

**MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance:** Paul Andersson, Matt Arata, Aaron Boyles, David Checkley, Jeff Dyer, Kailey Genther, Patti Gobin, Brian Goodremont, Christina Koons, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Kimbal Sundberg, Beth Tate, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

**Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public:** Audrey Coyne, Tyler Davis, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Kathryn Moore, Jessica Owens, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Sam Whitridge, Cindy Wolf

**9:07 AM Convene MRC meeting**

*Kendra Smith, chair by proxy until Christina can join*

Kendra: it would be easier to meet in the Beaverton Valley office than in the legislative building, we have the IT

- Matt usually joins in person, he's fine with meeting at Beaverton Valley

ACTION ITEM: in future, let's meet in the Beaverton Valley office conference room

Sam: this is the public access virtual meeting space, we'll still have in-person meetings once every quarter

**9:11 AM** technical issues resolved, Christina joins, the meeting official kick-off

*Christina Koons*

**9:11 AM Public Comment**

*none*

**9:12 AM Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC December retreat minutes**

*MRC members*

Any changes to agenda? No, all approve the meeting agenda

Lovel made language changes on derelict vessels, clarified a statement about the oil spill liability trust fund

MOTION to approve the Retreat minutes (*as changed*), all in favor, none opposed. The minutes are approved

**9:14 AM NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC**

*Christina Koons*

Terrific conference in PT, 6 of us attended, over 100 participants. Review of a white paper by Island County on climate, a statement to their county council about plans to move ahead, a lot of consensus-building. Would be good for us to look at it maybe as part of a workplan. The MRC system is in good shape. We toured the rain-garden systems in Port Townsend, now focusing on maintenance. Great to hear the Tribal participation at the meeting.

NW Straits commission will hold a retreat in February with more planning and convening of MRC's

Lovel: did anyone bring back examples of Clallam county's coasters? Informative coasters in local restaurants.

Christina: I have one, it says "Clallam County MRC's" this one describes native oyster, QR code to MRC website.

Variety of images. Sorted through how to lower printing costs for producing. Lovel's presentation was excellent

Lovel: on the need for an ERTV. Other MRC's are also concerned about accident and oil spill risk. Some talk of a comprehensive MRC-wide spill response readiness group to engage with other MRC's for whom this is a priority.

ACTION ITEM: Christina will send the Island County white paper to Sam to distribute to MRC members

Lovel: they don't want it distributed broadly until presented to their county, but can share with MRC members

**9:24 AM MRC Updates/Business**

- MRC Retreat Debrief Items

*Sam Whitridge*

We had great discussion at retreat, opportunity now to review and pick up a few unresolved items:

o MRC Work Plan for 2024

Must be submitted this month as a condition of our grant. This is the most recent version we reviewed at the Retreat with the changes we discussed. Spreadsheet shows 7 grant tasks and monthly commitments/deliverables

MOTION: Adam moves to approve the 2024 workplan, Sandy seconds, all in favor, the workplan is approved.

o MRC Subcommittees for 2024

Don't need formal approval, but please let Sam know if there any changes are needed

Dave: where does the ERTV subcommittee fit into the workplan?

Sam: oil spill work is a subcommittee, not a grant deliverable. Could go under Marine Stewardship in outreach

Kendra: we've historically paid for that through Puget Sound Partnership, so it's in LIO workplan

ACTION ITEM: notify Cindy when ERTV subcommittee meetings happen (she doesn't necessarily need to go)

o ERTV Subcommittee

Sam: is ERTV subcommittee the right name for it? Reminder – we came up with the idea for this at the Retreat in aftermath of the Ecology report that we were unsatisfied with, we wanted to work together on next steps.

That subcommittee had first meeting yesterday: Kailey, sandy, Jeff, Dave, Christina, Lovel, and Marta. Working to extract the takeaway messages we feel are inaccurate or buried in their analysis. We plan to prepare a letter Cindy could bring to Council to approve, perhaps a follow up to Debra Lekanoff or other interested parties.

o MSA next steps

ACTION ITEM: Please send in remaining comments for review to Frankie!

9:36 AM •Update on El Capitan

*Kari Koski*

Not many recent updates. Since last meeting Coast Guard issued West Sound Marina an order to put together a plan to monitor and manage sheen, they did and it was approved. With Legislature going into session, DNR will seek more funds for their Derelict Vessel (DV) program. We want to take advantage of that, looking into costs and trying to put together proposal(s) to lift and move it. Support from Debra Lekanoff. Trying to be creative. No reconvened meeting of all agencies, probably will be soon. Still no determination of owner(s) or liable party.

