



January 2024 Meeting Draft Minutes

Date: Monday, January 22, 2024

Time: 5:30-7:03 PM

Location: Zoom hybrid meeting

Minutes Prepared by Rebekah Brooks

Members present: Helle Andersen (Marine Related Recreation and Tourism Alternate), Chris Burns (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe Alternate), Alan Clark (Community at Large; Northwest Straits Commission [NWSC]), Tim Cochnauer (Community at Large; Chair), Mike Doherty (District 3), Katharine Frazier (Port of Port Angeles), Robert Knapp (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe), Allyce Miller (Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Alternate), Lyn Muench (District 2 Alternate), Ann Soule (District 2; Vice Chair), Nancy Stephanz (Ecology Alternate), Lance Vail (District 1 Alternate), Bob Vreeland (Conservation and Environment), Jeff Ward (District 1)

Others present: Chris Butler-Minor (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary [OCNMS]), Joann LaBaw (member of the public), Cathy Lear (CC), Rebecca Mahan (CC Habitat Biologist; CC Marine Resources Committee [MRC] Coordinator), Jim Parsons (Jamestown Seafood)

Call to Order / Introductions / Changes to Agenda

Tim Cochnauer called the meeting to order. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting. Mike Doherty noted that he had a couple of updates to make under the Good of the Order.

Public Comment / Approval of December Minutes

Ann Soule moved to approve the December CC MRC Minutes as written; Bob Vreeland seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements

- Film Festival Collaboration with OCNMS and North Pacific Coast MRC: Chris Butler-Minor announced that this summer will be the 30th anniversary of the OCNMS. In celebration of the event, the Sanctuary will be collaborating with the North Pacific Coast MRC to host a Film Festival featuring local films about the marine environment on the Olympic Peninsula. Chris invited the CC MRC to participate in the Port Angeles element, which will take place at the Field Arts and Events Hall in July of 2024. Rebecca Mahan added that part of the event could showcase a table hosted by the CC MRC where they would be able to present information on their projects. The CC MRC agreed that they would like to participate. Mike Doherty requested a briefing on the OCNMS Climate Vulnerability Assessment when it is published this spring.

- **Green Crab Update:** In response to the request from the Board of County Commissions for MRC leadership, Rebecca Mahan, Ann Soule, and Tim Cochnauer have identified several European green crab resources. They hoped that a CC MRC member would take the topic on and report back to the full MRC with regular updates. *If anyone is interested in championing this topic, please contact Rebecca.
- **Joint Meeting with Jefferson County in March:** Rebecca Mahan announced that the joint meeting has been scheduled for 3/6/24 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at Red Cedar Hall at the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. The meeting will include a presentation on treaty rights.

Presentation

Jim Parsons, president of the Pacific Aquaculture Alliance and CEO of Jamestown Seafood, presented an overview on the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s aquaculture operations and practices. He gave a brief introduction on why Jamestown Seafood was formed and what their operations were, why they believe that it is time for responsible marine farming of all species, and a look at other possible alternatives. The Tribe has oyster hatcheries in Kona, Hawaii, at Point Whitney, and at John Wayne Marina. They also have a geoduck hatchery at Point Whitney. In partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service, and Washington Sea Grant, the Tribe is also involved in a cooperative project for sablefish production ([more information on the sablefish pilot project here](#)). Jim explained that 85 percent of US seafood is imported, causing a deficit worth \$17 billion, \$6 billion of which is aquacultured salmonids. Roughly half of the imported seafood is farmed product, often coming from countries with far less stringent regulations than the US. Jim went over some of the technical improvements and regulations that came out of the appeal from the Wild Fish Conservancy to the Washington Supreme Court regarding net pens, and discussed land-based alternatives to aquaculture, which face problems with greater fish stock density. Jim invited viewers to continue engaging in the aquaculture discussion and emphasized that the Pacific Aquaculture Alliance believes that sustainably producing and providing seafood for all people is a worthy endeavor.

NWSC Update

Alan Clark gave an update on NWSC news. The last NWSC meeting took place on 12/5/23 and was reported on at the December CC MRC Meeting. The next NWSC meeting will be held remotely on 1/26/24. The biggest current issues are regarding kelp, so Alan saved that information for the Kelp Survey section under Field Project Updates. More information can be found on the NWSC website: <https://nwstraits.org/>.

Advisory Role

Subcommittee Status

Jeff Ward said that the Advisory Role Subcommittee had their first meeting in the second week of January and will be meeting again this Wednesday, 1/24/24. Subcommittee members include Jeff, Ann Stafford, Alan Clark, LaTrisha Suggs, and Chris Burns. Jeff and Alan are serving as co-chairs. They are creating an annotated outline for recommended reports that includes a timeline and a step-by-step roadmap for the advisory process, which they hope to have ready for full CC MRC Committee review by the April CC MRC Meeting.

