



**WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
SUMMARY**

Scheduled for: **October 6, 2022**
 Time: **5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**
 Place: **PW Civic Annex Building, Garden Level Conference Room. 322 N. Commercial St. Bellingham, WA**
 Join Zoom Meeting: **Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85730030249>
 Meeting ID: 857 3003 0249
 Passcode: 98225
 One tap mobile: +1-253-215-8782 US (Tacoma)**

We acknowledge the lands we're on today are the ancestral and current homelands of Indigenous Nations who have stewarded them since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These Indigenous Nations include the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribe.

1.		Introductions and Determine Quorum
2.	5:00	October 6 Agenda Action: Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.		Approval of September meeting summary Action: Review and approve summaries as final.
4.		Public Comment Period
5.	5:10	Salmonid Research, monitoring, and restoration efforts in the South Fork Nooksack River – Devin Flawd, Lummi Nation Natural Resources Department and Tom Chance, Lummi Nation Natural Resources Department Objective: Learn about the latest population of Chinook in the South Fork Nooksack River as well as other key salmonids in the watershed. The impact of restoration projects on salmon returns will also be discussed.
6.	6:10	MRC Agenda Adjustment Action: Approval of the committee no longer adhering to the OPMA and changing the Public Comment period to “Community Updates” as described in the amended MRC Policies and Procedures.
7.	6:20	Staff Update: scheduling in-person meetings, letter to the PBMC, Clayton Beach restoration update, Objective: Provide staff with opportunity to relay information and updates to the full MRC.
8.	6:30	Project Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympia oyster restoration – scoping new sites? • Forage Fish – introduce new intern, expansion of survey sites • Chuckanut PIC
9.	6:40	MRC Partner Committee Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWIN/Speaker Series (Austin) – SeaFeast • County Council • Port of Bellingham – Kurt B. • NWSC – Bob C.
10.	7:00	Adjourn

If you're not on our Northwest Straits Commission newsletter list, you can join here: <https://www.nwstraits.org/get-involved/join-the-mailing-list/>

In attendance: Eleanor Hines (Chair), Heather Spore (Vice-Chair), Austin Rose (staff), Jim Boyle, Bob Cecile, Dan Sulak, Alex, Kurt Baumgarten, Andrew Gamble, Paul Troutman, Colin Wahl, Elma Burnham

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Others: Elizabeth Kilanowski, Carl F., Victoria, Chris Brown, Rebecca Schlotterback (Whatcom PUD No. 1), Emily Hirsch (Whatcom Conservation District), Kim Cauvel (Nooksack Indian Fisheries Commission - Communications), Eric Stover (Nooksack Indian Tribe), Jana Turner (Garden of the Salish Sea and Friends of Birch Bay State Park), Tami, Brittani Isenhour, Alexi Guddal (Whatcom Conservation District), Kim Clarkin, Nathan Rice (Lummi Nation), David Beatty, Lindsie Fratus-Thomas (Nooksack Indian Tribe), Devin Flawd (Lummi Natural Resources Department), Henry Bierlink (Ag Waterboard), Alan Chapman (WRIA 1 Planning Unit Fishers Caucus)

