



**WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
DRAFT SUMMARY**

Scheduled for: **August 4, 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	August 4 Agenda Action: Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.		Approval of June meeting summary Action: Review and approve summaries as final.
4.		Public Comment Period
5.	5:10	Passport to Marine Adventure – Jessica Page, Northwest Straits Foundation Objective: Allow Foundation staff to share information about the Passport to Marine Adventure app and gather input from MRC members about Whatcom County beach sites to include.
6.	5:20	EarthViews – Brian Footen, President – Co-Founder Objective: To share development of online application to interact and learn about conservation in Puget Sound.
7.	5:50	Staff Update: CDS Funding schedule, In-person meeting requirement, Northwest Straits Initiative Collaborative Conservation Workshop Objective: Provide staff with opportunity to relay information and updates to the full MRC.
8.	6:00	Project Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW Lummi Island beach cleanup • Kelp Monitoring • Education and Outreach – European Green Crab display (Eleanor) • North Chuckanut No-Anchor Zone
9.	6:20	MRC Partner Committee Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWIN/Speaker Series (Austin) – Water Week 2022, Bellingham SeaFeast • County Council • Port of Bellingham – Kurt B. • NWSC – Bob C.
10.	6:30	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/>

Whatcom County boards, commissions, and advisory committees are currently following State Open Public Meetings Act amended requirements by holding all meetings remotely. Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.

In attendance: Eleanor Hines (Chair), Paul Troutman, Kathy Ketteridge, Jim Boyle, Mike MacKay, Heather Spore (Vice-Chair), Bob Cecile, Beth Lorence, Austin Rose (staff)

Others: Brian Footen (Earth Views), Allie Simpson (Northwest Straits Commission), Janet Migaki, Jana Turner, Barb Thompson (Whatcom County Public Works staff), Maggie Taylor (Nooksack Indian Tribe), Jackie Dexter, Jessie Page (Northwest Straits Foundation), Annika Fain

1. **Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Eleanor began the meeting with introductions. A quorum was established.
2. **August 4 agenda:** The agenda was approved with the correction of August 4 (as opposed to August 2) to agenda item number 2.
3. **Approval of June meeting summary:** The June MRC meeting summary was approved.
4. **Public Comment:** Janet Migaki called attention to the need for public input to protect North Chuckanut Bay from a proposed housing development on the north end of the bay. Janet shared her concerns about the proposed stormwater management plan and the potential harm to the marine water from stormwater output. You can find out more information at <http://mudbaycliffs.org>
5. **Passport to Marine Adventure:** Jessie Page, Northwest Straits Foundation, shared information about a new app the launched by the Foundation called [Passport to Marine Adventure](#). The goal is to get people outside to explore coastal sites and beaches within the 7 MRC counties. As participants visit the sites, they collect points, and through the app can learn about work that has been done at particular sites by the Northwest Straits Initiative. The points can be redeemed at local businesses for discounts. The Chuckanut Pocket Estuary, Locust Beach, and Jerry's Journey at Birch Bay State Park are the sites currently showcased for Whatcom County. Three more sites (Semiahmoo, Point Whitehorn, Clayton Beach) will be added within the next couple of months. Jessie invited the MRC to provide environmental education info., pictures, and local tips on those additional sites.
6. **EarthViews:** Brian Footen, co-founder of [EarthViews](#), provided an overview of EarthViews – an online image mapping and data application – that he built as a way to preserve waterways and allow collected data to be readily available to the public. Data is collected by kayaks and rafts. The application operates and functions similar to Google StreetView. This work is rooted in connecting people with waterways and he hopes that the more people can view imagery of places not many go, it will increase their understanding and desire to protect those places. Brian began mapping Puget Sound in September 2021, starting with the south sound (Seattle -> Olympia, Olympia -> Shelton, etc). Over 600 miles of nearshore mapping with 360° imagery is complete. Brian also collects 12 different parameters of water quality, and geotags animals seen along the way. The data is [ArcGIS](#) compatible and data can be extracted as well as added to (i.e.MRC data). An adopt a mile program is set up so that every \$100 donated, a mile of shoreline is mapped. This allows different agencies to partner and come together to provide funding for particular areas of the shoreline.
7. **Staff Update:**
 - CDS Funding Timeline: The MRC's project proposal was submitted to the Commission in mid-June. We are still waiting for approval from NOAA. The Commission will enter into an interagency agreement for derelict boat removal. The funding will likely be available in January 2023 and needs to be spent within 12 months.
 - In-person meeting requirement: In June 2022, the legislature has amended the Open Public Meeting Act (OPMA) to require a physical meeting location where the public can attend, except in emergency situations where the public agency determines it cannot safely hold an in-person meeting. The MRC is subject to the OPMA because of the public comment period offered at monthly meetings. This in-person meeting requirement requires that two County staff (for safety reasons) to host the MRC meetings in the Garden Room every month. Staff asked the committee if they would like to remove the public comment period, no longer be subject to the OPMA, and meet in person on a quarterly basis (as they desire) with all the other meetings throughout the year being virtual. The MRC suggested other ways to ensure the public feels they can approach the MRC with issues – i.e. having a 'General Updates' agenda item, or creating a specific agenda item for larger topics/issues to be discussed. The group discussed having the MRC Executive Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, and any other members) draft parameters for how the General Updates item would be utilized, which the committee would vote on. In addition, the MRC Policies and Procedures would need to be amended. The MRC Vice-Chair made a motion:

