



**WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
SUMMARY**

Scheduled for: **August 5, 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.		Tribal Acknowledgment
		<i>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 Jamestown S'Klallam, Lower Elwha Klallam, Lummi, Makah, Nooksack, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Samish, Stillaguamish, Swinomish, and Tulalip Tribes.</i>
2.	5:00	Introductions and Determine Quorum
3.		August Agenda Action: Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
4.		Approval of June meeting summary Action: Review and approve summaries as final.
5.		Public Comment Period
6.		5:10
7.	5:15	Coastal Storm Modeling System (CoSMoS) Action: <u>Develop MRC specific questions and areas of interest to guide the presentation from Eric Grossman (USGS) and Nicole Faghin (SeaGrant) to the MRC in September. The presentation will focus on CoSMoS model outputs and the applicability of the data to community planning. Develop specific questions to frame presentation from Eric Grossman (USGS) presentation to the MRC in September.</u>
8.	5:35	Project Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelp (Eleanor) • Olympia oysters – monitoring tiles (Austin/Paul)
9.	6:05	MRC Staff Update (Austin): Volunteer hours, 2021-23 Northwest Straits Commission Proposal, Mussel Watch 2021-22, new CDC guidelines and meeting, Conservation/Environmental vacancy Action: Determine capacity for Mussel Watch participation.
10.	6:30	MRC Partner Committee Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWIN (Water Week, Speaker Series) – Austin • BBAT (Eleanor) • County Council – Councilman Elenbaas • Port of Bellingham – Kurt B. • NWSC – Bob C.
11.	6:55	Adjourn

Whatcom County boards, commissions, and advisory committees are currently following State Open Public Meetings Act amended requirements by holding all meetings remotely. Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.

In attendance: Austin Rose (Staff), Bob Seaman, Glen, (Alex) Alexander, Eleanor Hines (Chair), Bob Cecile, Mike MacKay, Heather Spore, Colin Wahl, Elma Burnham, Kurt Baumgarten, Kathy Ketteridge, Dan Sulak

Others: Elizabeth Kilanowski, Leslie Perkins (Northwest Straits Commission), Julie Hirsch (Garden of the Salish Sea), Alan Chapman

1. **Tribal Acknowledgment:** The Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) went through a process of creating a tribal acknowledgement as seen on the Whatcom MRC agenda. This acknowledgement is anticipated to be shared as a verbal acknowledgement at the beginning of meetings, or events where MRC's are participating and can be used on MRC websites. The acknowledgement has been approved by the NW Indian Fisheries Commission as well as all Tribes listed in the acknowledgement, and was officially adopted at the June NWSC meeting. It was noted that MRC should refer to particular Tribes when they are present. The Whatcom MRC voted to use the acknowledgement before their general meetings, acknowledging the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe.

The MRC will reach out to Lummi Nation and the Nooksack Tribe to ensure their approval of the acknowledgment, and discuss ways the MRC can establish a working relationship with the Tribes to honor and respect the commitment stated in the acknowledgement. In addition, MRC members will communicate with other nearby Tribes about U&A information.

2. **Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Attendees participated in roundtable introductions and shared a highlight from their summer.
3. **August Agenda:** Agenda was approved with suggested changes - shown in red. Port update moved to combine with agenda item 7.
4. **Approval of June meeting summary:** June meeting summary was approved.
5. **Public Comment Period:** No public comment.
6. **Nomination of MRC Vice-Chair:** Alex accepted the nomination of Vice-Chair until the end of 2021. The MRC formally elected Alex for the officer position.
7. **Coastal Storm Modeling System (CoSMoS):** Kurt Baumgarten mentioned that the CoSMoS project is funded by Whatcom County, City of Bellingham, and Port of Bellingham to examine future coastal changes. USGS and Washington SeaGrant (WSG) presented the project to the Whatcom County Council in April 2021. Recording can be found [HERE](#). USGS started the project in California and data was put into a web based platform that can be used to run scenarios to look at community impacts from coastal flooding. CoSMoS adds complexity to a static model (relative sea level rise) by adding real time data such as tides, wind, waves, and atmospheric conditions to create a real world scenario of what may be experienced in a coastal flood event. Kurt shared examples of how the Port of Bellingham plans to use the model. Whatcom County is the first county in Washington State utilizing this model. It is anticipated to become the new model for Puget Sound for assessing sea level rise and coastal flooding. USGS and WSG will be presenting to the Whatcom MRC in September. Kurt suggested the MRC consider their monitoring and restoration work (i.e. forage fish, establishment of Olympia oysters) and interest in public access to the shoreline when developing specific questions about this model.

Port of Bellingham Update: The Port has been working with a GIS consultant to develop a user friendly ArcGIS platform to host CoSMoS data for the Port to plan projects (ex: Fairhaven Marine Industrial Park) and include coastal resilience. The Port is also working with a consultant on a vulnerability assessment of Port infrastructure (built environment and parks) to assess adaptive capacity. Restoration work is planned for Little Squalicum Beach and CoSMoS data will be used to determine potential flood impacts as well as a balance of the dynamic environment of the beach, the nearby built environment, and the anticipated habitat gains from restoration.

8. **Project Updates:**

- **Kelp (Eleanor):** Kelp surveys are being re-scheduled due to weather (wind). Contact Eleanor if you are interested in participating. Bob Cecile is working on a frame for the GoPro – “Mumford frame” (original design by Tom Mumford).
- **Olympia oysters – monitoring tiles (Austin/Paul):** Austin mentioned that Paul Troutman was scheduled to meet with Paul Dinnel to assess the ceramic tiles that were placed in the Chuckanut channel to monitor settlement of

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Olympia oyster larvae. Update is anticipated in September.

9. MRC Staff Update (Austin)

- **Volunteer Hours:** Austin reminded members to submit their volunteer hours either by using the Excel sheet provided or via email.
- **2021-2023 Northwest Straits Commission Proposal:** The Commission approved the MRC proposal and the grant is anticipated to be presented to Whatcom County Council on September 14 or September 28. Work is planned to begin on October 1.
- **Mussel Watch 2021-2022:** WDFW has invited the MRC to participate in the Mussel Watch program. Four sites will be studied in Whatcom County: Chuckanut - Clark's Point, Drayton Harbor, Locust Beach, and the Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve near Conoco Phillips. Members voiced interest and availability to help with this monitoring again.
- **New CDC Guidelines and Committee meetings:** Due to construction of the Civic Annex building and increased COVID cases in Whatcom County, MRC meetings will likely stay virtual through the end of 2021. Austin will look into an outdoor meeting for September or October.
- **Conservation/Environmental Vacancy:** Austin reminded the committee of the current MRC vacancy and recommended members share the announcement posted on the MRC website.
- **Clayton Beach Restoration:** Lisa Kaufman with the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) came across the possibility of a restoration project along the shoreline at Clayton Beach in Larrabee State Park. This would be a great opportunity for both Whatcom and Skagit MRCs to work together. Technically the beach is in Skagit County, but the project has been on the WRIA 1 project list, so it spans the geographies of both MRCs. There is approx. 1,300 linear feet of rock armor, old pilings, and recent rock debris on the shoreline from BNSF actions. State Parks is excited about the prospect of a shoreline project and is currently working on a project (set to launch in fall 2021) to reroute the trail to the beach including an overpass over the railroad. Members expressed interest in being involved with all aspects of this potential shoreline restoration project.
- **Drayton Harbor EandO:** WDFW is planning a large grid survey for European Green Crab (EGC) in Drayton Harbor. This is a huge effort as they are planning to trap the entirety of Drayton Harbor from subtidal to upstream in the creeks all in one week. WDFW would like to have an education and outreach table on EGC and other aquatic invasive species at the marina. Members expressed interest and availability to help to work this table.

10. MRC Partner Committee Updates:

- **WWIN (Water Week, Speaker Series) – Austin:**
 - [Whatcom Water Week](#) is occurring mostly virtually September 11- September 19. The International Coastal Cleanup (**September 18**) is an event planned and an opportunity for the MRC to partner with other local organizations for a beach cleanup. The MRC should choose a beach to host a cleanup.
 - Eleanor shared information about the [Escaped Trash Assess Protocol \(ETAP\)](#). A volunteer would like to do an ETAP survey along the Drayton Harbor shoreline in spring of 2022 and involve the local community and RE Sources. Eleanor will send a detailed e-mail to the full committee.
 - Austin mentioned that the MRC was invited to host a booth at [Run with the Chums](#), scheduled for **September 11 9:30am – 12:30pm**. Committee members will let Austin know if available.
 - The Speaker Series subcommittee is working to develop a “marine research symposium” to provide a forum to share information on marine research and recovery, better understand the current conditions, identify data gaps, inform future research, and support resource management of Whatcom County marine waters and shorelines. The primary geographic focus is the marine and nearshore from the Canadian border south to Chuckanut Bay. There is a potential to work with the Salish Sea Institute and include information about impacts from the Fraser River. The subcommittee would like to host the event in January or February 2022. Contact Austin if interested in joining the planning committee.
- **Bellingham Bay Action Team (BBAT):** Eleanor described the function and interest of BBAT. The GP West Chlor-Alkali comment period for the draft cleanup plan recently closed. The waterfront cleanup is going to be phased out over the next several years.
- **County Council – Councilman Elenbaas** no update

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- **NWSC:** Bob Cecile mentioned that the new [State of the Salish Sea report](#) is available for download and print access. Each MRC will receive a printed report. The MRC grant proposals have been approved for the next biennium. Forage fish surveys will continue through WDFW. The Commission has set up a subcommittee to determine if the forage fish survey can be done in house. An Initiative retreat/planning meeting is scheduled for September. The MRC conference is planned to be virtual in November. There is interest across all MRC's to host internships. The Commission is looking to offer a centralized internship opportunity.

11. Adjourn