



February 2023 Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, February 27, 2023

Time: 5:30-7:00 PM

Location: Zoom hybrid meeting

Minutes Prepared by Rebekah Brooks

Members present: Helle Andersen (Marine Related Recreation and Tourism Alternate), Ed Bowlby (Academic Community Representative), Mary Sue Brancato (At Large Alternate), Alan Clark (Community at Large Representative; Vice Chair; Northwest Straits Commission [NWSC]), Tim Cochnauer (Community At Large; Chair), Mike Doherty (District 3), Ann Soule (District 2 Alternate), Justin Stapleton (Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe), Nancy Stephanz (Conservation and Environment Representative Alternate), Bob Vreeland (Conservation and Environment Representative), Jeffrey Ward (District 1)

Others present: Rebekah Brooks (Rebekah Brooks Contracting), Cathy Lear (Clallam County), Rebecca Mahan (Clallam County [CC] Habitat Biologist; CC Marine Resources Committee [MRC] Coordinator), Alisa Taylor (CC MRC Intern)

Call to Order / Introductions / Changes to Agenda

Chair Tim Cochnauer called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM. Rebecca Mahan added an update on Olympia oysters.

Public Comment / Approval of November Minutes

There were no public comments. *Ann Soule moved to approve the January CC MRC minutes as written; Jeff Ward seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

NWSC Update

Alan Clark gave an update on the last NWSC Meeting. There was a presentation from the Snohomish and Island MRCs on the Port Susan Bay marine stewardship area. The two MRCs are working together on the project, with assistance from the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Policy and Governance. Alan suggested that the CC MRC might consider a similar collaboration down the line. A NWSC and MRC Retreat is scheduled for 3/30/23-3/31/23 in La Conner. The reauthorization is moving ahead in the legislature. The Commission meetings are returning to the old schedule of alternating between remote and in-person; this meeting had no remote options. More information can be found on the NWSC website: [Northwest Straits Commission | Marine Conservation in Washington \(nwstraits.org\)](https://www.nwstraits.org/).

CC MRC February Retreat Updates

Rebecca Mahan led discussion on the CC MRC February 23 Retreat that took place at the Dungeness River Center. Notes from Rebekah Brooks were distributed. Projects were put forward, ranked, and volunteered for as follows:

- 1: Educational Presentation: 10 votes, 3 volunteers
- 2: Habitat Restoration and Maintenance: 7 votes, 4 volunteers

- 3: More Admin Support: 7 votes, 3 volunteers
- 4: Pinto Abalone: 6 votes, no volunteers (more info needed)
- 5: Watershed Restoration/Maintenance Needs: 6 votes, 2 volunteers
- 6: Creative Outreach: 5 votes, 1 volunteer
- 7: Gap Analysis/Research review: 5 votes, 1 volunteer
- 8: Sound IQ/Database Liaison: 4 votes, no volunteers (paid position?)
- 9: Beach Cleanup (especially plastics): 3 votes, no volunteers
- 10: Shoreline Property Support: 2 votes, no volunteers
- 11: Oiled Wildlife Rescue: 2 votes, 1 volunteer
- 12: Seabird Surveys (from boat): 2 votes, no volunteers
- 13: WDNR Project ID/Seagrass Surveys/Restoration: 2 votes, no volunteers
- 14: WRAP Act Support: 2 votes, no volunteers
- 15: Fellowship for Outreach/education: 2 votes, 2 volunteers
- 16: “State of the Watersheds” Implementation: 2 votes, no volunteers
- 17: Education/Outreach for Environmental Stewardship: 2 votes, no volunteers

