

CLALLAM  COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes

Date: Monday, July 19, 2021
 Time: 5:30 – 7:30 pm
 Location: Zoom meeting
 Minutes prepared by Alisa Taylor

Members present:

P = Present E= Excused

- | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| P Bob Vreeland | E Robert Knapp | P Arnold Schouten | P Tim Cochnauer | ? Jesse Waknitz |
| P Ann Soule | P Jeff Ward | P Mike Doherty | ? Latrisha Suggs | Makah Open Position |
| E Lyn Muench | P Alan Clark | P Ed Bowlby | E Ann Stafford | P Vanessa Castle
(LEKT) |

Alternates present:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|
| P Mary Sue Brancato | P Chris Burns | ? Lance Vail |
| P Ioana Bociu | Navarra Carr | |

Ex-Officio Members / MRC staff/Members of the Public Present

Rebecca Paradis, Clallam MRC Project Coordinator; Alisa Taylor, Clallam MRC Fellow; McKenzie Ginther, MRC Intern; Jonathan Hallenbeck, NWSC; Jackie Lindsey, COASST Science Coordinator.

Call to Order/Introductions/ Changes to Agenda

A section was added under project updates for Ed Bowlby to give an update about the Pigeon Guillemot project.

Public Comment/Approval of Minutes

Ed Bowlby pointed out that the MRC monthly meeting are not currently being advertised in the Peninsula Daily News. Tim Cochnauer said he made note of this, and will follow up.

Mary Sue Brancato said that she would like to edit the volunteer recruitment section of the minutes for clarity. Tim said to send the edits along to Alisa to be added to the June Minutes final draft.

COASST Presentation

Jackie Lindsey gave an engaging and informative presentation to the audience, about the purpose and workings of the Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team. She has worked with COASST since 2017, and now works as their Science Coordinator, she endeavours to reach out to folks like the MRC’s to set up new partnerships in new communities. COASST is a citizen science program out of University of Washington, and utilizes the participation of community members to conduct surveys, participating in data collection such as water sampling, species identification, measuring and recording environmental conditions, as well as some data analysis, deduction, and digitally reporting findings. COASST gives public and academic talks about topics ranging from avian influenza warnings, oil spill baseline, harmful algal blooms, entanglement rates, fishery bycatch, avian influenza warnings. A few staff on the management team coordinate approximately 1000 volunteers, including in Clallam county all the way out to Ozette and Neah Bay, as well as the coastlines from California to Alaska. They have been surveying for 21 years, and over time have had 4400 participants. Volunteers do not have to have previous birdwatching experience. The beached bird guide which was designed for their program, is a key factor in helping people return to participate in this program. Surveys range from 2-8 hours in the field. The data from the various regions shows a heartbeat-like pattern of yearly population fluctuations, and in doing so reveals occasional high mortality events. While some indicated causes for these events include migrating or struggling populations, oil spills are a major culprit of marine bird deaths. The findings from the

collected data included 7500 + deaths of Cassin's Auklets in 2014-15, likely related to "the blob" of warm air/water traversing the Pacific Ocean at that time. The data collected regarding marine debris reveals interesting trends: in sheltered Puget Sound, they tend to see medium and large debris, and more often of terrestrial origin. On the Pacific coast are found more tiny debris, plastics of less than 2.5 cm, and more frequently of marine origin. Some beaches, like those with lots of vegetation, trap more debris. Jackie encouraged people to talk to others around them about COASST: beachwalkers, environmental groups, family, neighbors, coworkers, communicators and decision makers like reporters, politicians, and resource managers.

Jackie responded to questions from the audience, sharing that yes, there are currently areas in Clallam County which had been surveyed in the past, but currently are not, and they would very much like to have people survey those places again. COASST is also interested to set up surveys of new beaches in Clallam County which haven't ever been surveyed before. Their interactive map online shows which areas have survey data, and which are open to begin being surveyed.

