



**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

**[Join the meeting now](#)**

Meeting ID: 224 695 057 192

Passcode: TY6MU3f3

### Dial in by phone

[+1 360-726-3293](tel:+13607263293), [117069420#](tel:+1117069420) 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	<b>Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott</b>
9:05 AM	<b>Public Comment</b>
9:10 AM	<b>Approve meeting agenda – All</b> <b>Approve MRC January meeting minutes – MRC Members</b>
9:15 AM	<b>NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons</b>
9:20 AM	<b>Presentation on Working with the Northwest Straits Foundation- Don Hunger, NWSF Executive Director</b>
9:40 AM	<b>MRC Updates/Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome new Marine Advisory Committee Members- <i>Sam Whitridge</i></li> <li>• Discussion re: MRC projects for 2025-2027 grant- <i>Sam Whitridge</i></li> <li>• Revisit OPALCO Tidal Energy Project and possible MRC comment letter - <i>Sam Whitridge</i></li> <li>• Update on MRC role in Orcas Landing Marine Interpretive Area next iteration – <i>Susan Eshelman</i></li> <li>• Dept of Ecology Shoreline Master Plan Rulemaking, MRC Comment Opportunity- <i>Barbara Bennett, Island County MRC</i></li> <li>• MRC subcommittee updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Outreach &amp; Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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

**MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance:** Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genter, 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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>

Level: 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](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->

[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**