



WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Scheduled for: May 5, 2022
Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Place: PW Civic Annex Building, Garden Level Conference Room. 322 N. Commercial St. Bellingham, WA
Join Zoom Meeting: Join Zoom Meeting: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85730030249
Meeting ID: 857 3003 0249
Passcode: 98225
One tap mobile: +1-253-215-8782 US (Tacoma)

We acknowledge the lands we're on today are the ancestral and current homelands of Indigenous Nations who have stewarded them since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These Indigenous Nations include the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribe.

Table with 3 columns: Item number, Time, and Description. Items include: 1. Introductions and Determine Quorum; 2. May Agenda; 3. Approval of April meeting summary; 4. Public Comment Period; 5. Clayton Beach Restoration; 6. Grant Amendment Discussion; 7. Staff Update; 8. Project Updates; 9. MRC Partner Committee Updates; 10. Adjourn.

If you're not on our Northwest Straits Commission newsletter list, you can join here: https://www.nwstraits.org/get-involved/join-the-mailing-list/

In Attendance: Austin Rose (Staff), Eleanor Hines (Chair), Colin Wahl, Mike MacKay, Alex, Heather Spore (Vice-Chair), Bob Cecile, Kathy Ketteridge, Paul Troutman, Kurt Baumgarten

Others: Jim Boyle, Lisa Kaufman (Northwest Straits Foundation), Jackie Dexter (Holdfast Mariculture, LLC), Jana Turner (Garden of the Salish Sea and Friends of Birch Bay State Park), Sasha Horst (Northwest Straits Commission), Mia Somenek (Lummi Island Heritage Trust), Alan Chapman

Whatcom County boards, commissions, and advisory committees are currently following State Open Public Meetings Act amended requirements by holding all meetings remotely. Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.

1. **Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Eleanor began the meeting with introductions. A quorum was established.
2. **May Agenda:** The May meeting agenda was approved.
3. **Approval of April Meeting Summary:** The April meeting summary was approved.
4. **Public Comment** – Jackie Dexter shared information about her plan to start Holdfast Mariculture in North Birch Bay. Holdfast Mariculture will focus on growing sugar kelp and mussels, and is set to be established by fall 22'. Jim Boyle, a recent applicant to MRC, introduced himself to the committee and expressed his interest in becoming a member.
5. **Clayton Beach Restoration:** Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF), began by updating the MRC on the Aiston Preserve restoration project on Lummi Island. Permitting is still in process, though construction may begin by fall 22'. A public hearing will be held on May 25 at 1:30. Clayton Beach, Larrabee State Park, currently has 1200 linear feet of rock armor, reminiscent of an old railroad trestle that went across the electric trolley. There is also remnant fill/dredge that supported the rail line and trolley. Herrera Consulting is conducting a feasibility study, assessing the impacts to the shoreline from removing the armor and fill. Funding is needed to keep the feasibility going. The project will be slowed down to ensure all questions from stakeholders have been addressed and feasibility and design is completed. The MRC will be working with Jason Morgan (NWSF) on monitoring, initially including: large woody debris, beach wrack, and elevation. Shellfish surveys, snorkel surveys, and European Green Crab monitoring will also be incorporated.
6. **Grant Amendment Discussion:** MRC Staff shared a suggested budget adjustment for Year 1 and Year 2 of the 2021-2023. The budget summary can be shared with via e-mail for members to review.
7. **Staff Update:** Q2 grant deliverables have been submitted to Ecology. Those deliverables included the 2021 annual report, which is also linked on the MRC website. There is an opportunity for the committee to present to County Council members at the Surface Water Work Session scheduled for June 14 10:00am – 12:00pm. Members shared their availability to help with that presentation. MRC staff met with WA State Parks regional staff to discuss the interest in protecting the eelgrass meadow adjacent to the boat ramp in Wildcat Cover, Larrabee State Park. State Parks suggested the MRC gather eelgrass data previously collected by DNR to help them make an informed decision on any actions they can take to protect that environment. The committee briefly discussed their availability to attend the June and/or July MRC meeting. Staff will send out a poll to members to help determine whether a quorum will be present at those meetings. The committee discussed providing a letter of support to the City of Bellingham for their effort to secure for the Boulevard Park Shoreline and Public Access Improvements from the State of Washington Recreation and Conservation Office Aquatic Land Enhancement Grant. The committee requested more information on the project before approving a letter of support. A soon-to-be Marine Science graduate from Western Washington University is interested in interning with the MRC to gain field and work experience. He will be plugging into various MRC projects over the summer.
8. **Project Updates:**
 - **Olympia oysters:** The MRC's annual Olympia oyster survey within the pilot plots of N. Chuckanut Bay is scheduled for May 17 and 18. Students from Bellingham Technical College will be joining the survey. Taylor Shellfish donated 12 bags of seasoned Pacific oyster shell which will be placed within the test plots to assess for larvae recruitment. Paul will also be placing ceramic tiles within the bay to assess for larvae recruitment.
 - **SW Lummi Island Beach Cleanup:** The cleanup will occur on July 14. Specialized Marine Transport will pick volunteers up from the Bellingham marina and travel to the Aiston Preserve on the east side of Lummi Island to pick up volunteers from the island before heading to the SW side of the island for the cleanup. A limit of 15 people can fit on the boat with the debris. Northwest Indian College will also be invited to join the cleanup.
 - **Beach Seine with Kids:** The first of three Beach Seine with Kids field trips was very successful. Steve Soloman, Lummi Nation, spoke to the 4th grade class from Northern Heights Elementary about the importance of salmon and clean water. Students were then joined by Lummi Natural Resources field staff to perform a beach seine at Boulevard Park. 333 salmon smolts (2 Chinook, 8 Pinks, and the remainder Chum) were caught. The kids were focused on the Lummi crew setting out the net, counting, and measuring the salmon. They also filled out their field forms which looked a lot like those used by the Lummi field team.

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9. MRC Partner Committee Updates:

- **WWIN/Speaker Series** – Whatcom Water Week is scheduled to occur September 10-18. Bellingham SeaFeast will be held on September 18. MRC Staff asked committee members to think about an event they may want to host. The MRC has previously partnered with RE Sources, Surfrider, and the Ocean Conservancy to host a beach cleanup for the International Coastal Cleanup. A “Save the Date” was shared for an upcoming JEDI training. Staff will follow up with registration info.
- **County Council** – no update
- **Port of Bellingham** – The Little Squalicum Habitat Beach restoration is almost through permitting. City of Bellingham is working on the Little Squalicum Estuary restoration and a joint press release will be distributed, along with an open house scheduled for May 25 from 6-8pm at Bellingham Technical College. It is possible that the parking lot for Little Squalicum Beach will be closed for the summer. The Port is going to apply for funds through Washington Emergency Management for funds to support feasibility, alternative analysis primarily for flooding and fish passage barrier removal in the lower Squalicum Creek area . The Port may be looking for letters of support. There are two derelict vessels outside the Padden estuary that the Port Commission approved moving forward to secure grant funding to have those removed.
- **NWSC** – The Northwest Straits Commission has an opening for a Program Coordinator position. The Northwest Straits Foundation will be hosting a Salish Sea Conservation Corps and assigned corps members to MRCs that are interested.

10. Adjourn