

Minutes

**MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance:** Matt Arata, Paul Andersson, Aaron Boyles, Kailey Genther, Phil Green, Erin Licata, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Laura Jo Severson, Craig Smith, Kimbal Sundberg, Beth Tate

**Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public:** Robin Alsdurf, Tyler Davis, Derek Day, Marta Green, Sasha Horst, Brian MacDonald, Jayna Ott, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Sam Whitridge, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

9:03 AM **Convene MRC Meeting, Coast Salish Acknowledgement** *Karin Roemers-Kleven*  
*Let us acknowledge we reside on the ancestral lands and waters of the Coast Salish people who have called this place home since time immemorial and let us honor inherent, aboriginal and treaty rights that have been passed down from generation to generation.*

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

9:04 AM Introductions around the room, meeting in-person at the Grange. There are two new MRC members.

9:16 AM **Approve MRC February meeting minutes** *MRC members*  
 Kendra moves to approve February minutes, Adam seconds. All in favor, none opposed, the minutes are approved.

9:17 AM **NWSC meeting report to the MRC**  
 Table this for the moment, Christina Koons has the update and is expected to join later in the meeting

9:17 AM **MRC Updates/Business** *Sam Whitridge/Tyler Davis*  
 • Introduce and welcome new MRC members *Sam*  
*Whitridge*  
 Aaron Boyles and Craig Smith were introduced at the start of the meeting

9:18AM • MRC Staffing update *Sam*  
*Whitridge*  
 Tyler has moved from project coordinator to manager role, we have posted for a new project coordinator position.

9:19 AM • April 4-5 Marine Managers Workshop (MMW) Planning *Frances Robertson*  
 MMW is set, invitations sent in early February with registration information and instructions to provide feedback for strategic actions as part of the MSA plan finalized last week, all at <https://marinemanagersworkshop.weebly.com/> Introduction will be given by Patti Gobin. Even if can't attend can provide feedback; input into MSA plan. In the workshop, breakout groups with expert input to prioritize actions. Expect around 50 people. Please register.

9:24 AM • NWSC Derelict Crab Pot Removal Project off Lopez Island *Sam Whitridge*  
 There is a NWSF Derelict crab pot removal project off Lopez with side scan sonar to survey for derelict pots, then diving later in the spring. - more discussion of derelict nets, large project in past to remove them, still a problem

9:27 AM **MRC subcommittee updates**  
 • Oil Spill Prevention and Response Preparedness  
 Level: Commission is holding a special meeting this morning, should be recorded. I'll be leaving early for that.

Frankie: Here is an article in the local paper on the tug sinking incident [Tugboat partially sinks off Lopez ferry terminal | The Journal of the San Juan Islands \(sanjuanjournal.com\)](http://www.sanjuanjournal.com)

- This incident is discussed in detail, the boat wasn't used as a tug but rather to transport workers. Fortunately the boat could be stabilized quickly with a crane on site and diesel didn't spill. It's likely a line broke in heavy winds.

Sam: on this topic of oil spill prevention – the ECB is a committee of the Puget Sound Partnership, they rotate meetings around the Sound, and it's being held here in May. We have an opportunity as a local LIO to highlight a concern. Oil spill prevention and the need for an ERTV station is our selected topic. We can have multiple presentations within two hours, also thinking of the vessel situation as part of the broader topic.

Frankie: unfortunately, we were not successful in our HSIL application, that would have been the county-wide assessment of buoys and sensitive areas and a potential vessel and mooring buoy plan could be for county. We're trying to get some feedback now as to why we didn't get it. I think vessels just aren't seen as a big impact.

Adam: derelict vessels are connected with the housing crisis and people living aboard.

Frankie: recreational boating is a big concern of the Tribes and it's not being taken seriously.

