

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Aaron Boyles, Paul Andersson, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Craig Smith, Beth Tate, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Caitlyn Blair, Harriet Booth, Tyler Davis, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Kelly McCaffery, Jessica Owens, Alexandra Simpson, Kendra Smith, Sam Whitridge, Cindy Wolf

9:03 AM **Convene MRC meeting, Coast Salish Acknowledgement**

Christina Koons

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.

9:04 AM **Public Comment**

none

9:05 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve June MRC meeting minutes**

MRC members

All approve the agenda, Lovel abstains (wasn't at the last meeting). Craig moves to accept the June meeting minutes, Aaron seconds, Lovel abstains, all in favor, approved.

9:06 AM **NWSC June meeting report to the MRC**

Christina Koons

Met at Lopez end of June, Sam/Craig/Christina attended and many from the Commission. Sam gave a report at Odlin about County projects. Then a full meeting at church near town. Discussed support for new distance from whales, ECB visit to SJI's. Efforts for reauthorization for the MRC system are somewhat stalled, trying to get this bill on the docket.

9:10 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

Sam Whitridge/Tyler Davis

- MRC Staff Meeting Report (June 12th)

Sam Whitridge

Held in person at Padilla Bay, featured all MRC staff around the region, great to get together in person. Discussion regarding communication issues between MRC's and NWSF. Late summer/early fall plan to meet to address that.

- 2023 Northwest Straits Initiative Conference

Sam Whitridge

-discussed NWS conference, November 3-4 in Port Townsend at NW Maritime Center. Registration information going out in August. There's a call for conference submissions, opportunity to provide a presentation/poster/table display to highlight local work here. Deadline for submission is in late August. Snapshot presentation is up to 15 minutes, to showcase a project. Could be a poster/table display in the gallery room and could contribute to a combined slide show.

Caitlyn: one slide show for photo submissions asking MRC's to submit recent photos with credits; the other is shared slides that will have all the snapshot presentations instead of separate slide shows. Caitlyn can provide the template.

Christina: possible to present on the Roberts bank terminal?

ACTION ITEM: Caitlyn will loop in Lucas and Sasha on that question and follow up via email

Sam: it seemed more focused on MRC projects but given the relevance of the terminal to all MRC's it's appropriate.

Craig: Inclusion of the ERTV issue with Roberts Banks would also be good

Cindy: I'd like to see some focus brought to the amount of nearshore habitat we have here, how much restoration is happening and how much more is left to do, and it's important to frame the Roberts bank issue in terms of the ERTV. This conference can be about looking for allies regionally to help advocate for why that's important

Sam: staff will put together a poster to highlight the issues Cindy just brought up, we'll also plan a presentation.

- neither Karin nor Christina can attend the next NWSC meeting on July 28th 11am-4pm it's at Padilla Bay, there is a ride available from Anacortes. Please let Sam or me know if you can attend. It would be great to have representation.

- Craig is available interested.

- MRC Membership Updates

Christina Koons

Sam: Sandy's membership is now official. (Congratulations all around)

Christina: we had two open seats on the MRC, advertised widely. Three applicants interviewed over last couple of weeks. There is a question of diversity and representation. Katie, Sam, Tyler and Christina participated in the interviews. There is one candidate we feel strongly would make a valuable member because of science background. But, what about diversity in the San Juans? a strong geographic representation is important. Open that conversation:

Tyler: what does diversity mean to this group? Can be defined many ways, demographic, geographic, expertise, and experience. We have some good science/research but no tourism representation now. We value representation.

Craig: these trade-offs are difficult to assess without knowing the candidates and their specific expertise.

Level: Have you identified barriers to applying? Are we not getting diverse pool of applicants? Having remote meetings helps for that geographic distribution. But can still be challenging for folks working at time when meetings take place.

Sam: we haven't identified specific barriers, mostly people are just busy. Katie did a good job of recruitment.