Data is presented to the public through this interactive map by COASST:
<http://3.223.50.225:3838/Explore-data/>

SoundIQ was mentioned as a valuable database for marine species population data in general:
<https://maps.cob.org/geviewer/Html5Viewer/Index.html?viewer=SoundIQ>

Jackie shared a link to a presentation by Win Cowger of the PNW association for plastics:
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/18bdyd21L9PKquG0TxEO3kaaDI1v9ryzRYEI7gUK1uRw/edit?usp=sharing>

Jackie responded about the COASST data being used for research papers, in some instances. Some state and federal agencies use their data, as well as researchers of all backgrounds, interested in bird or debris data. Sometimes, these people are some of the same who help with data analysis. All the science updates, including examples of publications, can be found at: <https://coasst.org/cool-coastal-stories/>

It was discussed among the members that a COASST training to be hosted in Clallam County may be a good idea. It is a single day, 5 hour + training.

Ed Bowlby and Mary Sue Brancato are MRC members who are also active COASST volunteers currently, for two beaches: Dungeness Spit and the outer coast of Norwegian Memorial. Arnold Schouten, another member, helped beta test the COASST beached bird field guide, and Mary Sue has been involved since the beginning of COASST, commenting on the beached bird guide, training volunteers, and helping in other ways.

If anyone has additional questions, email Jackie at jackiekclindsey@gmail.com.

Project Updates

Olympia oyster restoration effort: Chris shared that some oyster surveys were recently done, including a heatmap survey and a regular population survey at the Jamestown restoration site. The recent heat wave took a massive toll on the oyster population, as well as that of other nearshore marine species. The full extent of the damage is, as of yet, unknown; Chris estimates that at least half of the original

population has perished. In addition to the mortality of Olympia oysters, mussels, sand dollars, chitons, sea stars, gooseneck barnacles, razor clams, and other creatures were found on the beaches in significant numbers. Fortunately, as surveys were done right before this heatwave, and as more can be conducted in the coming weeks, the team will be able to piece together a good idea of what happened. Chris will share the population survey numbers and results with the MRC sometime soon.

Forage Fish: Tim Cochnauer commented that the smolt trap saw some additional mortality, coinciding with the heat wave—the creek was perceptibly warmer than usual. Department of Fish and Wildlife had said that they didn't have the funding to continue processing the forage fish egg samples, but fortunately they were able to acquire the necessary money after all, and will continue therefore to process and analyze the eggs. Tim plans to continue to collect companion samples regularly, to keep and analyze using the MRC's newly purchased microscope. July was the first month with any discernable eggs found in a sample—from Cline spit. Over 100 surf smelt eggs were found, ranging from life stages of 1-2 days, up to 10 days old. This is interesting because historical data shows that May had been a prosperous month for surf smelt eggs at Cline spit. The sample sites at Ediz Hook will be combined into a single site, due to changes over time in the coastline, resulting in the two locations now being much closer together. A new site has been added to the survey schedule, the East side of the beach at the mouth of the Elwha river. Tim said that Rebecca Paradis has contacted WDFW to inquire as to if they could come out and give a training for the identification and data recording/reporting process for egg samples. An update will be provided once a response has been received.

Kelp Survey: Alan Clark and Jeff Ward shared about a recent attempted survey at the large bed in Freshwater Bay on the 14th, but which was unable to be completed due to increasing wind speeds and challenging waves. The survey was postponed to be conducted again on another day soon. On the 15th an event, the Kelp Highway Expedition, was held at Freshwater Bay and included many public participants, as well as Dana Oster, the Marine Program Manager of the NWSC. The surveyors and kelp expeditioners were joined by a CMRC volunteer who travelled to the area from Seattle, Hogan. There was a videographer doing a multidisciplinary study about the Salish Sea and Puget Sound, and they and others including divers looked at the kelp beds, forage fish abundances, use of nursery areas, samples of microplastics, measuring co2 uptake of kelp, and a variety of other things.

Pigeon Guillemot: Ed shared that the survey efforts are going along well, but the new signage which was posted at Port Williams was unfortunately vandalized. It was removed from the site entirely, along with a host of other signs. Since the cost of the sign was a deterring factor as far as making and installing another sign of the exact type as the previous one, Ed said that another sign will be made by printing a large version of the PDF from the original sign, and laminating that to be posted at the beach for the remainder of this season. The team plans to reevaluate whether next year they will create and install another sign, or not.

