WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
DRAFT SUMMARY

Scheduled for:	**November 3, 2022**
Time:	**5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**
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.

1.	5:00	**Introductions and Determine Quorum**
2.		~~**October 6**~~**November 3 Agenda** **Action:** Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.		**Approval of ~~September~~ October meeting summary** **Action:** Review and approve summaries as final.
4.		**Community Updates** **Objective:** Community members attending the meeting who wish to address or update the Committee on Committee related matters will be provided up to five (5) minutes to speak.
5.	5:10	**Chuckanut Bay Voluntary No-Anchor Zone:** Dana Oster, Northwest Straits Commission **Objective:** Discuss preliminary eelgrass survey results and the MRC's interest in executing the project in Chuckanut Bay or another location.
6.	5:40	**Nominations for MRC Officer Positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, NWSC rep. NWSC alt. rep)** **Action:** Confirm nominations submitted on google form and discussion.
7.	6:00	**Staff Update**: 2023 MRC Retreat, timeline for Jones Subdivision comment period (ad hoc committee?), voting via zoom, new MRC appointment, Whatcom Compound Flood and Vulnerability Risk Assessment **Objective:** Provide staff with opportunity to relay information and updates to the full MRC.
8.	6:20	**Project Updates:** • Chuckanut PIC • CDS Proposals • Derelict vessel removal • Beach Seine With Kids
9.	6:40	**MRC Partner Committee Updates**: • WWIN/Speaker Series (Austin) – Flood Symposium • County Council • Port of Bellingham – Kurt B. • Northwest Straits Commission – Bob C.
10.	7:00pm	**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 (MRC Staff), Bob Cecile, Mike MacKay, Dan Sulak, Beth Lorence, Heather Spore, Kurt Baumgarten, Glen "Alex" Alexander, Andrew Gamble, Paul Troutman, Jim Boyle, Colin Wahl, Elma Burnham

Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are to contact MRC Staff at least 4 business days in advance.
arose@co.whatcom.wa.us

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Others: Jana Turner (Garden of the Salish Sea, Friend of Birch Bay State Park), Dana Oster (Northwest Straits Commission), Allie Simpson (Northwest Straits Commission), Alan Chapman, Victoria, Jackie Dexter

1. **Introductions and Determine Quorum**: Heather Spore (Vice-Chair) led the meeting in Eleanor's absence. Heather began the meeting with the land acknowledgment. No introductions were made.

2. **November 3 Agenda:** The November meeting was approved with edits shown in track changes.

3. **Approval of October meeting summary:** The October meeting summary was approved pending an edit to the "Protect Mud Bay Cliffs" (PMBC) acronym, which was written as (PBMC) in the draft minutes.

4. **Community Updates:** No community updates.

5. **Chuckanut Bay Voluntary No-Anchor Zone:** Dana Oster and Allie Simpson, Northwest Straits Commission, have been working with other MRCs to develop a regional project to establish voluntary No-Anchor Zones. The project started with the Jefferson County MRC. A voluntary No-Anchor Zone is a voluntary approach, using informational buoy markers placed ~25ft seaward of the edge of eelgrass beds to delineate the bed and zone of protection. These protection zones are non-regulatory. The marker buoys provide a visual cue and social prompt for boaters. In 2021, the Whatcom MRC suggested N. Chuckanut Bay as a potential No-Anchor Zone site. Commission staff worked with volunteers during the summer of 2022 to collect the number of vessels anchoring in the bay within the eelgrass delineation. In September 2022, the Northwest Straits Foundation contracted with Confluence to complete an up to date eelgrass survey using UAV, divers, and towed underwater video, to determine the extent of the eelgrass. Dana and Allie shared the results from the boat count and eelgrass survey. Multiple vessels anchored in the area throughout the summer – particularly during July and August. Vessels often anchored 100-300 ft from the trestle. There are four separate eelgrass beds along the shoreline that total 8.6 acres. The MRC should be considering the cost of ongoing maintenance of the buoys if they choose to move forward with the project. Members expressed concern about the cost benefit of the project, but understand a critical need to protect eelgrass beds. Data on potential damage to the eelgrass would be needed to justify costs of the project. The Commission is working to develop a social marketing toolkit to provide regional education and outreach on eelgrass protection. The Committee discussed supporting the social marketing effort before deciding on a No-Anchor Zone site for long term investment. The Commission requested authorization from the MRC to move forward with permitting applications for Chuckanut Bay. Members agreed to move forward with the project – authorizing the Commission to submit permit applications for the Chuckanut site, and using CDS funds to purchase supplies and hire a consultant to design the buoy assemblage. Austin will work with Commission staff to finalize the project proposal and share with the MRC for approval.

