



## April 2024 Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, April 15, 2024

Time: 5:30-7:28 PM

Location: Zoom hybrid meeting

Minutes Prepared by Rebekah Brooks

**Members present:** Helle Andersen (Marine Related Recreation and Tourism Alternate), Ioana Bociu (Academic Community Alternate), Ed Bowlby (Academic Community), Chris Burns (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe Alternate), Alan Clark (Community at Large; Northwest Straits Commission [NWSC]), Tim Cochnauer (Community at Large; Chair), Mike Doherty (District 3), Allyce Miller (Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Alternate), Ann Soule (District 2; Vice Chair), Nancy Stephanz (Conservation and Environment Alternate), LaTrisha Suggs (Port Angeles City Council), Bob Vreeland (Conservation and Environment), Jeff Ward (District 1)

**Others present:** Cynthia Harbison (Washington Department of Natural Resources [DNR]), Amelia Kalagher (CC Marine Resources Committee [MRC] Administrative Support), Joanne LaBaw (member of the public), Cathy Lear (CC), Rebecca Mahan (CC Habitat Biologist; CC MRC Coordinator), Chris Rumble (Pacific Northwest National Laboratory), Max Showalter (Washington DNR)

### Call to Order / Introductions / Changes to Agenda

Chair Tim Cochnauer called the meeting to order. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting. ***The agenda was approved by consensus.***

### Public Comment / Approval of March Minutes

***Alan Clark moved to approve the third draft March CC MRC Minutes as written; Chris Burns seconded. The motion passed unanimously.***

### Announcements

- Storage Space Moved to Port Angeles: Amelia Kalagher thanked the volunteers who helped with the successful move to J & P Mini Storage behind Corner Restaurant in Port Angeles. \*Let her know if you need a key for access.
- Annual Report (Oct 2022 – Sept 2023): Rebecca Mahan announced that the Annual Report was complete and available.

### Washington DNR Presentation on the Kelp and Eelgrass Health Plan

Cynthia Harbison and Max Showalter presented on the Statewide Kelp Forest and Eelgrass Meadow Health and Conservation Plan, which was developed to meet the need to identify priority habitat for restoration actions on a statewide scale. Three high-level goals of the plan are to 1: Protect and recover at least 10,000 acres of priority native kelp and eelgrass habitat by 2040; 2: Identify and mitigate stressors in priority habitats; and 3: Monitor distribution and trends in priority habitats. The development process involved tribal engagement; a working group of tribes, academia, government, and non-profits; public workshops; and early tribal review. The framework outline asks three questions: 1: Why protect kelp and eelgrass?; 2: What habitats can we best protect or recover?; and 3: How will we protect or recover habitats? They spent the last year mostly working on the first question, and developed ecological, economic, and socio-cultural values. A two-step framework was developed to identify priority values: Step 1: Statewide High Value Area identification, which mapped areas of shared ecological, economic, and cultural value and identified gaps in knowledge and the need for deeper local context; and Step 2: Sub-basin scale High Value Area identification, which focused on site selection and an implementation process, and integrated local data. Cynthia gave an example of the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca High Value Area, and said they were excited to be starting in an area that has a lot of healthy habitat, but also room for improvement. Max discussed the goals for sub-basin implementation, which are 1: Support ongoing efforts by DNR and partners, particularly in High Value Areas; 2: Identify ways to support new efforts in High Value Areas; 3: Identify at least 10,000 acres of DNR-managed lands for DNR-lead conservation and recovery actions; and 4: Proactively identify and leverage opportunities for conservation and recovery as they arise. Desired outcomes for sub-basin planning include a kelp and eelgrass protection zone that has strong ecological value, reflects tribal needs and support, has partner buy-in, and is on state-owned aquatic lands. They are looking for input on what areas are most important to local communities; what data, plans, or existing priorities DNR should consider in prioritization; and who else should be engaged in prioritization exercises. The group discussed the CC MRC kelp and eelgrass surveys and suggested reaching out to local fishing groups and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. More information on kelp monitoring can be found at: [https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/aqr\\_nrsh\\_monitoring\\_bull\\_kelp\\_multispectral\\_uas.pdf](https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/aqr_nrsh_monitoring_bull_kelp_multispectral_uas.pdf). Max and Cynthia can be contacted at: [max.showalter@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:max.showalter@dnr.wa.gov) or [cynthia.harbison@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:cynthia.harbison@dnr.wa.gov).