Field Project Updates

Olympia Oyster

Chris Burns said they will start moving oyster shell by barge in the first week of March and are hoping to be able to use the State Park as the staging area.

Pigeon Guillemot

Ed Bowlby was not present for an update.

Forage Fish

Tim Cochnauer said they are continuing to collect samples.

Elwha Beach Stewardship

Helle Andersen reported that she was continuing to conduct surveys.

Ediz Hook Restoration

Helle said that the Clallam Conservation District is organizing two planting events in March for the enhancement project out at Ediz Hook.

Kelp Surveys

Alan Clark said there was a kickoff meeting with the NWSC featuring news about the decline of kelp in south Puget Sound. There are also troubling trends in other areas, although there are no negative trends in Clallam County besides the area around Protection Island, which has been in decline for some time. They are looking at different ways of monitoring the water column. Alan also spent some time working as a docent at the Feiro Marine Science Center for the traveling kelp exhibit from the Port Townsend Marine Science Center. The exhibit has one more Saturday at Feiro and Alan asked if anyone else would be interested in taking on the docent role. *Contact Alan if interested. More information on the Kelp Plan can be found at <https://www.nwstraits.org/our-work/kelp/>.

Shellfish Biotoxins

Bob Vreeland said that he would be resuming surveys in April.

Sound Toxins

Nancy Stephanz reported that the team did not survey last week because of the extreme cold. Two weeks ago, they observed poison toxins forming, but this week they saw none.

Pinto Abalone

Jeff Ward said that even though recreational fishing of pinto abalone has been shut down since 1994, the species has never recovered from over-harvest. Around the San Juan Islands, substantial work has been done to identify where the pinto abalone are and to develop culturing methods to outplant juveniles. That project has been extended to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The first year of the project involves diver surveys from Port Angeles to Freshwater Bay, looking for remnant populations and potential outplant locations. The first kickoff meeting was held last week. The team is currently working on the quality assurance plan and subcontracts.

Education/Outreach

Coasters

Ann Soule suggested checking with local vendors to see if they need coasters restocked.

New Displays

Ann Soule said that there are three project posters completed, and they are planning posters for the next three projects: Forage Fish, Kelp, and Olympia Oysters. *If anyone is interested in participating, let Ann know. Nancy Stephanz mentioned that Alisa Taylor developed a draft for the Sound Toxins poster.

Future Presentations

- Rebecca Mahan said that Lee First with Twin Harbors Waterkeeper will be presenting on Protecting Old Growth Forests in our Waterways at the February CC MRC Meeting.
- Find the link to Dr. Catherine Copass's presentation to the Board of County Commissioners here, at about one hour into meeting:
<https://clallam.granicus.com/player/clip/1955?&redirect=true&h=abc27db5c26be5716bf13d4add34c2bc>.

Other Updates/New Topics

Update on CC MRC Part-time Administrative Assistant

Rebecca Mahan announced that the County had selected one of the applicants for the Administrative Assistant position.

Communication with our County Commissioners

After meeting and discussing this topic, Tim Cochnauer, Ann Soule, and Rebecca Mahan thought it would be beneficial for each of the district CC MRC representatives to meet with their district Commissioner on a list of topics. The district representatives are Ann Soule, Mike Doherty, and Jeff Ward. Tim said they would reach out with the list of topics to the district representatives.

Rescue Tug Letter

Mike Doherty stated that in response to a 2019 legislative mandate, the Department of Ecology and Washington State Pilotage are leading a series of workshops, the next one to be held on 1/26/24. Roche Harbor was selected as the preferred location for staging the tug. Additionally, there will be three public hearings in February regarding protocol and rulemaking on tug escorts.

Adopt a Beach for CoastSavers

Rebecca Mahan said that CoastSavers Coordinator Megan Juran is working on the scope of work, budgeting, and supply needs for the Adopt a Beach program. If it works with their grants, the CC MRC would like to select Elwha Beach to adopt for marine debris cleanup.

Recruiting for Open MRC Members

There are open seats for Development Community and Makah Tribe representatives.

Good of the Order

Chris Butler-Minor announced a European green crab symposium coming up next month, and a presentation from CoastSavers Coordinator Megan Juran in late February as part of the OCNMS and Feiro Speaker Series.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Chair Tim Cochnauer adjourned the meeting at 7:03 PM.

Action Items:

****If anyone is interested in championing the European green crab topic, please contact Rebecca Mahan.***

****If anyone is interested in the docent role at the Feiro Marine Life Center while the kelp exhibit is being featured, please contact Alan Clark.***

****If anyone is interested in participating in the project posters, please let Ann Soule know.***