6. **Nominations for MRC Officer Positions:** MRC members made their nominations via a google poll prior to the meeting. Nominations were confirmed. MRC Chair – Heather Spore, MRC Vice-Chair – Jim Boyle, MRC NWSC rep.- Bob Cecile, and NWSC alt. rep. – Mike MacKay.

7. **Staff Update:**
   - MRC Retreat: CDS funding has been allocated to support a facilitated MRC retreat in 2023. Austin suggested a sub-committee form to outline the goals and expectations of a retreat, and will follow up via e-mail.
   - Jones Subdivision Comment Period: The potential 30-day comment period was shared. Paul Troutman, Heather Spore and Austin will draft a comment letter to be presented to the full committee at the December meeting. Upon full committee approval, the letter will be submitted to the City.
   - Voting via Zoom: The MRC's decision-making protocol was included in the November meeting packet. Austin asked members to review and provide input on any changes that should be made with respect to voting during virtual meetings. The committee determined that the decision-making platform could be used more effectively when voting via zoom. Elma volunteered to work with staff and the MRC Chair to introduce protocols and expectations that are clear and more inviting to each committee member present.
   - New MRC Appointment: Austin introduced Jackie Dexter who recently applied to fill the Economic Interest position on the MRC. The MRC Executive Committee provided a recommendation to the Executive's office for Jackie to be appointed to the MRC. Jackie's appointment is expected on November 9.
   - Whatcom Compound Flood and Vulnerability Risk Assessment: The background of the Whatcom Coastal and Riverine

Compound Flood Vulnerability and Risk Assessment project was shared. This project goal is to convene a multi-jurisdictional and collaborative partner team to complete a Vulnerability & Risk Assessment for marine shorelines and lower Nooksack riverine shorelines in Whatcom County based on a common set of agreed upon assumptions, scenarios, and probabilistic outcomes. This will be used by jurisdictions for regulatory purposes to address projected climate impacts and build community resilience. A community meeting will be held on Saturday, November 19, 1:00pm-3:00pm, Birch Bay State Park, BP Heron Center, 7290 Birch Bay Drive, Blaine, WA.

8. **Project Updates:**
   - Chuckanut PIC: Tabled for December meeting.
   - CDS Proposals: The CDS project proposals have been submitted with the exception of the Voluntary No-Anchor Zone project. Austin will work with Commission staff to finalize that proposal based on the discussion earlier in the meeting, and will send to the committee for approval.
   - Derelict vessel removal: Commission staff are setting up a workgroup, with a representative from each MRC, to review available funds and process for derelict vessel selection. The first meeting will be scheduled for sometime in November. A report will be shared at the December meeting.

9. **MRC Partner Committee Updates:**
   - WWIN/Speaker Series: Gavin Willis, Whatcom Family Farmers, will share updates on work being done on farmland to address flooding, improve riparian habitat, and promote health waterways for salmon. His presentation is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 12:00pm – 12:30pm via Zoom. Register HERE. A flyer was included in the meeting materials.
   - County Council: no report.
   - Port of Bellingham: The Little Squalicum Beach re-opening occurred on 10/27.
   - Northwest Straits Commission: Representative Debra Lekanoff provided opening remarks for the meeting and shared information on some important issues coming up in the next legislative session (clean water and habitat, and discussed issues surrounding net ecological gain). Jan Newton shared information on the Backyard Buoys project. The Northwest Straits Conference is scheduled to be held in Port Townsend November 3-4.

10. **Adjourn: 6:48pm**

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