Christina: *provides more details about current applicants/candidates.*

MOTION: Christina move we accept David Checkley as a member and then move ahead with collecting more applicants

Karin: in your discussions, are you considering how much time the candidate has to volunteer?

Sam: we do bring up commitment expectation. We ask if they are on MRC to sit on at least one subcommittee.

Level: Great if council members can identify candidates from their respective districts, good way to get applicants.

So Jane Fuller may identify folks on Lopez, maybe Cindy knows some on Orcas, that's a great way to do outreach

Sam: to proceed, if we move forward with approving Dave Checkley that'd be 14 members and still one vacant seat. We'll keep current candidates under consideration.

Beth Tate seconds accepting Dave Checkley as a member.

All in favor, MOTION approved. Sam will follow through to put it before Council, likely on agenda in late July.

Cindy: we could do it on Decatur on the 25th (Sam will aim for that)

ACTION ITEM: let's do the outreach Level recommended, asking Jamie Stephens and others who they recommend.

9:40 AM • MRC subcommittee updates:

- Outreach and Education Update

Katie Johnson

Dock Talks are going well, Mackenna is great, passing out flags and educating about what they mean. Shipped some flags up to BC, Soundwatch folks are encountering people with whales. A few more Dock Talks planned:

Saturdays July 15th and 29th at Roche, August 4th and 26th – we'd love to have MRC members join us

- Karin wants to help with Dock Talks. Whale Flag poster on the main dock is very effective.

ACTION ITEM: Katie will send out the Dock Talk schedule of dates to MRC members.

Level: are you providing information about WDFW recent press release about the 11 whales identified at risk?

Recreational boaters aren't required but urged to keep 1000 yd distance.

Press release: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/newsroom/news-release/wdfw-calls-boaters-be-whale-wise-reports-several-southern-resident-killer-whales-poor-condition>

- San Juan County Fair Planning

Environmental Stewardship booth, it would be great to have some volunteers sign up. Katie has a schedule.

- Plastic Free Salish Sea

Karin Roemers-Kleven

There was an entangled whale in our marine waters, young T-65A5. NOAA came out to disentangle him. This reinforces the importance of the Catch More Crab program. So far, we have outreach in the form of flyers that

come with newly purchased crab pots. Heard report Port Townsend identified 500 derelict crab pots. This is a major problem. I hope Ken will allow me to have pictures of this whale to help reinforce importance of avoiding entanglements.

On a different note, whales have been coming by Eagle Cove, noticed a float drifting in the current, I don't have the means, but we need to get that out of there, it's in the path of whales and there are babies.

Craig: on the derelict trap issue, I checked with Gary Greene to see if we'd get the resolution to visualize traps in places like Lopez Sound. He said yes. We'd likely set out reference crab pots in known locations.

Sam: on that topic NWSF has been in touch with Jason Morgan, they have been doing some derelict pot removal around Lopez, I was planning to have Jason come present results at an upcoming meeting, possibly September.

- Derelict Vessel Prevention

Tyler Davis

Welcome Kari Koski, she'll be 0.5 FTE, coming on board to replace Marta Green.

Phil Green isn't here, that means we need a new representative to NWS derelict vessel working group

We've been working off a law enforcement grant that ended last month, coordinating with sheriffs department we developed a database of over 60 boats, we've rescued a few boats and a few will be on watchlists.

ACTION ITEM: Tyler can share that report from sheriffs' department

Replacing Phil as rep to the NWS dv work group:

Christina: who else serves on that committee?

Adam: I'm not quite familiar with what Phil's representation was for that position? What does that role consist of?

Sam: Every MRC has a representative on that working group. Commission got funding from DNR to form work group.

Next meeting July 24th. They're working through remaining budget and priority list of vessels.