Level: in January the ports released the ports and waterways safety assessments, showed consensus around insufficient regulations for small recreational fishing boats and their interactions with larger boats. But no work was done to identify additional needed mitigations. The ERTV is needed to address ships' loose steerage, idea is to prevent an accident. But also concern about large commercial ships' need to avoid smaller boats crossing in front

- Discussion returns to the sunken tug at Lopez: couldn't rough weather and herring spawn season be predicted? Questions: do we need to act on this in some way at this point? can staff run with it if they have a way to represent the county on this? is there some mechanism in permitting process to plan for adverse weather?

Beth: herring work window is January but that's for spawning beds and this is a holding area so likely wouldn't apply

ACTION ITEM: Beth can track down this particular permit and report back to MRC. It's likely it wasn't in-water work

9:48 AM • Derelict Vessel Prevention Program

Tyler, Marta and Adam did a patrol around Friday Harbor with Sherriff, included some Coast Guard boardings.

Adam wants to convene the subcommittee via email to better define the role of the MRC in the derelict vessel program i.e., develop a statement on the MRC's purpose/ function. Are we logistical support or expert help?

Frankie: It's still early days of building database of vessels that need to be addressed. Like the Snohomish MRC, the idea was that at intervals the list would be brought to MRC for review to decide which vessels would be prioritized.

Adam: advisory or with authoritative power?

Frankie: unclear, we're funding prevention work through MRC, so MRC needs to be involved as a lead in the project.

Marta: monthly would be too much, but quarterly review or associated with when we do a new area would be good

Adam: so we want an MRC member on each patrol, and a quarterly review of vessels?

Marta: there are issues of commitments of county money upfront. The county can take recommendations.

ACTION ITEM: subcommittee will discuss it further and bring ideas back to MRC

- Some discussion of details from the Morning Star, derelict schooner in Blind Bay, top priority boat before it sank

Question: when you do this work, is there a personal risk to you?

Adam: no, we were multiple people, and we're with the Sheriff. And the Coast Guard was with us last time

Marta: Disagree, I have been threatened. We set up a generic email and hotline number, nobody's personal name is on any letter when we send out notices. It's important everyone here knows NOT to give out a personal number.

Kendra: county is offering a customer service and de-escalation training, maybe can do a special workshop for us.

Tyler: We want to be supportive of people living that lifestyle but not let it become a tragedy of the commons.

Adam: some vessels moored illegally but being well maintained and owner contributing to community. No slips available, this is an issue with seasonal workers who come in May and stay all season. The rule is 30 days total in a

row max and no more than 90 days in one area within 5 mile radius. Need to come up with some kind of exemption. - more discussion of specifics of the rule, time for anchorage

Karin: could MRC be the entity that approaches county council with some kind of a plan for an exemption?

Kendra: that was part of our goal with the HSIL, those boats should be on moorings. We should have a system

Matt: but those boats aren't the problem, it's the ones that are going to sink

Kendra: The derelict boat program is vessel management, not yet dealing with the seasonal worker issue

Level: as to the unsuccessful grant application, could it be strengthened with a worker housing component?

Kendra: maybe we should talk with Affordable Housing about that, ask for a strategy that involves putting in buoys?

Adam: It's part of that is maritime law. A boat can anchor. There will be pushback from boaters if that's removed

Frankie: this is a great idea we need to pursue but It's a massive uphill climb until we address the issue of unauthorized buoys and tribal objections. We've had objections to no-anchor-in-eelgrass buoys.

Beth: I'd rather see mooring buoys go out that encourage people not to anchor rather than the no anchor buoys

Also need enforcement, if we generated income we could pay someone to go out and check.

- More discussion of the limited space at existing marinas, permitting to expand southern marina at Friday Harbor

10:17 AM • Outreach and Education

Frankie went to the Boat Show, Be Whale Wise booth. Shared information and flags, everyone was very positive.

Level: current status of that bill, recreational boaters' association still has some issues, requirements for some groups for outreach and education for boaters and additional time to educate them about it. Added two sections.

