots with movement in three different turbine velocities (low, moderate and high speeds). Figures show that seals swim against tidal currents. Seals foraging upstream of turbines need to swim faster against the current. In terms of depths, they do a classic U-shaped dive and once turbines are in place seals avoid it up to 400m, There's lateral avoidance. There's a paper about this in Marine Pollution Bulletin.

- SNOPUD, study partners were UW and PNNL. Proposed a 10m turbine in Admiralty Inlet. Learned a lot about harbor porpoise use, used their clicks to track their location. But there are a lot of porpoises in Admiralty Inlet. Used data to measure collision risk, and coordinated with marine mammal observations

- FORCE, partnered with Acadia University in Nova Scotia. Took a long time for turbine to be deployed; data collected until after the turbine broke. It's a challenging site. Jason shows timing of porpoise detection. As tides flowed in, numbers of porpoise detections max out because of noise of sediment movement in high flows. Shows 50% reduction in detection of porpoises while turbines were running. Summary: tidal energy has potential because it's so predictable. The state of the science report from 2024 is a good review of collision risk. Hard to understand collision risk without understanding the temporal and spatial information about the animals

2:01 PM Q and A/Discussion

Frankie: I've seen porpoises in Admiralty inlet doing behaviors I've never seen in other places. Sometimes more than 500 porpoises. Jason's point is that there are so many specific specialized variables

Kari: diet can depend on time of year, tidal period – could be fish, squid, worms, etc.

Craig: repeatedly been said there are no records of collision, but how would you record a collision?

Jason: with fish it'll be hard. With large mammals, evidence of blunt force trauma may be easier. There hasn't been such evidence around these sites in seals or porpoises

Joey: inherent tradeoff between collision and avoidance?

Jason: these companies are prioritizing not having collisions, but some noise could be a good thing so animals are aware it's there then some avoidance inevitable

- more discussion of avoidance vs. collision; some discussion of avoidance with respect to SRKW,

Kari: if there are multiple units required, then there's avoidance at multiple sites adding up to displacement

Beth: can talk yet about BPM's? can we say, this type of device will provide minimal noise or scour, etc.?

Jason: no, we're not there yet, different habitats require different designs, disparate array of engineering solutions

- brief discussion about upcoming OPALCO proposed project, Jason hasn't been consulting on it

Brian: is this going to be an ongoing topic for MRC meetings? We already wrote a letter in August stating there wasn't enough information for us to take a position, are we trying to get enough data now to take one?

David: OPALCO has now submitted their application, the comment period on that is over.

Jason: there is more to the permitting process after this one

Lovel: given that this is a pilot project, is this the appropriate location for that?

Jason: if we made enough local tidal energy to get rid of the Snake River dam, which would be a bigger benefit? That's part of one argument for doing this pilot in the Salish Sea

2:25 PM Wrap and Adjourn Retreat