### **NWSC Update**

Alan Clark gave an update on NWSC news. The next NWSC meeting is scheduled for 4/27/24. The Great Islands Cleanup in the San Juan Islands is scheduled for 4/20/24; more information can be found at: <https://www.sanjuancountywa.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1600>. The Jefferson County MRC will be hosting their Digging for Dinner Event on 4/27/24; tickets can be reserved at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/digging-for-dinner-tickets-873035311117>. The joint CC and Jefferson County MRC meeting sparked a lot of interest. Puget Sound Day on the Hill is scheduled for 5/13/24 to 5/17/24. Representatives from NWSC will be attending. Whatcom MRC is working with Whatcom County on their Comprehensive Plan; Alan will pass along more information as things progress. The NWSC MRC Meeting will be held in November; Alan will pass those details on as they are forthcoming. Mike Doherty noted that the deadline for comments for Clallam County Hazard Mitigation is coming up; sea level rise and other marine-related climate change impacts will be relevant to add. \*Rebecca Mahan said she would resend it. Amelia Kalagher added that the Jefferson County MRC has a county commissioner on the committee to help with communication between the County and the MRC. Alan suggested that Clallam County follow suit; it was suggested that Com Ozias, as our liaison, try to attend 2-4x/year. Rebecca noted that she does send emails to the county commissioners and to the director of the Department of Community Development reminding them of every CC MRC meeting. More information can be found on the NWSC website: <https://nwstraits.org/>.

## **Advisory Role**

### Subcommittee Status

Ann Soule reported that the Advisory Role Draft Procedures were sent out and feedback was received and incorporated. Mike Doherty suggested including county staff from the Department of Health and Human Services, and that the Board of Health could be listed as another source. Next month's CC MRC meeting will include a vote for approval of the Advisory Role Procedures. A footnote was added to Step 1, adding a policy that the MRC should request notification for actions that will affect the marine or nearshore environments by casting a wide net, such as a letter to DCD, BOCC, Board of Health, etc. Deputy Director of the Department of Community Development Holden Fleming will respond to the CC MRC about the appropriate contacts. Jeff Ward thanked Alan Clark, LaTrisha Suggs, Chris Burns, Ann Stafford, Rebecca Mahan and other staff, and Ann Soule for their help with the Advisory Role process.

### Aquaculture Subcommittee Next Steps

Tim Cochnauer said that no progress had been made on this subcommittee yet. Rebecca Mahan noted that there was no response to the Doodle Poll, but \*she will send it out again tomorrow. \*Volunteers included Ed Bowlby, Lyn Muench, Tim Cochnauer, and LaTrisha Suggs.

## **Field Project Updates**

### Olympia Oyster

Chris Burns announced that the tentative date for broodstock collection is 4/29/24. A Washington Conservation Corps crew will be helping spread the oyster shell on 5/28/24 and 5/29/24. Population survey dates are yet to be confirmed.

### Forage Fish

Ioana Bociu reported that the survey went well the night before.

### Elwha Beach Stewardship

Helle Andersen said she was continuing surveys but had nothing new to report.

### Ediz Hook

Allyce Miller said that three thousand beach plants were planted, and five pounds of seed were spread by about 60 volunteers, including students. More property was planted than was expected. Two loads of derelict asphalt were disposed of as well. It was very productive.

### Sound Toxins

Nancy Stephanz noted that Amelia Kalagher had joined the survey team. They detected 24 genera today, and a couple species that can produce toxins.

### Pinto Abalone

Jeff Ward and Alan Clark had nothing new to report.

### Projects Inactive this Month:

#### *Pigeon Guillemot*

Ed Bowlby mentioned that surveys would start in the first week of June and continue for at least 10 weeks.

### *Kelp Surveys*

Alan Clark reported that the Kelp Kayak Work Group met. San Juan County is not currently monitoring, but a lot of things were discussed, including providing more information on kelp conditions, looking more at the substrate, and creating ideal data sets. A drone pilot may be able to help. The Kayak Kickoff is scheduled for 5/1/24 in Neah Bay. They are looking for one or two people to attend the Kickoff event in Neah Bay and run another one in Port Angeles. Joanne LaBaw is helping to recruit new members from the Olympic Peninsula Paddlers and asked for training dates. \*Alan will circle back with Max Showalter and Cynthia Harbison to fine tune efforts. Information on the Kelp Plan can be found at <https://www.nwstraits.org/our-work/kelp/>.

### *Shellfish Biotoxins*

Bob Vreeland announced that surveys will start on 4/24/24.

### **Education/Outreach**

#### Coasters

Coasters are available in Rebecca Mahan's office for distribution to known and new venues. Ann Soule asked for volunteers to distribute them before mid-summer. Rebecca Mahan noted that Hook and Line Pub loves the coasters and is a good place to take more.

#### New Displays

Ann Soule is seeking input from project leads for Crab, Toxins, and Pigeon Guillemots so that the posters can be completed before the fall festival season.

#### Interns

Ann Soule and Rebecca Mahan are in discussion with Peninsula College about tasks and credits for potential interns. Tim Cochnauer is going to be the project lead, and will be gathering information from other project leads to see if there are enough hours to give interns college credit. Rebecca is working with Sasha Horst to see if interns can be paid.

#### Website

Amelia Kalagher is taking suggestions for content and new ideas for the CC MRC website. She is continuing to update pages with fresh content and is also adding a Pinto Abalone page. \*She will send draft pages to the project leads. \*Please send suggestions to Amelia.