9:39 AM •Spring Vessel Turn-in event

*Kari Koski*

Adam & Kari working with NW Straits DV work group, helping to prioritize vessels and events. Multiple partners. We have brochures, applications due by March 1. Taking 12 vessels maximum but accept as many applications as possible – this will help us know where vessels are and identify for prioritization. At the event, limited to a week at the yard to decommission/deconstruct. Working with DNR to do more events in future. If successful, could be annual. Brochure going out with invoicing to Port customers and shared with other marinas. This is federally funded, NOAA and Seagrant money coming from DNR. Tentatively planning for April 12<sup>th</sup>, it's a time of year when we have enough yard space but want to keep dates off the brochure. Must apply and if approved, a date will be given to bring the boat at that time. Also applies to boats sitting in yards because people often get rid of those by pushing them into the water. Looking to do a marine debris clean-up event in conjunction at the same time, dispose of fuels etc. This is the first time we're doing this! don't know yet what response will be.

9:48 AM •Scheduling for February MRC Meeting

*Sam Whitridge*

Salmon advocacy day scheduled for February 1 in Olympia, Sam will be there, Christina also unavailable.

Should we move meeting to a time when they can both attend? (several other conflicts, i.e. the Boat Show)

ACTION ITEM: Let's move forward with having the meeting February 8<sup>th</sup>, meet virtually

9:51 AM •MRC Resolution Discussion

*Sam Whitridge*

It's outdated. Some straightforward edits but some warrant discussion regarding MRC membership,

-one is that 'planning director' is listed as a required seat on the MRC. That hasn't happened for a while. Kendra has been filling that role as ES director. Do we want to change it to ES Director or staff so it's more open-ended?

Kendra: we should make it ES staff so it's not always on the Director

- we also talked about having an official Tribal seat, Patti has served two terms, we'd like her to stay on the committee. Do we want to pursue putting language in the resolution about that being a permanent seat?

Dave: how many Tribes are there that would be appropriate to sit on the SJI MRC? In the geographical sense

Frankie: 12 federally recognized Tribes in these areas. Do we have to restrict the number of seats to just one?

Brian: Term limits are important as is Tribal representation. Not sure about the bylaws but the MRC could possibly create an ad-hoc position for tribes to be filled and would not have a term limit

Kendra: LIO should also have representation, there could be multiple seats available. There are 12 governing bodies we can consult! As staff we're about to go through a training to learn more about this, let's revisit then

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

*Katie Johnson*

Thursday Jan 12th we'll have a table at Storming the Sound in La Conner, anyone can join. And encouraging stewards to report clean-up. Contest for pickup, winner gets a gift certificate, will announce on our website

9:59 AM •Other subcommittee updates

Adam: the Islander will be removed from FH to PT this coming Monday, it was delayed due to weather

Kari: DV subcommittee next week on January 9<sup>th</sup>, virtual meeting in the afternoon, I'll send out an agenda.

10:03 AM **Committee member updates and any other business**

Sam: reminder to everyone to send in hours please for the October-December quarter if you haven't already!

Cindy: The National Association of Counties legislative conference in WA DC happens Feb 10-14<sup>th</sup>; if there are meetings with people in DC I should be asking for, please let me know soon!

Lovel: there was a mitigated determination of non-significance (MDNS), announced in the Friends of San Juans updates. This was a new trans-shipment project at the refinery that was done without proper permitting.

Kendra: This year ES will be tasked with the climate element in the comprehensive plan. Grant from commerce, working with Cascadia consulting firm. Need strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas output as well as sea level rise. We'll likely do some tabling at farmer's markets, fairs, and other events. Jeff is liaison to the Climate and Sustainability committee, please contact Jeff if you're interested in helping as ambassadors in the community. Sea level rise models show county property, must complete map to show whole county including private land.

Dave: How can volunteer 'ambassadors' be as informed as possible?

Kendra: we will plan some training with the folks who will be tabling and have some FAQ's. Concern after how destination management plan went over. And now we're talking about climate change, there's nervousness about the weight of topics and community's ability to absorb. Working with Cascadia, they have sociologists.

CWAC will be working on this in terms of freshwater side, Solid Waste team talking about issues. This is a big lift.

Dave: maybe a meeting where everyone is present and learn in general about the issues. I'd like to be involved

Frankie: Seattle Boat show in Seattle February 1. Whale Museum just hired a new Soundwatch coordinator. NOAA offered to run the Boat Show outreach this year. Plan to meet about this soon, great for any MRC members to volunteer. Expenses covered (by Whale Museum). Working with Katie to get information out to MRC members. This is an important year to be in front of boaters because of new legislation and distance regulations, opportunity to reinforce messaging and get whale flags out. This booth is Be Whale Wise focused, but also other outreach booths from WDFW, SeaGrant, etc. Appreciate anyone who can sign up; various shifts. Frankie there all day. Cheat sheet provided. Also have a contest for tickets. Location is in downtown Seattle

- Jeff is willing to help with this

Jeff: back to the climate strategy and comp plan, would it be worthwhile to have a MMW on the topic?

