



November 2023 Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, November 20, 2023

Time: 5:30-7:16 PM

Location: Zoom hybrid meeting

Minutes Prepared by Rebekah Brooks

Members present: Helle Andersen (Marine Related Recreation and Tourism Alternate), Ed Bowlby (Academic Community), Mike Doherty (District 3), Robert Knapp (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe), Arnold Schouten (Development Community), Ann Soule (District 2; Vice Chair), Ann Stafford (Marine Related Recreation and Tourism), Nancy Stephanz (Ecology Alternate), LaTrisha Suggs (Port Angeles City Council), Bob Vreeland (Conservation and Environment), Lance Vail (District 1 Alternate), Jeff Ward (District 1)

Others present: Rich Havel (Citizen Observer), Cathy Lear (CC), Rebecca Mahan (CC Habitat Biologist; CC Marine Resources Committee [MRC] Coordinator), Alisa Taylor (CC MRC Volunteer)

Call to Order / Introductions / Changes to Agenda

Ann Soule called the meeting to order in Tim Cochnauer’s excused absence. A quorum was not present at the beginning of the meeting, so decision items were postponed until a quorum arrived.

Public Comment / Approval of October Minutes

There were no public comments. Approval of the October minutes was postponed until later in the meeting. ***When a quorum was present, Nancy Stephanz moved to approve the October CC MRC minutes; Arnold Schouten seconded. Ann Soule clarified that she distributed the overview of the Exec’s vision of the Advisory Role Subcommittee to the Subcommittee rather than the full Committee, but if anyone would like a copy, please let her know. The motion to accept the minutes with that change passed with all in favor.***

Announcements

- Oiled Wildlife First Response / 24hr HAZWOPER: Rebecca Mahan announced the upcoming training, scheduled for 2/13/24-2/14/24 at Red Cedar Hall in Blyn, WA. The CC MRC will sponsor the event in partnership with the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. Registration will be limited to 50 people; more information will follow.
- Annual Workplan Draft: Rebecca attached the Draft Workplan to the CC MRC meeting agenda for review. The new projects and their deliverables are still to be added. *Please send any

questions or comments to Rebecca by the end of November. The Workplan is due in January, so it will be discussed at the December CC MRC meeting.

NWSC Update

Alan Clark was not present for an update on NWSC news. CC MRC members who attended the 2023 NWSC Conference on 11/3/23-11/4/23 shared some takeaways from the event. Mike Doherty and Nancy Stephanz listed the presentations and panels on rain gardens, sea level rise, no anchor zones, storm surges, kelp, MRC projects, the history of the MRCs, and climate resiliency. Nancy was disappointed that they were unable to ask questions at the panel discussions. Ann Soule shared Tim Cochnauer's key takeaways: the need for more involvement from the County Commissioners that he thought could be facilitated through presentations from project leads; and the possibility of increasing their interaction with the County and the cities on shoreline permitting. Regarding the involvement with the County Commissioners, Rebecca Mahan added that the Commissioners are looking to the MRC for European green crab leadership; the crabs have been found recently in the Port Angeles lagoon and in Salt Creek. She advocated for working with the tribes on their trapping efforts. Ed Bowlby said that he and Mary Sue Brancato assist the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. Jeff Ward said that in the past, the CC MRC had sponsored an intern to help the Makah Tribe with their efforts. LaTrisha Suggs suggested sponsoring a Huxley program college intern, but Rebecca has had no luck garnering student interest with past efforts. The group discussed pursuing the college intern idea further and following up on the shoreline permitting process at a following meeting. Jeff Ward added that the panel discussions were particularly beneficial, but he agreed that it would have been helpful to be able to ask questions. He thought that the project that built the remotely operated vehicle in partnership with students was an example of exactly the kind of work that the CC MRC should be doing, namely teaching and engaging students in science. Ann Stafford appreciated learning about the history of the NWSC and its involvement with the MRCs. Ann Soule noted that the session that was facilitated to encourage communication between the attendees was somewhat awkward and seemed moderately successful. No one visited the CC MRC booth to discuss how to engage with the County Commissioners, so she and Ann Stafford were unable to get information from others on that issue. Rebecca mentioned that there was a survey that was distributed and asked the attendees to fill it out. Robert Knapp noted in the Chat that the Shoreline Master Plan was required to be updated every eight years. He enjoyed being on the panel discussion but regretted that there was not more time for questions. His big takeaway was how climate change had gone from being a minor topic at the last conference three years ago, to a major focus of this conference, with temperature rise being one of the biggest impacts. More information can be found on the NWSC website: [Northwest Straits Commission | Marine Conservation in Washington \(nwstraits.org\)](https://www.nwstraits.org/).

Advisory Role

Subcommittee Status

Ann Soule reminded the group that the Advisory Role Subcommittee met to develop a process for how the CC MRC would form and provide official comments in keeping with the CC MRC bylaws and tribal guidance. *Jeff Ward, Alan Clark, Ann Stafford, LaTrisha Suggs, Chris Burns, and a representative from the NWSC were among the volunteers. Sequim City Council member Kathy Downer, and Allyce Miller with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe are both possible Subcommittee members. *Ann Soule, Tim Cochnauer, and Rebecca Mahan agreed to help the Subcommittee get started. It is anticipated to be a three-to-four-month process. *The overview of the Exec's vision of the Advisory Role Subcommittee will be sent to the full Committee. Mike Doherty suggested establishing the rules for a federally chartered group on when they are required and allowed to give advice. A chair is still needed. Jeff Ward outlined his basic proposal, which included identifying the issue in question, seeing if members would be willing to form a subcommittee to look at the issue in depth, investigating the issue to create a synopsis,

forming a CC MRC consensus, and deciding how best to bring the issue to the attention of the public.

*Rebecca Mahan will contact the Subcommittee volunteers about a meeting date.

Field Project Updates

Olympia Oyster

Chris Burns was not present for an update. Rebecca Mahan confirmed that the permits and oyster shell had been obtained. A time extension was being filed for the project.

Pigeon Guillemot

There was no update, as this is a seasonal project and currently not active.

Forage Fish

Tim Cochnauer was not present for an update, but Helle Andersen said she would be sampling tomorrow.

Elwha Beach Stewardship

Helle Andersen reported that Cathy Lear reached out to the road department about counting cars at the Elwha Dike Road. A road counter that was installed for seven days in October recorded 378 cars during that time, which was extrapolated to almost 1700 cars visiting the beach in October. Considering that the month of October is between the busiest summer months and the quietest winter months, the engineer was comfortable extrapolating the numbers out for the year, which would mean that an estimated 19,700 vehicles come to the Elwha Beach per year. Helle's surveys have found that an average of 1.76 persons and 0.27 dogs per vehicle visit the beach, which infers that 34,690 people and more than 5300 dogs visit per year. Helle will continue her surveys through May. The engineer agreed to install the road counter for a week in the summer as well. The numbers more than justify supporting the portable restroom at the trailhead.

Kelp Surveys

There was no update, as this is a seasonal project and currently not active.

Shellfish Biotoxins

There was no update, as this is a seasonal project and currently not active.

Sound Toxins

Nancy Stephanz reported that the sampling was continuing weekly. After seeing a reduction in the poisonous species in recent weeks, three were identified again in last week's survey. Feiro Marine Center confirmed that there was a corresponding sewage spill during that survey, which seems to have been the cause.

Pinto Abalone

Jeff Ward said that the funding was confirmed for the pinto abalone surveys for 2024 and 2025. The species were overharvested almost to extinction until the recreational harvest was cancelled in 1994, but they have never recovered. The Puget Sound Restoration Fund and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife asked for participation in surveys to identify the remnant population in hopes of future restoration efforts. There will be two diver surveys in year one in the Port Angeles area and at Pillar Point, with expanded diver surveys at each location in year two. Alan Clark and Jeff are co-leading the project.

Education/Outreach

Coasters

Ann Soule said that more coasters were available for distribution.

New Displays

Ann Soule said that there were three more posters left to finalize.

Future Presentations

- The Blob (for public): Ed Bowlby said that he had not moved on this yet but would like to work on it if someone would be interested in helping. *Ann Soule volunteered to help with a targeted subcommittee. *Rebecca Mahan will send out an email with Ed's notes about the idea with a request for more volunteers.
- Aquaculture (CC MRC only at first): Jim Parsons with the Northwest Aquaculture Alliance said he would be happy to present. The group had agreed that they would prefer a January presentation if possible. *Rebecca Mahan will contact Jim again about presenting.
- Dr. Catherine Copass (Olympic Forest Coalition): Ann Stafford suggested inviting Dr. Copass to give a presentation about Clallam County forest stands, their ecological connections, and their impact on climate change. The group discussed Dr. Copass' past presentations and various presentation scenarios. Ann Stafford was not present for this conversation, so it was agreed to circle back to this topic at the next CC MRC meeting for further discussion.

Other Updates/New Topics

Update on CMRC Part-time Administrative Assistant

Rebecca Mahan said that the new assistant position should be posted soon.

Update on Orca Day Beach Cleanup

Rebecca Mahan reported that the cleanup went very well. Over 40 pounds of debris were collected.

Rescue Tug Letter

Mike Doherty had been in touch with the project lead, who contacted the Board of Pilotage. They were still in the rule development phase, so there was no draft rule to circulate yet or to comment on. The group discussed the possibility of signing a letter drafted by the San Juan MRC, who has been involved with the issue more extensively. *Mike will contact the San Juan MRC before the next CC MRC meeting to see about signing a letter.

Review of Department of Ecology's Oil Spill and Wildlife Rescue Program

Ed Bowlby said that the comment period had closed.

Adopt a Beach for CoastSavers

CoastSavers asked the CC MRC if there was a beach that they would like to sponsor for the Adopt a Beach program. The group has not decided on whether to participate or not.

Maritime Renewable Energy Update

Lance Vail brought the group up to speed on a marine renewable energy study from the Pacific Northwest National Labs and the North Olympic Development Council, funded by the US Department of Energy. The study is looking at public outreach and involvement regarding renewable tidal and wave energy, not wind energy. Lance added that this is not a particularly good area for either of those energy sources. They are considering hybrid micro grids and various types of energy storage, but tidal

technology is not yet advanced enough for major deployment. There will be further development over the next few months. Lance said he was happy to talk about the topic further.

Good of the Order

- Nancy Stephanz said she signed up for an Oil Spill Risk Discussion on 11/30/23.
- Mike Doherty asked Helle Andersen to invite the biology professors from Peninsula College to come talk to the CC MRC about engaging student interns. LaTrisha Suggs suggested talking to the High School science teacher at Lincoln School as well because interning with the CC MRC could be a viable way for students to make up a science credit. The group decided to circle back on this topic to decide when to invite the teachers to a meeting, and who should reach out.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Ann Soule adjourned the meeting at 7:16 PM.

Action Items:

****Please send any questions or comments on the Workplan to Rebecca Mahan by the end of November.***

****Jeff Ward, Alan Clark, Ann Stafford, LaTrisha Suggs, Chris Burns, and a representative from the NWSC were among the Advisory Role Subcommittee volunteers.***

****Ann Soule, Tim Cochnauer, and Rebecca Mahan agreed to help the Subcommittee get started.***

****The overview of the Exec's vision of the Advisory Role Subcommittee will be sent to the full Committee.***

****Rebecca Mahan will contact the Subcommittee volunteers about a meeting date.***

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****Rebecca Mahan will send out an email with Ed Bowlby's notes about the idea with a request for more volunteers.***

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****Mike will contact the San Juan MRC before the next CC MRC meeting to see about signing a letter.***