#### Future Presentations

\*Please bring suggestions to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Coordinator. Ann Soule noted that there was an interesting presentation about biotoxins making their way up the food chain that was given by Don Anderson to the Olympic Natural Resources Center; the link for the presentation can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdAiqnWgZww>. She added that another option for member education/enlightenment is to broadcast a recorded presentation like this one in webinar format immediately follow a monthly meeting, so members can watch together and chat/comment. \*The officers will discuss this idea for the future.

### **Other Updates/New Topics**

Rescue Tug Letter and Other Updates

<https://www.clallamcountymrc.org/>

Mike Doherty said that Department of Ecology staff were still on track to meet legislative deadlines for the rescue tug. Another meeting is scheduled for the end of the month. The Trans Mountain Pipeline project is progressing in Canada and is facing a lot of opposition. It would result in at least six times more tankers in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The 42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Northern Tier Pipeline veto was celebrated on 4/8/24. He also added that there were over 1800 governments active in litigation on global warming impacts.

#### Green Crab Update

Ioana Bociu announced that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has emergency measures funding for European green crab through 2025. In 2023, there was a large trapping effort in 150 locations. Much of Washington remains relatively uninvaded, but the coastal areas are being impacted. WDFW has advised that the crabs are photographed and reported; Ioana suggested that that was something the CC MRC could become involved in. Joanne LaBaw added that Washington Sea Grant did a training last month. She is participating with the Dungeness survey team; they found six green crabs last week. Specimens are collected and frozen. Nancy Stephanz said she took a molt survey course and reports her finds when she is able. Ed Bowlby and Mary Sue Brancato participate in the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe surveys.

#### River and Ocean Film Festival

The Film Festival is scheduled for 7/24/24 at the Port Angeles Field and Events Center. Rebecca Mahan sent out the link: <https://wsg.washington.edu/community-outreach/outreach-detail-pages/river-and-ocean-film-festival/>. \*Please distribute the request for films; the deadline for submittal is 4/22/24.

#### Recruiting for Open MRC Members

There are open seats for Development Community, Marine Related Recreation and Tourism, Makah Tribe, and District 3 Alternate representatives. Rebecca Mahan has not received any applications yet, but interested parties can contact her. Ann Soule is talking to Arnold Schouten about a potential member from Surfrider for the recreation seat.

#### Upcoming Elections

The elections for CC MRC Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the May meeting. Tim Cochnauer will be stepping down as Chair. Ann Soule is willing to continue as Vice Chair, but not as Chair. Ann and Tim will be happy to talk to anyone who is interested in what the position involves, and \*will make a list of responsibilities.

#### Good of the Order

- LaTrisha Suggs announced that Port Angeles is doing an Earth Day Proclamation and requested that the CC MRC accept the proclamation at the City Council meeting tomorrow night. \*A representative for the CC MRC will attend to accept the proclamation.
- Ann Soule said she heard about a proposal regarding Co2 capture that involves intense operations in a marine environment. The group discussed the location (PA Harbor) and operations of the proposal from "Ebb Carbon". The application to override public interest is due on 5/3/24. \*Rebecca Mahan will resend information on the proposal.
- Mike Doherty requested a refresher on the Open Public Meetings Act.
- It was noted that projects like Olympic oyster restoration sometimes needs many volunteers, and it was suggested that the MRC might need its own volunteer coordinator to ensure coverage for field projects, educational activities, and others.

## **Public Comments**

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory engineer Chris Ruple said he would like to be more involved with the CC MRC.

## **Adjournment**

Chair Tim Cochnauer adjourned the meeting at 7:28 PM.

## **Action Items:**

- \*Let Amelia Kalagher know if you need a key for access to the new storage unit.*
- \*Rebecca Mahan said she would resend the link to the survey for public comments on Clallam County Hazard Mitigation.*
- \*Rebecca will send the Doodle Poll for the Aquaculture Subcommittee out again tomorrow.*
- \*Volunteers for the Aquaculture Subcommittee included Ed Bowlby, Lyn Muench, Tim Cochnauer, and LaTrisha Suggs.*
- \*Alan Clark will circle back with Max Showalter and Cynthia Harbison to fine tune Kelp Survey efforts.*
- \*Amelia will send draft website pages to the project leads.*
- \*Please send website suggestions to Amelia.*
- \*Please bring future presentation suggestions to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Coordinator.*
- \*The officers will discuss showing recorded presentations as webinars for members, following future monthly meetings.*
- \*Please distribute the request for films for the Film Festival; the deadline for submittal is 4/22/24.*
- \*Ann Soule and Tim will make a list of Chair and Vice Chair responsibilities.*
- \*A representative for the CC MRC will attend the Port Angeles City Council meeting to accept the Earth Day Proclamation.*
- \*Rebecca will resend information on the Co2 capture proposal.*