- Adam volunteers for that role

Tyler: Matt Arata was also on that subcommittee, Jeff was involved too

- Craig also wants to be on the SJC MRC derelict vessel subcommittee

Kari: it's been a busy transition with Marta wrapping things up and handing over reins. Over holiday weekend at least four boats on the rocks, didn't need to respond but keeping abreast was a good way to meet up with all the players.

ACTION: Let's have a subcommittee meeting prior to July 24th meeting so we can touch base about our priorities

- Oil Spill Prevention and Response Preparedness

Level Pratt

Subcommittee last met in April.

- On Roberts Bank Terminal, in April federal government in Canada approved the project. Then BC had their own environmental review process with an unadvertised 30-day comment period. We've been advocating for an ERTV, but comment letter from Ecology to BC said we needed more studies to address need for an ERTV. Unfortunate because this is the window of opportunity for permitting, not hopeful that BC will require additional conditions like an ERTV. WA State agreed to engage in a collaborative discussion to evaluate the effectiveness, not a very strong requirement.

Still a few outstanding permits the project needs and outstanding litigation from the Lummi Nation. There's a requirement for the project to receive a SARA (Species At Risk Act) permit from Fisheries and Oceans in Canada, DFO, like the counterpart of NOAA. Now efforts to convince DFO to deny the permit or at least require conditions. This is a brand-new project, large footprint over the water covering Fraser River habitat, and would promote traffic for huge container ships that would need to round Turn Point, wouldn't require tug escorts cargo could be hazardous.

- Grant to address small spills, we applied for some funding for small spill education funding, still waiting on approval, hope to hear in coming weeks. We'd work in cooperation with IOSA to target some outreach around fueling stations.

Level: We have a meeting scheduled 10:30 on July 10th, if there's interest in joining the subcommittee let Level know

- Craig is interested in being on the subcommittee, he's done research on oil spill impacts

Sam: we have a Phil sized hole on almost every subcommittee.

Expecting to hear soon from the ECB about our requests to help on the ERTV issue at the transboundary caucus.

- Sea Duck Hunting Discussion

Tyler Davis

Tyler discussed this with DFW, motivated by sea duck conservation work. learned a lot about sea duck hunting:

- DFW does an amazing job of regulating it but some changes in the landscape they're trying to grapple with.

There's been a significant increase in commercialized guiding of sea duck hunting. There have been a few bad actors in that space, figuring out how to navigate. Unlike fishing, duck hunting doesn't have regulations, certifications, permits, etc.

- There's 107 days of hunting in any given year, bag limit of 7 for any given species (including two hens, other specifications). Certain moratoriums like on harlequin ducks, people come here specifically for them. There was a spike in their harvest in recent years. Trying to get more information on locations where harvest is happening. WDFW has made some considerations, like a no-hunting zone similar to an MPA like Cattle Point. But enforcement is a challenge

Karin: I hate hunting period, it's just awful. And when I clean beaches, most prevalent plastic is from guns - can we use that to force the industry to change, how can we articulate the larger impact when there are this many as litter?

Tyler: Gun wads are the most prevalent plastic, some push to have manufactures move away from plastic and back to cardboard which would decompose. They could be floating here from Skagit Valley

Craig: is this on marine waters or coastal adjacent?

Tyler: this is on marine waters, hunters in a bow or stern shooting at ducks on the water

- We could have Cal from WDFW come present to the MRC about this (YES, there is interest)

- Report on Managed Retreat Conference

Tyler Davis

Tyler attended this conference June 20-24 Columbia Climate School in NYC, multiple workshops. Some takeaways:

1. Sea level rise is happening and largely we're not ready
2. Best practices for managed retreat don't exist yet, significant difference in proactive and reactive approach throughout the world. Nature-based solutions are largely absent, litigation and legal implications represent uncharted territory. The concept that we're not ready, large-scale sea-level rise isn't new in theory but it is in practice. Here in San Juan County, we're on the ground floor/blazing trail which feels a burden but also an opportunity, we're a small progressive county we can come up with some new ideas, not a lot of regulations yet.
3. Some themes coming up – people come first, words matter. Even the term managed retreat is triggering for some. Transparency is important, visuals are important to share with community. Governments have a duty/obligation to educate/involve the community in sea level rise. Decisions need to be made clear
4. Much of conference was focused on reactive solutions, managed retreat as a response to huge natural disasters and very little being done proactively. PEOPLE FIRST theme is critical, but not mutually exclusive with nature-based solutions, very little discussion of the opportunity to prioritize people-first solutions that are also nature-based.
5. Legal implications represent uncharted territory. We have setbacks here but they aren't based on elevation
6. Timing is good, current administration has political will and funding available for climate resilience.

This conference happens every 2 years, also happens virtually, if anyone else is interested in joining.

Cindy: we have a very relevant discussion coming up in Council July 17 on the application for a grant that will require shoreline armoring to preserve a road. Should we be going after grants that require shoreline armoring in a situation in which you have water coming in from two sides? Would you be available to present about this to council July 11 or 17? <Tyler can do July 11th, Cindy and Tyler will touch base, Cindy will add it to the agenda>

Sandy: The young generation should be hearing this information. If I can work out an arrangement with science teachers at the high school like Tim Dwyer, important to reach out to that generation that will inherit these issues.

ACTION ITEM: Sandy can connect Tyler with Tim Dwyer, also Adam from Salish Sea Sciences program (in session now)

Christina: NWSC meeting on Lopez this topic came up briefly, I mentioned the process with Crescent Beach. Now County is having an engineering study done. This would be a great case study to present in Port Townsend

Craig: Hawaii has been very pro-active in outreach and planning for sea level rise, including widely available inundation maps (e.g., through press stories). The Hawaii state approach could be good model for SJC.

Level: Tyler - great presentation - thank you! Would you send us your slides? ACTION ITEM: Tyler will send slides

10:40 AM **Committee member updates and any other business**

Katie: reminder that we have a quarterly report coming up, please send in volunteer hours ASAP

Aaron: just time from the meetings? YES and any hours spent on an MRC task, also travel, site visits etc.

Cindy: I've had inquiries from interested citizens about the foamy red stuff that comes in on beaches in April/May and different colored tides and correlations with shellfish. Would the MRC like to engage in that, maybe with FHL?

SWE: Dave Checkley would be a good first place to start

Kendra: could we use a fact sheet about algae, these questions often come up

Christina: could there be a PR blurb once a month about marine happenings in the SJ's, what's on beaches, etc.?

10:46 AM **Adjourn MRC meeting**

10:46 AM **Convene CAG meeting**

10:47 AM **CAG Updates**

Sam Whitridge

- Prepare for final Salmon Recovery Grant Round Scoring in August

Reminder that CAG does final scores. TAG will do their scores and evaluations at meeting tomorrow

Sam shares spreadsheet showing 3 projects. Upright Head project from Friends has been shifted from a planning/restoration project to just planning/design. So now the total ask is reduced meaning this grant round we'll have less requested than total available. We'll have some funding leftover even if all projects get completely funded. That leaves options we'll discuss with TAG tomorrow. We can give funding to an active project that needs a cost increase or do a swap with another entity around the region in exchange for funds back in a coming year. If you're unable to attend August meeting, please send reviews/scores to Sam in advance. It's a tight turn around right after that meeting. Sam will send materials soon; we will plan to discuss scores at that meeting.

10:54 AM • Salmon Recovery Outreach Opportunity

Agreement working through County review process, but once funding is in place we have the capacity to pay for an educational component at a salmon display at San Juan Museum of History. There'll be a bathymetry map, a map showing salmon migration routes through San Juans, etc. (support from Gary Greene, Tina Whitman, etc.)

They're asking for \$750 to support an artist to help with illustrations for the display. It's a great opportunity.

- All in favor of supporting. Sam will put that in motion and let everyone know when the display is in place

10:56 AM **Adjourn CAG meeting**