



WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Scheduled for: **January 7, 2021**
 Time: **5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**
 Join Zoom Meeting: **Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/99550731250>**
Meeting ID: 995 5073 1250
Passcode: 98225
One tap mobile: +1-253-215-8782 US (Tacoma)

1.		Introductions and Determine Quorum
2.	5:00	December Agenda Action: Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.		Approval of November meeting summary Action: Review and approve summaries as final.
4.		Public Comment Period
5.	5:10	Seabed Mining: “The Dawn of an Industry” and the need for a precautionary approach: Lee First, Twin Harbors Waterkeeper and Liz Schotman, Washington Regional Manager, Surfrider Foundation
6.	6:00	MRC Retreat Planning Update (Eleanor/Austin) Action: Discuss dates/times, what to expect, and materials to review
7.	6:10	MRC Staff Update (Austin) Action: Review/discuss 2021 MRC meeting schedule, MRC vacancies and appointment schedule, MRC elevator pitch
8.	6:25	MRC Partner Committee Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWIN – Austin • Port of Bellingham – Kurt B. • County Council – Todd Donovan • NWSC – Bob C.
10.	6:45	Adjourn

In attendance: Austin Rose (MRC Staff), Eleanor Hines (Chair), Kristin Murray (Vice- Chair), Mike McKay, Alex, Andrew Gamble, Bob Cecile, Dan Sulak, Elizabeth Kilanowski, Kurt Baumgarten, Pete Sim

Others: Liz Schotman, Lee First, Alan Chapman, Annika Fain, Chris Brown, Elma Burnham, Heather Spore, Hilary Wilkinson, Jennie Tuckerman, Steve Tuckerman, Lindsey Parker, Vicki Roy

Introductions and Determine Quorum: Eleanor began the meeting at 5:02pm. There were no introductions. A quorum was established.

December Agenda: The December meeting agenda was approved.

Approval of November meeting summary: The November meeting summary was approved.

Public Comment Period: Elizabeth Kilanowski announced that this was her last MRC meeting. She thanked the committee for the electronic card that members signed and sent to her. Elizabeth and Burt will still be conducting the forage fish surveys at the Aiston Preserve. Elizabeth mentioned that she will remain on the MRC mailing list and will volunteer with projects as her time allows.

Seabed Mining: “The Dawn of an Industry” and the need for a precautionary approach: Liz Schotman and Lee First discussed what seabed mining is and the main resources looking to be extracted. A discussion about the potential impact to nearshore marine waters and coastal communities followed. The PowerPoint presentation can be viewed [HERE](#).

MRC Retreat Planning Update (Eleanor/Austin): Hilary Wilkinson, VEDA Environmental, introduced herself to the group and explained that she will be facilitating the Whatcom MRC Retreat, which is scheduled to be held virtually in two sessions February 25 and March 4 from 3:00pm – 6:00pm. Hilary has been working with an ad hoc retreat planning committee to identify what the retreat should accomplish. Draft retreat goals were included in the MRC meeting packet, and Hilary opened the discussion to the broader committee to gain input on those goals. The committee agreed on the draft goals presented. It was noted that the goals of the Whatcom MRC need to be clearly defined before identifying projects. Members mentioned that they would like to review the successes of MRC projects, improve/develop relationships with members, become more engaged in project development/execution, and community outreach.

MRC Staff Update (Austin)

- **Review/discuss 2021 MRC meeting schedule:** The 2021 meeting schedule was presented. The committee agreed to hold their regularly scheduled meeting on February 4 despite also holding the first retreat meeting on the 25th. Summer meeting dates will be tabled for discussion.
- **MRC vacancies and appointment schedule:** The MRC currently has 4 vacancies (one Scientific interest, one Economic interest, and two Conservation/Environmental interest positions). Applications for those positions were due on January 5. The MRC Executive Committee met the morning of January 7 to develop their recommendations. The recommendation will be officially approved at the January 26 County Council meetings and appointments will begin after that date.
- **MRC elevator pitch:** A small group of MRC members and a MRC volunteer met to start developing the MRC elevator pitch. The group needs to reconvene to finalize draft materials. At this time, the MRC is aiming towards a more charismatic approach, and perhaps using a small video in addition to written material.

MRC Partner Committee Updates

- **WWIN:** Austin mentioned that two surveys will soon be distributed. One survey to identify the services that best meet the needs of the WWIN membership and a second separate survey to gauge the topics of interest from the Speaker Series in addition to the format of presentation (time of day, day of the week, length of the event, etc.).
- **Port of Bellingham:** Kurt will work with Eleanor on developing a presentation from the Port on Bellingham Bay cleanup activities (potentially at the Feb 4 meeting). The Port has partnered with the City and County on a coastal storm monitoring project (Puget Sound COSMOS model) to look at more dynamic effects of sea level rise, particularly around Whatcom County. Waiting on preliminary results. USGS in California were struggling with outreach and ended up working with SeaGrant – they recently brought on WA SeaGrant staff to help with that outreach effort. Stay tuned for a local presentation on what the community could expect from that modeling. Port is moving forward with Climate Change planning/risk assessment.
- **County Council** – no update
- **NWSC** – Bob mentioned that the Northwest Straits was not successful in attaining funding for the regional eelgrass protection zone project. They will be looking into additional funding opportunities. Bob reminded the group that a Northwest Straits 101 was held on December 15, and it provided a nice overview of the history of the Northwest Straits Initiative that new members in particular may find useful. These presentations will be held twice a year.

Adjourn