



**WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
SUMMARY
APRIL 1, 2021**

1.		Introductions and Determine Quorum
2.	5:00	April Agenda Action: Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.		Approval of February meeting summary Action: Review and approve summaries as final.
4.		Public Comment Period
5.	5:10	Roundtable Introductions and Welcome New MRC member (Kathy Ketteridge)
6.	5:20	Nominations for MRC Vice – Chair (zoom poll)
7.	5:25	Whatcom County Shoreline Master Program Plan Periodic Review Amendment (Cliff Strong) Objective: Provide information on joint local-state public comment period and inclusion of previous MRC comments. Action: Committee decision on providing further comment
8.	5:40	Summary of MRC Retreat (Austin/Eleanor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main takeaways • Review final list of project ideas
9.	5:50	2021-23 Request for Proposals for Northwest Straits Commission funding for MRCs (Austin) Objective: Allow MRC Staff to share details about the opportunity to apply for funding for the 2021-2023 award period.
10.	5:55	MRC 2021 Project Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympia oyster monitoring • North Sound Stewards • Forage fish survey location change • Summer Events – What’s the Point
11.	6:25	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.
12.	6:45	Adjourn

In attendance: Austin Rose (Staff), Eleanor Hines (Chair), Paul Troutman, Bob Cecile, Kathy Ketteridge, Bob Seaman, Kurt Baumgarten (Port of Bellingham), Alex, Jackie Bourgault, Mike MacKay, Dan Sulak, Andrew Gamble

Others: Cliff Strong (Whatcom County PDS), Allie Simpson (Northwest Straits Commission), Kathryn Mitchell (Alcoa), Megan Hintz (Lummi Nation Shellfish Biologist), Katharine Sell, Rachel Arnold, Kim?, Julie Hirsch, Elizabeth Kilanowksi

- 1. Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Eleanor began the meeting with roundtable introductions. Members shared the marine activity they are looking forward to in summer 2021.

2. **April Agenda:** The meeting agenda was approved with the addition of a presentation of aerial photos of herring spawn along Cherry Point by Mike MacKay.
3. **Approval of February meeting summary:** The February meeting summary was approved.
4. **Public Comment Period:** No public comment.
5. **Roundtable Introductions and Welcome New MRC member (Kathy Ketteridge):** Roundtable introductions occurred at the beginning of the meeting.
6. **Nominations for MRC Vice – Chair (zoom poll):** Eleanor reminded the group that Kristin Murray (former Vice-Chair) had to resign from the MRC due to new employment in Skagit. Austin launched a zoom poll for members to nominate a new Vice-Chair. Kathryn Ketteridge was not listed as an option due to her newly appointed status on the MRC. Pete Sim was not an option as his position will soon be represented by Jackie Bourgault. Six members voted, which is not a full quorum. Mike MacKay was the top choice, but Mike declined the nomination. Rachel Arnold was the runner up, and she accepted the nomination. A final election will occur in May. A full quorum is needed to approve Rachel's election.
7. **Whatcom County Shoreline Master Program Plan Periodic Review Amendment (Cliff Strong):** Cliff Strong, Whatcom County Planning and Development, explained the periodic review of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) amendments. The Planning Commission will hold a Joint (County and Department of Ecology) Public Hearing on April 22, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. Cliff highlighted the items he thought would be of most interest to the MRC which included:
 - Staff created a new Chapter 11 of the CompPlan entitled "Shorelines" which now include all the SMP policies from Title 23 as well as related policies from Chapter 10, "Environment".
 - The MRC previously supported a proposal to include a "Marine Resource Lands" chapter. The inclusion of that chapter is being considered at this time. The MRC may want to consider supporting that inclusion by writing a letter to Council and the Planning Commission.
 - There are suggestions to develop and/or strengthen policies regarding climate change/sea level rise, including the incorporation and use of new data (COSMOS, as it becomes available), to review and revise, if warranted, shoreline use regulations. The MRC may also want to provide suggestions to the Planning Commission and Council on those policies.
8. **Summary of MRC Retreat (Austin/Eleanor):** Eleanor thanked committee members for their time participating in the retreat. Summary materials were shared via e-mail. The main takeaway from the retreat was the development of a committee wide project prioritization process.
9. **2021-23 Request for Proposals for Northwest Straits Commission funding for MRCs (Austin):** Austin reminded the group that the RFP was shared via e-mail. Austin shared the final list of projects that were decided on at the MRC retreat. New projects include: rain garden, remote beach cleanups, and juvenile salmon beach seining. Austin will be working with the project champions on the project proposals.
10. **MRC 2021 Project Updates:**
 - **Olympia oyster monitoring:** Population monitoring within the Olympia oyster monitoring plots in North Chuckanut Bay will occur on May 27.
 - **North Sound Stewards:** Several upcoming events are coming up for the North Sound Stewards (NSS). You can find them on the MRC homepage and Austin will forward the NSS e-news. Eleanor mentioned the development of the Beach Stewards program.
 - **Forage fish survey location change:** Due to construction set to begin at Little Squalicum Estuary, the MRC has moved their forage fish survey index site near entrance to Squalicum Beach.

- **Summer Events** – Due to COVID precautions, What's the Point will be a live zoom event on May 27th from various locations around Whatcom County.

11. MRC Partner Committee Updates:

- **WWIN (Water Week, Speaker Series) – Austin:** There are no speaker events to be hosted by the MRC scheduled. The Speaker Series group is hoping to host another State of the Bay Research Symposium in early 2022. Water Week is tentatively scheduled for September 10-19, and will be virtual. Paul Troutman suggested we contact City of Bellingham staff regarding the proposed development in North Chuckanut Bay.
- **County Council – Councilman Elenbaas:** No report.
- **Port of Bellingham – Kurt B.:** The Port has received preliminary outputs from the COSMOS modelling. Eric Grossman would be able to present information to the MRC. The City is working with WA SeaGrant on a vulnerability assessment framework. The Port will be reviewing that work and also developing an adaptation plan for built environment and natural areas (i.e. Marine Park). When the State budget finalizes there could be funding to support the Squalicum Beach restoration. More funding would be needed for logical public access and back beach planting. The Port may be looking for a letter of support for funding opportunities.
- **NWSC – Bob C.:** The Northwest Indian Fisheries Committee sent a letter to the Governor asking to set up a committee to review the impact of recreational activities on tribal rights (land/water). This came to a forefront in 2020 with an increase in recreation. The Northwest Straits Commission will now begin their meetings with a tribal acknowledgement that honors all the tribes within the Salish Sea. The 2021 MRC conference will be virtual on October 29. A Northwest Straits 101 will be held on April 15 from 12-1pm. Allie mentioned that the NWSC has hired two Veteran's Conservation Corps to help with European Green Crab work in Drayton Harbor.

Mike MacKay shared aerial photos from herring spawn events along the Cherry Point shoreline. The presentation can be viewed here <https://app.box.com/s/d66ua2y3yep9q4pxywsove26gsg57lpr>

- 12. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm