



March 2024 Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, March 18, 2024

Time: 5:30-7:08 PM

Location: Zoom hybrid meeting

Minutes Prepared by Rebekah Brooks

Members present: Chris Burns (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe Alternate), Alan Clark (Community at Large; Northwest Straits Commission [NWSC]), Katharine Frazier (Port of Port Angeles), Robert Knapp (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe), Allyce Miller (Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Alternate), Ann Soule (District 2; Vice Chair), Nancy Stephanz (Conservation and Environment Alternate), Lance Vail (District 1 Alternate), Bob Vreeland (Conservation and Environment), Jeff Ward (District 1), Harmony Rutter (City of Sequim)

Others present: Holden Fleming (CC Deputy Director, Department of Community Development), Amelia Kalagher (CC Marine Resources Committee [MRC] Administrative Support), Rebecca Mahan (CC Habitat Biologist; CC MRC Coordinator), Joe Schmidt (member of the public)

Call to Order / Introductions / Changes to Agenda

Acting Chair Ann Soule called the meeting to order. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment / Approval of February Minutes

Nancy Stephanz moved to approve the February CC MRC Minutes as written; Chris Burns seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements

- Joint Meeting with Jefferson County MRC on 3/6/24: Rebecca Mahan announced that the joint meeting was a success. Clallam County Commissioner Randy Johnson commented that he only wished it had been longer. Rebecca has a recording of the presentation on treaty rights from the Northwest Indian Fish Commission if anyone is interested. She expressed thanks to Robert Knapp and the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe for hosting.
- Moving Storage Space to Port Angeles: Amelia Kalagher explained that it would be beneficial to move the CC MRC storage space to a more central location, at J & P Mini Storage behind Les Schwab in Port Angeles. Amelia will be working on the move on 3/19/24 and a work party is scheduled for 3/25/24.

- Ediz Hook Planting Event: This is scheduled for 3/26/24 and 3/28/24. All volunteer slots are full. There is five pounds of seed and 3,000 bare root plants to spread. A reporter will be present to take photos of the event.
- Shared Drive for CC MRC Members: Amelia created a shared drive for file sharing between CC MRC members, including private files for subcommittees. She reminded the group that volunteer hours are due to be entered this month, as the grant deadline is 4/4/24.

NWSC Update

Alan Clark gave an update on NWSC news. The next NWSC meeting is scheduled for 3/29/24. The Executive Committee received the good news that Senator Murray secured \$1 million for programmatic funding for the 2024 NWSC budget; this continues the congressionally directed spending funds and can be requested again next year. It also opens the door to ongoing appropriations and is another step toward a permanent appropriation for NWSC and MRCs. The Senator's staff said it was a big win but was hard won. The NWSC would like to thank Senator Murray through Puget Sound Day, and by collecting photos and video clips of MRC members at work saying thank you for the funds. It appears that the funding will continue to support programs that already exist, but it is possible that capacity could be increased as well. More information can be found on the NWSC website: <https://nwstraits.org/>.

Advisory Role

Subcommittee Status

Jeff Ward announced that the subcommittee completed their first task of producing a draft report that describes the process for new or existing actions in Clallam County that may affect marine resources. The draft was sent to the CC MRC Chair and Vice Chair. The subcommittee was formed in December 2023 with Jeff, Ann Stafford, Alan Clark, LaTrisha Suggs, and Chris Burns as volunteers. They began work on the draft report with Ann Soule's help in January 2024, then held twice monthly meetings from January to March. Guiding principles for the advisory process were to align with enabling legislation, resolutions, and bylaws; and to provide advice and consultation consistent with tribal treaty rights. The CC MRC roles and responsibilities come from the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) Resolution 58-1999 and are defined as serving as an advisory committee to the BoCC; having a mission to address local marine issues and to recommend remedial efforts; and coordinating with other agencies, tribes, and entities. The subcommittee came up with four steps to look at an issue or action: 1: *Identify* a connection to marine resources; 2: *Investigate* by developing background information; 3: *Integrate* the likely positive or negative aspects; and 4: *Inform* by providing advice, education, outreach, or support. Discussion followed on the importance of communication and transparency, especially when it came to contentious issues. It was also suggested that the CC MRC have a representative present at the BoCC meetings. Jeff requested comments on the draft report from the full CC MRC by 3/29/24.

Aquaculture Subcommittee

Rebecca Mahan sent out a second Doodle poll about an initial meeting to discuss another aquaculture presentation, because no one had responded to the first poll. *She requested members to please respond and will send the poll out again.

Field Project Updates

Olympia Oyster

Chris Burns reported that four thousand bags of oyster shell were successfully distributed to beaches. The project is now moving into phase two, which will involve spreading the shell, and may also include

putting out some seeded cultch. Rebecca added that Sasha Horst said that was outside the scope for the project funding, but it could be added as an amendment.

Forage Fish

Tim Cochnauer was not present for an update.

Elwha Beach Stewardship

Rebecca Mahan said she was in communication with the portable toilet company about posting a CC MRC sticker with a QR code.

Ediz Hook

There are two planting events scheduled; see announcements for more information.

Sound Toxins

Nancy Stephanz reported that they are continuing weekly sampling. Today's sample showed very few toxins. She attended a Sound Toxins event in Seattle and learned that three new sites were being initiated.

Pinto Abalone

Jeff Ward said that they were on track with the quality assurance plan. Field work will not start until October.

Projects Inactive this Month (no updates):

Pigeon Guillemot

Kelp Surveys

Information on the Kelp Plan can be found at <https://www.nwstraits.org/our-work/kelp/>.

Shellfish Biotoxins

Education/Outreach

Coasters

Coasters are available in Rebecca Mahan's office for distribution to known and new venues.

New Displays

Ann Soule said there was nothing new to report on the project posters for the next three projects: Forage Fish, Kelp, and Olympia Oysters.

Interns

Project suggestions and volunteer mentors are needed. Ann Soule explained that the CC MRC was working with Peninsula College to try to integrate the internship program with the student programs so that the student interns could receive payment without being hired as County employees.

Website

Amelia Kalagher is taking suggestions for content and new ideas for the CC MRC website. She has been working on the back pages and would like to hear ideas for the homepage and what project leads would like to include for their project pages. *Please send suggestions to Amelia.

Future Presentations

- CC MRC April Meeting: Max Showalter (Department of Natural Resources Executive Policy Team) will present on the kelp and eelgrass health plan, which can be found here: https://app.leg.wa.gov/ReportsToTheLegislature/Home/GetPDF?fileName=2023_KelpAndEelgrassHealthAndConservation_Prioritization%20Plan_196dcf40-a44c-47f2-b973-7c11f578a5b0.pdf.
- Addition topic suggestions: The group discussed a recent presentation to the Dungeness Resource Management Team on the La Nina and El Nino periods and the possibility of inviting a similar presentation to the CC MRC.

Other Updates/New Topics

Rescue Tug Letter

Mike Doherty was not present for an update.

Green Crab Update

Ioana Bociu, Joann LaBaw, and Lance Vail have all volunteered to provide updates. Lance said that he had been focusing on distributing Catch More Crab and European green crab cards at the boat launches. He has talked to local fishers who were not sure about trapping plans for this year. Talking to people at the Port Angeles City Pier who were unloading their boats has not been effective in the past, but he is planning to hand out rot cord to crabbers as a way to initiate conversations.

River and Ocean Film Festival

The Film Festival is scheduled for 7/24/24 at the Port Angeles Field and Events Center. Rebecca Mahan sent out the link: <https://wsg.washington.edu/community-outreach/outreach-detail-pages/river-and-ocean-film-festival/>. *Please distribute the request for films; the deadline for submittal is 4/22/24.

Recruiting for Open MRC Members

There are open seats for Development Community, Marine Related Recreation and Tourism, Makah Tribe, and District 3 Alternate representatives. The Makah Tribe is interested in providing a representative. Rebecca Mahan sent them the application.

Upcoming Elections

The elections for CC MRC Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the May meeting. Tim Cochnauer will be stepping down as Chair. Ann Soule is willing to continue as Vice Chair, but not as Chair. Ann and Tim will be happy to talk to anyone who is interested in what the position involves.

Good of the Order

Rebecca Mahan reported some leftover funds from the oyster project that will be spent on an amendment to add the seeded cultch. The projects are all progressing well; there is information on budgets and grants available to anyone who is interested. Nancy Stephanz noted that Rebecca was quoted in an article on Pacific lamprey in the HighCountry Newsletter: <https://www.hcn.org/issues/56-3/saving-the-pacific-lamprey/>. Rebecca added that there will be a Pacific lamprey training at the Dungeness River Center in June.

Public Comments

Joe Schmidt discussed his history as CC MRC Chair and explained that Clallam County has always been a leader, changing the way government thinks about projects. He brought up the issue of shellfish biotoxins and his concern about shellfish toxins moving up the food chain. Shellfish monitoring used to be done year-round, as paralytic shellfish poisoning can occur at any time of year. With food insecurity a rising issue, more people are digging their own clams, making the need for year-round sampling even more important for public safety. Joe was concerned that Pillar Point and Freshwater Bay were not being sampled over the winter. Rebecca Mahan explained that Bob Vreeland does sample those beaches from spring to fall, but that tides and funding restrict the winter sampling. Joe would like to generate enough interest that year-round sampling would be possible. Rebecca suggested writing that in as an amendment for the next funding cycle.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Ann Soule adjourned the meeting at 7:08 PM.

Action Items:

****Rebecca Mahan requested members to please respond to the aquaculture poll and will send the poll out again.***

****Please send CC MRC website suggestions to Amelia Kalagher.***

****Please distribute the request for films for the Film Festival; the deadline for submittal is 4/22/24.***