Frankie: the boater education includes pointers on how to judge 1000 yards and range finder cards.

Adam: we have cards and pamphlets at the port.

- More discussion of developing an app based on public sighting networks, Whale Alert System for mariners

10:25 AM • Plastic Free Salish Sea

We have the Great Island Clean up planned for Earth Day, we'll send out an email to publicize that

Kendra: Friday Harbor has a reusable bag program that's expanding to county-wide

Laura: PFSS will have a booth at Brickworks Sunday, March 5. We need more volunteers

10:27 AM • Cattle Point Interpretative

Tyler: we confirmed \$20K from LTAC for the new installation. Pursuing other funds to add amenities like power and water so we can have a water bottle filling station for bicyclists. That's a great opportunity to tell a PFSS story and a water story about the scarcity of resource for the Cape, that's the system we'd need to tie into to get water

Megan Dethier was part of a group years ago to create interpretive signage. Paul McFarland has those and plans to use them to replace outdoor signage. We as MRC need to replace interior signage and create its content.

10:30 AM **Adjourn MRC meeting, Convene CAG meeting**

Kendra moves to adjourn MRC meeting and convene the CAG, Laura Jo seconds. MRC meeting adjourned.

10:30 AM **CAG Updates**

*Sam*

*Whitridge*

• 2023 SRFB Grant Round Letters of Interest

TAG met yesterday, reviewed the 4 Lol's we received. Sam sent those out: Two from Friends of the San Juans, a shoreline restoration in Eastsound and one on Upright Head. And another two from Environmental Stewardship on Lopez, one on Weeks way and one at Odlin. This first round was informal Q& A, TAG will send in comment forms.

We also reviewed two amendment requests: An active Friends project that proposed anchor-out buoys in eelgrass needs to be rescoped due to Tribal opposition to treaty rights. They plan to return some funds that may be available to use this grant round and create education-related signage instead. The second amendment request

was for the Griffin Bay project. That was a protection project with San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) we funded in 2019. Perfect example of how things change when projects take multiple years to implement. This was a family that owns two parcels, proposal to put a conservation easement on both but as newer generation moves in, they decided on one parcel to maintain use of dock that the easement would have phased out. The TAG will continue talks with SJPT about how to rescope the project, conservation easement on one parcel and more of a restoration on the other. TAG was not ready to approve the project as proposed, want to ensure benefit to salmon is maintained and maximized. Asking for more information, want them to push harder to include more of shoreline in the easement.

Sam: next step for the TAG are site visits

10:35AM • May 3-4 SRFB Site Visit Planning

We only have 4 projects, one in Eastsound. May 4 is Thursday, typically have site visits instead of meeting. We can do it all in one day. This is not a PSAR year, which happens in even years. This is a smaller round, just SRFB funds. Amount is somewhere around \$350K, more based on what Friends returns from buoy project. 2024 will be larger.

- Some discussion of the process, funds can be traded between entities for active project, can't save/roll over
- CAG members are strongly encouraged to attend site visits. Sam will put together an agenda and logistics

10:41 AM • Salmon Recovery Council rep for San Juan County

Sam: This is an advisory group to PSP leadership. Jamie Stephens was rep for many years now need to recommend a new council rep to Partnership. Tandem with ECB rep, same person can serve in both roles. We can choose the former but latter requires application and resume. Cindy Wolf is the only person who has expressed interest. It could be anyone from County, usually an elected official but not required. They need to attend quarterly meetings. Cindy is our marine liaison to county council. I'd spend time getting her up to speed. Jamie had a lot of experience and Cindy is probably newer. Science background is helpful but there's a large legislative background  
Kendra: it can't be a staff member. I'm a little concerned that she's not here now, maybe her plate is too full. Other things coming up with Tribal relations. If we could table this for another month would give a chance to explore.

Sam: sure and I can fill in in the interim. We had an application deadline for ECB and Cindy was the only applicant

10:48 AM **Adjourn CAG meeting**