Education and Outreach: Ann Soule and McKenzie Ginther shared about the outreach cards (coasters) project. They are about to order the first set of coasters, and the plan is to produce about 8, 10, or 12 coasters before the project is over, but for now they plan to order just a few (3-4) with the funding that is currently available. McKenzie shared the first design she has come up with for the coasters, which was the Orca. A border was added to help tie the design of all the coasters together, with their various different photos. The MRC logo was added to the template for the front of each coaster, as well. There will be a question or fun fact on the back of each card, as well as a QR code which will link to the MRC website. A few other design templates, and photograph options were examined for the coasters, and the desired depictions and bordered front coaster design, were agreed upon by the members. An idea was

brought up to add a statement, “check out the other outreach cards” on each card, for example featuring relations between species such as the sea otter, urchins, and kelp, to encourage people to collect the whole set. Ann said that the goal is to give some outreach cards of a few different species to each participating venue. Arnold Schouten suggested that the cards/species could be featured all together on the website, so people can see what each of them are, and perhaps be inspired to go on a coaster scavenger hunt. McKenzie answered questions from the members regarding pricing and quantities, and it was decided that a minimum of 500 per species should be printed, at least. Ed Bowlby suggested that different species cards could be given to different venues, to encourage people to visit different places to collect the lot. Ideas were discussed to incentivize people to pick up the cards and turn them over, like a “flip” symbol or text included on the front. Ed suggested “turn over for fun fact!” This is intended to help increase the exposure of the factoids to the public, inform people about the MRC, and generally encourage more exploration of the content on the website.

NWSC Update

Alan Clark shared that the NWSI is working closely with Patty Murray’s staff, and other staff of our State representatives. They are waiting to hear back about whether their proposed language will be included in another bill, in addition to their funding reauthorization bill. Alan said that this bill would not be a standalone one, and historically this has happened before—the first time around, the legislation around the NWSC was attached to a Polish fishing bill. Lucas Hart (Executive Director of the Commission) and Cris Castner (Chair of External Affairs Committee), have been working very hard to establish contact and keep the process going. The NWSC has also been continually working on their tribal acknowledgement statement, to be read at the beginning of each meeting, beginning this month. The presentation to be given to the NWSC by CMRC regarding the Tumwater smolt trap project, will be a 15 minute time slot at the meeting on the 30th. Staff will work together with Tim and Alan to create the power point visual aid for this presentation, to be submitted to Sasha Horst at NWSC by the 29th.

Equipment Purchase

Alan shared that, at the kelp highway event on Thursday, he observed other people who had some very intriguing and useful technology for water quality measurement. They are waiting to hear back about the specific model of this device and its cost, but it’s easily deployable from a kayak and also measures dissolved oxygen, pH, [others]. It would be useful to have the ability to identify a baseline of the conditions in the kelp beds, in order to be aware of fluctuations and how these may relate to what’s going on with the canopy kelp species.

Bob Vreeland pointed out that a possible reason for kelp disappearing could be algae growth, and lack of available light, measurements of which could be read easily from a kayak with a secchi disc. He said they are inexpensive, but he has one he isn’t using, and he will give it to Alan for the kelp survey efforts.

Alan said there has also been talk of purchasing PFD’s (personal floatation devices) and other equipment this year. They have already purchased a VHF radio for expeditions.

Tim said that, although the budget is running a little low for this year, if anyone needs or wants for certain equipment, keep it in mind and send an email to him, Alan, and Rebecca.

Rebecca shared that the extra available money for this year is \$8000, but from what she knows of water quality equipment, this may not be enough... Ioana Bociu had the idea that the MRC could perhaps purchase one or two of the desired items, and then purchase more in the next cycle as funding becomes available again.

Good of the Order

Mike Doherty shared that the National Marine Sanctuary meeting will be on Friday from 10am-1pm via zoom. Topics covered will include acoustics monitoring out in the sanctuary, a discussion of the advisory board regarding Biden's initiative to save 30% of natural resources, and a discussion of the west coast regional climate profile.

Mike said also that on the 27th from 3-6pm there will be a Port Angeles chamber of commerce initiative meeting, where they will discuss plans for downtown Port Angeles now, to 20 years from now. They will talk about strategies to help downtown PA have a more sustainable structure.

Mike said that archaeologists for west end Puget Sound tribe, are going to give a presentation about Ozette to the Jefferson County Historical Society.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Adjourn

The meeting ended at 7:50 pm.