Kendra: yes, as we formulate community engagement strategy with Cascadia, will do some social networking.

Kim: I along with False Bay neighbors participated in a Climate Fresk last summer for citizen participation in the complexities of climate change and visualizing effects. The Fresk moderator, Nikyta Palmisani lives on Lopez. Suggest contacting her for her thoughts on planning for county climate change meetings.

10:25 AM **Adjourn MRC meeting, Convene CAG meeting**

10:26 AM • 2024 Grand Round Kick-off

*Sam Whitridge*

Grant round kicked off. Sam sent out materials. Letters of Interest (LoI's) due February 18<sup>th</sup>, project sponsors will meet with TAG in March. This will be a big grant round. May site visits. Sam will keep everyone updated.

TAG members are required to attend site visits, MRC members are strongly encouraged (sometimes there are space limitations due to space on boats) Block out May 1 and 2, we'll be going out and looking at projects.

10:29      **Presentation:** San Juan County Salmon Recovery Program Overview

*Sam Whitridge*

Request at Retreat to review technical priorities in the Salmon program, science behind how we select projects; SJI's in the heart of Salish Sea, map produced by Friends shows 22 stocks of chinook that pass through to the ocean. Limited spawning, but big feeding stopover for migrating juveniles. How to select projects in right places: Beamer and Fresh (2011) study provided a probability index for finding a juvenile chinook. Places with highest probability are south Lopez, and N. Waldron, President channel area. Based on that study, County and Lead Entity worked with Friends of San Juans and other technical experts to create the PIAT (Pulling it all together) report, PIAT I in 2012 was a shoreform and landscape-scale prioritization study; PIAT II in 2017 refined previous studies down to parcel and project scale. Identified areas as priority fish use regions shown on map: Waldron/President channel, Rosario SW, Juan d Fuca/S. Lopez, and Haro Strait NE. Map shows priority fish use areas by shoreform, table of shoreform types in highest priority use regions (i.e. pocket beach, feeder bluff, etc.) We've discussed and identified protection as top local priority, restoration is second priority, and assessments are third because protection is most cost-effective, easier to protect before degradation than to restore, and more ecologically successful than restoration. Protection refers to acquisitions and conservation easements, those are protected through perpetuity, but restoration projects have a 7-year time frame within this grant process. We have a lot of high-quality habitat in San Juan County identified as in need of protection.

Dave: does protection mean protection of forage fish as food for salmon?

Sam: yes, forage fish and also habitat that's good for salmon rearing. The main factors of juvenile chinook rearing and forage fish spawning/rearing (herring, sand lance, surf smelt) combined make up fish use priorities.

We don't do dock removal projects for salmon recovery projects, just too big for us too tackle

Sam: in 2022 finalized Salmon Recovery Chapter Update, our local chapter for the NOAA chinook salmon recovery plan. Includes 15 different regions with lead entities, each provided their own local priorities chapter.

First chapter established in 2005, first NOAA recovery plan in 2007. Now all subsequent studies (like the Beamer and Fresh and PIAT, etc.) fed into our local salmon recovery chapter update. This is our guiding document.

Completed through a two-year process started in 2020, committee of TAG and MRC members, project sponsors, agency members etc. Some funding from Puget Sound Partnership and ESA. This document is available online. How it's structured: established 50-year goals and 10-year targets for nearshore habitat types (6 different types)

We also have Freshwater goals and targets for specific habitat types (like Cascade Creek that has spawning salmonids). These goals are more qualitative, further data needed to refine further. Identified 8 watersheds (on SJI and Orcas) we want to work in where we have the most data and background. We address restoration and protection strategies for salmon recovery through the Grant round, annual SRFB and biennial PSAR funds. Process is locally driven by TAG and CAG scoring and ranking projects, then a regional and statewide process.

We are one of 15 lead entities around Puget Sound. That term refers to the local salmon recovery process. In that role we participate in various regional and statewide processes.

Sam encourages everyone to review the salmon recovery chapter update doc as well as the PIAT I and II studies.

**ACTION ITEM:** Sam can send out these slides and links to the documents just mentioned to all members

10:55 AM      **CAG updates**

*Sam Whitridge*

The grant round is underway now, Sam will keep everyone updated. Press releases and emails have been sent announcing applications, we try to get word out broadly. Applicants are from non-profits like Friends of SJ's, Land Bank, SJ Preservation Trust, some individual private landowners

-more discussion about showing benefit to salmon for certain projects, informing landowners about salmonids

10:59 AM      **Adjourn CAG meeting**