Ann Soule noted that the projects listed were only the new projects, and did not include current CC MRC projects. Rebecca suggested that existing partnerships with Shore Friendly and International Bird Rescue would make #10: Shoreline Property Support and #11: Oiled Wildlife Rescue easy to implement. Helle Andersen added that #2: Habitat Restoration and Maintenance and #5: Watershed Restoration/Maintenance Needs could be combined into a single project. Jeff Ward said that some of the 17 listed projects could be combined with existing projects, which could provide enough critical mass for the project champions. Ed Bowlby requested additional Retreat notes and documents to be sent to all MRC members, beyond those who were present at the event. Nancy Stephanz announced that the Sound Toxin Training would be taking place either on 3/22/23 or 3/29/23; *she will send the confirmed date to Rebecca for distribution. Alan Clark reported that the NWSC has discussed Pinto Abalone surveys and that the Skagit MRC has materials and reports from their surveys going back several years; the Skagit experience and resources could be helpful. Mary Sue Brancato suggested combining projects #2: Habitat Restoration and Maintenance, #5: Watershed Restoration/Maintenance Needs, and #16: “State of the Watersheds” Implementation, and relating them to #10: Shoreline Property Support and #13: WDNR Act Support. Alan brought up the previously discussed project ideas of updating the CC MRC booth and handout materials, and putting together some “canned” presentations that could be ready to go for outreach opportunities. Further discussion followed on whether to wait on projects without volunteers, involvement with the Elwha Beach project, and education and social media outreach. *Nancy Stephanz volunteered to be the champion for the Sound Toxin weekly data collection in partnership with Feiro. *Helle Andersen volunteered to lead the Valley Creek project. Rebecca reminded the group that she needed to submit a list of anticipated projects to the NWSC by 3/1/23, and full proposals in May. She added to the project list during the discussion; the list included:

- Ongoing Projects: Forage Fish surveys, Kelp surveys, PG colony surveys, Elwha Beach stewardship (Sanikan and dog waste bags), Olympia Oyster surveys with JST, Education and Outreach, Coasters, Interns, BoCC updates
- New Projects in Development: Olympia Oyster – adding seed, Fellowship/more coasters, Shore Friendly collaboration, International Bird Rescue collaborations with workshops/Hazwoper training

- Not Yet Developed Projects: Pinto Abalone, Update booth/table for festivals/events, Green crab, “Canned Presentations” on MRC projects, Storm surge/king tides, Derelict gear in PA/Elwha, Valley Creek estuary – plantings/remove riprap, Second retreat – hire a facilitator, Collaborate with COASST, Social media/website, Hire county staff

Ann Soule clarified that the project titles did not convey all that was discussed during the retreat. *Alissa Taylor will distribute photos of the project notes that were posted on the wall. Bob Vreeland expressed interest in the Storm surge/king tide monitoring.

Project Updates

Olympia Oysters

Rebecca Mahan reported that she is working with the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe and the County to get the permits for the shell placement. She is also working with them on the Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that there is no conflict of interest since Chris Burns is the project lead.

Forage Fish

Tim Cochnauer said that they completed the sampling this month; they haven’t seen any eggs in several months. He will be presenting an overview of the project at the March CC MRC meeting.

Other Project Updates

Bob Vreeland said the biotoxin surveys have not yet resumed for the season. Ed Bowlby reported that he will be participating in the regional meeting for the South Salish Sea pigeon guillemot surveys. They are on track to start surveys again at the beginning of June.

Good of the Order

Mike Doherty announced that the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) is wrapping up their presentations on the new management plan with a final presentation tonight; comments will be accepted until 4/3/23. Mike hoped that the CC MRC could send in a letter of support; *he will draft a letter for review at the March CC MRC meeting. He also announced a new administrative law involving a rescue tug in the San Juan islands; comments to the Department of Ecology will be accepted until 3/5/23. There are also two recycling bills currently in the legislature: SB 5154 and HB 1131. Rebecca Mahan reminded the group that the CC MRC-sponsored Shore Friendly workshop is scheduled for 3/11/23 at the Dungeness River Center; sign up is necessary because space is limited. *She will send out another reminder.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Chair Tim Cochnauer adjourned the meeting at 7:08 PM.

Action Items:

****Nancy Stepanz will send the confirmed date to Rebecca Mahan for the Sound Toxin Training, which will be held on 3/22/23 or 3/29/23.***

****Nancy Stepanz volunteered to be the champion for the Sound Toxin weekly data collection in partnership with Feiro.***

****Helle Andersen volunteered to lead the Valley Creek project.***

****Alissa Taylor will distribute photos of the project notes that were posted on the wall at the CC MRC Retreat.***

****Mike Doherty will draft a letter of support for the OCNMS management plan, to be reviewed at the March CC MRC meeting.***

****Rebecca Mahan will send out another reminder for the Shore Friendly workshop.***