



WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Scheduled for: **May 6, 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	May Agenda Action: Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.		Approval of April meeting summary Action: Review and approve summaries as final.
4.		Public Comment Period
5.	5:10	Election of MRC Vice-Chair Action: Committee elects MRC Vice-Chair position
6.	5:15	Jones Long Subdivision – Steve Sundin, City of Bellingham Objective: Allow City of Bellingham staff to share information about a planned neighborhood expansion on the north side of North Chuckanut Bay.
7.	5:35	Northwest Straits Kelp Monitoring (Dana/Eleanor) Objective: Provide committee with update on the regional kelp monitoring project and results from Whatcom County monitoring sites.
8.	6:05	MRC Staff Update (Austin): 2021-23 Northwest Straits Commission Proposal, summer meeting schedule, and project presentation to the Northwest Straits Commission. Objective: Allow staff to provide a high level overview of the project proposals, review of MRC meeting schedule, and discuss project presentation to the Commission.
9.	6:15	Whatcom County Climate Action Plan Discussion: Allow members to share their comments on the draft Land Use and Water Resources chapters.
10.	6:30	MRC Partner Committee Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWIN (Water Week, Speaker Series) – Austin • County Council – Councilman Elenbaas • Port of Bellingham – Kurt B. • NWSC – Bob C.
11.	6:55	Adjourn

In Attendance: Austin Rose, Heather Spore, Dan Sulak, Alex, Eleanor Hines, Kurt Baumgarten (Port of Bellingham), Mike MacKay, Rachel Arnold, Andrew Gamble, Bob Cecile, Jackie Bourgault, Elma Burnham, Colin Wahl, Paul Troutman

Others: Elizabeth Kilanowski, Ross Craigie, Chris Brown, Larry Horowitz, Janet Migaki, David Varner, Kim ?, Julie Hirsch, Steve Sundin (COB), Kathy Bell (COB), David Burnham, Dana Oster, Matt Larson, Alan Chapman, Joel?, Bunny Schneider, Camille?

- 1) **Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Eleanor began the meeting with introductions. A quorum was established. Participants were asked to sign in via the chat function.
- 2) **May Agenda:** A citizen sent a request via e-mail to change the language “planned neighborhood expansion” under agenda item number 6, and suggested the language be changed to “proposed”. *The committee tabled approving the agenda as written until after the presentation from the City of Bellingham.
- 3) **Approval of April meeting summary:** Meeting summary was approved as written.
- 4) **Public Comment Period:** Julie Hirsch, Garden of the Salish Curriculum, reminded the committee about the Harmful Algae Bloom Program in Drayton Harbor. Rick Beauregard, chair of the Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District Committee, is leading the project with a group of volunteers. There are two sites being monitored weekly, the Semiahmoo Plover Dock and Blaine Harbor. The data will be housed at the Garden of the Salish Sea Curriculum website (gardensalishsea.org).
- 5) **Election of MRC Vice-Chair:** Dr. Rachel Arnold, Vice-Chair nominee, is not accepting the nomination for Vice-Chair as she is moving out of state for new employment and will be resigning from the MRC. MRC staff will set up a google form for members to nominate another Vice-Chair. An election will occur at the June MRC meeting.
- 6) **Jones Long Subdivision:** Steve Sundin, Shoreline Planner, City of Bellingham (COB), and Kathy Bell, City of Bellingham (COB) will be co-managing the Jones Long Subdivision through the permitting process. Steve mentioned that the word “proposed” is consistent with the language the COB uses when discussing this particular project. A formal application or supporting environmental materials for this project have not been submitted. The COB has reviewed a [preliminary site plan](#), which Steve shared with the committee. MRC members can contact Steve if they wish to be put on the mailing list to be informed on how the project moves forward. MRC staff are already on that mailing list.

The proposed property development extends from the shoreline of the North Chuckanut Bay Tidelands – on the north end of the bay – to Viewcrest Rd. and extending from Sea Pines Rd. to South Clarkwood Dr., which is approximately 37 acres of property. 44-45 lots/units are being proposed about 450ft. linear distance from the high-water mark. The Shoreline Master Program applies to marine properties, and this shoreline zoning is “natural”. The Critical Area Ordinance also applies due to steep topography. The COB will be extensively reviewing the storm water management component, in addition to detailed and complete information related to the biodiversity area.

*A motion was made to keep the agenda language as written. The motion was seconded. There were no objections. The agenda was approved as written.

- 7) **Northwest Straits Kelp Monitoring:** Dana Oster, Marine Program Manager, Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC), and Eleanor Hines, discussed the Northwest Straits Kelp Monitoring Project. Kelp spans the interest of all 7 MRCs, and the Northwest Straits Commission works to coordinate the monitoring work. There are twenty species of kelp in WA State, that are categorized into floating kelp (including bull kelp – found in Puget Sound), and understory kelp. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has mapped the percentages of both categories of kelp within Puget Sound, Straits of Juan de Fuca, and the outer coast. The monitoring work is being done to better understand, “Is the Salish Sea experiencing major losses in bull kelp?” Losses are greatest in protected areas and inner basins, such as south Puget Sound. The Northwest Straits Commission, MRCs, and many other partners were hired by NOAA to help create the [Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan](#), which outlines clear action steps towards recovery in addition to other important facts about kelp. The MRCs goals are to: 1) Map distribution and trends of select bull kelp beds in the NW Straits region, and 2) to create a reliable long-term dataset through community science. A video of the MRCs work can be viewed [HERE](#).
- 8) **MRC Staff Update:** Austin is working with MRC project champions to develop project proposals for the Northwest Straits 2021-2023 request for proposal. The final proposal is due on June 8. The MRC will determine their summer meeting schedule at the June MRC meeting. Austin will present (on behalf of the MRC) on the MRC’s current and

proposed work in North Chuckanut Bay to the Northwest Straits Commission on May 28.

9) MRC Partner Committee Updates

- **WWIN:** no update
- **County Council:** no update
- **Port of Bellingham:** Kurt mentioned that he can help coordinate a presentation from USGS on the Puget Sound Coastal Storm Modeling System (PS-CoSMoS). The Port will be reviewing the data from the modelling as they are incorporating coastal resilience into future projects. Through the Bellingham Bay Action Team (BBAT) the Port has received funding to move forward with habitat beach improvement at Little Squalicum.
- **Northwest Straits Commission:** Efforts to secure state funding for MRCs, kelp and European green crab work were successful for the 2021-23 biennium. New officer positions to the Commission were elected. Bob encouraged Whatcom MRC members to step into leadership roles. Austin will be sharing a draft letter of support to secure federal funding to the MRCs. That letter of support will need to be approved by the committee via e-mail.

10) **Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at approx. 6:52pm