1. **Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Eleanor began the meeting with roundtable introductions. A quorum was present.
2. **October 6 Agenda:** Meeting agenda was approved.
3. **Approval of September meeting summary:** Summary was approved.
4. **Public Comment Period:** No public comment.
5. **Salmonid Research, monitoring, and restoration efforts in the South Fork Nooksack River:** Devin Flawd, Stock Assessment Manager, Lummi Nation Natural Resources Department, provided a high-level overview of different aspects of the department's monitoring program, restoration efforts, goals, and hatchery operations. The status and trends of the salmon populations in the Nooksack River are tracked by the co-managers (Lummi Nation, Nooksack Tribe, and WA Department of Fish and Wildlife). Devin described three programs within the department: Stock Assessment, Salmon Enhancement, and the Watershed Restoration Program. The species of concern are Chinook salmon – Puget Sound ESU (evolutionary significant unit), Pink salmon, Chum salmon, Coho salmon, and Steelhead – Puget Sound DPS (distinct population segment). The population status and trends for each of these salmon was shared. Chinook salmon were listed as threatened under ESA in 1999 (North/Middle Fork populations and South Fork population). For Chinook, the natural spawner abundance recovery goal is 9,900 spawners and the 5-year (2015-2019) mean is 300 spawners. This led to the South Fork Nooksack Chinook Rescue Program. The goal is to restore self-sustaining conditions in Nooksack Chinook habitats through restoration planning, technical analysis, land acquisition, restoration project implementation, [CREP program](#) implementation, and forestland management. Broader concerns are heatwaves, high-water temperatures, and major flooding events. More information can be found at: lummi@nsn.gov, salmonwria1.org, www.psp.wa.gov/salmon-recovery-overview.php, and devinf@lummi-nsn.gov
6. **MRC Agenda Adjustment:** The committee voted to no longer adhere to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) and adjusted the language on their agenda from "Public Comment" to "Community Updates". This time will be provided for information updates from meeting visitors or committee members at each regularly scheduled meeting. A person who wishes to address the Committee in-person at a monthly meeting are welcome to do so during a designated Public Comment period. In this instance, the Committee will prepare to adhere to the OPMA and offer a physical location for the meeting to be held while also allowing remote attendance (hybrid meeting). The Committee will hold hybrid meetings on a quarterly basis, or as preferred, and hold strictly remote meetings the rest of the year. A motion was made to approve the amended Whatcom MRC Policies and Procedures. All approved. No abstain.
7. **Staff Update:**
 - **Scheduling in-person meetings:** The committee will decide on the schedule of in-person meetings at the December meeting. The December meeting will be held in person in the Garden Room and will celebrate the holiday season and Eleanor's last meeting as an official MRC member.
 - **Letter to the Protect Mud Bay Cliffs Committee (PMBC):** A draft thank you letter to the PMBC for sharing concerns about the proposed Jones-Subdivision was shared. A motion was made to approve the letter. All approved. No abstain. Staff will send the letter to the PMBC Steering Committee.
 - **Clayton Beach Restoration Update:** Staff reminded the group that a chunk of their CDS funding was allocated to the Clayton Beach restoration project, which is being led by the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF). The project proposal (written by the NWSF) will be shared with the committee.
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8. Project Updates:

- **Olympia oyster restoration:** The committee discussed scoping additional pilot sites within N. Chuckanut Bay that could be more supportive for oyster retention. There is interest in expanding the project and purchasing additional cultch to set up those additional sites. Staff will set up a sub-committee to discuss the project further.
- **Forage Fish:** A new intern was hired to lead the forage fish surveys. The City of Bellingham suggested 3 additional sites along the Squalicum shoreline within the beach nourishment of new restoration sites (Little Squalicum Estuary and Squalicum Beach Park). Forage fish surveys will be conducted strictly on the Squalicum shoreline. The Marine Park will no longer be surveyed by the MRC.
- **Chuckanut PIC:** Staff mentioned that it continues to be difficult to retain volunteers to help with water quality sampling. The MRC has still been sampling monthly since 2014. Water quality sampling could get folded into the Whatcom County PIC sampling calendar and be completed by Whatcom County staff if the MRC chooses to no longer be involved with that aspect of the project. Education and outreach to the adjacent community is a great fit for the MRC given all the MRC projects implemented in the bay. Members expressed interest in taking on that role.

9. MRC Partner Committee Updates:

- **WWIN/Speaker Series:** There are no speaker series events scheduled for the rest of the year. The MRC was reminded that the Speaker Series Subcommittee meets on a quarterly basis or as needed. Members who volunteered at the MRC booth felt it was a successful event and connected with several community members about MRC programs. A baby anemone and baby mussel were the highlight of the MRC booth.
- **County Council:** No report.
- **Port of Bellingham:** The Little Squalicum Habitat Beach Project is wrapping up. 1,060 tons of concrete, 1,600 tons of wood waste, and 4200 tons of fill was removed. 4,400 tons of fish mix and 401 native plants (trees, shrubs, and ground cover) – with more to be planted soon – was added to the beach. A number of old growth logs were uncovered and turned into a back-beach feature.
- **Northwest Straits Commission:** The re-authorization bill for the Northwest Straits Initiative was introduced to the U.S. Senate and is going through committee reports. There has been a surge in the number of EGC trapped in the region – with Drayton Harbor being one of the areas. CDS funding allocated for derelict vessel removal will go directly from the Commission to the Department of Natural Resources. High priority boats will be removed in 2023.

Eleanor mentioned that Oyster Fest is occurring in downtown Blaine October 8 from 12:00pm – 6:00pm and the Cherry Point Implementation Committee Meeting is scheduled for October 17, 10am-12pm. Austin will share the meeting information.

10. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 6:48pm.

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