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Pending review of the MRC By-Laws and if there is no restrictions to providing a public comment period I suggest that we revise our procedure and replace the standard public comment period with a place holder on the agenda for general updates.

A suggested addition was made to the motion that the MRC Executive Committee draft parameters for the General Updates that are as open as possible to ensure the MRC is receiving input from the community on situations the committee should be aware of.

7 members in favor, 1 abstain. No quorum to complete vote. MRC Staff will check in with the Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney to ensure the MRC can remove their public comment period. In addition, the MRC resolution and by-laws will be reviewed.

- Northwest Straits Collaborative Conservation Workshop: The Collaborative Conservation Workshop will be held on September 16, from 11am to 4pm, at Padilla Bay Reserve. The program is being held in lieu of the MRC annual conference and is designed to strengthen collaborative connections, share innovations and ideas across the Initiative, and reconnect in person and outdoors!

8. Project Updates

- **SW Lummi Island beach cleanup**: Bob reported that the SW Lummi beach cleanup was a success again. A group of volunteers left from Squalicum Marina and were dropped on the beach near Lummi Rocks. Another group of islanders was picked up at the Aiston Preserve and cleaned a beach section just south of Lummi Rocks. Approximately a total of 2 miles was covered. 450 pounds of trash was removed.

- **Kelp Monitoring**: Eleanor mentioned that the first kelp survey occurred at the Aiston Preserve. The kelp bed looked very health and potentially larger than previous years – perhaps due to the removal of the overwater structure. Eleanor will send the kelp survey schedule to the full committee and encouraged members to join if possible. Several extra kayaks are available to use.

- **Education and Outreach**: Eleanor recently made connection with an artist that could make an acrylic display of a European Green Crab for outreach purposes. This artist is going to develop a proposal with a cost estimate of this item. The MRC should consider how they may use this type of display.

- **N. Chuckanut Bay No-Anchor Zone**: Northwest Straits staff are working on contracting an eelgrass survey of the bay for this summer. It will be towed underwater video with some opportunistic dive surveys. Staff are also working with the Clarks Point residents to gather images this summer of boat use in the bay, and have been in contact with the Lummi Fisheries manager about this project to learn if there are concerns of impacts to fishing access. The timing is good to collect the survey and design a footprint for the no-anchor zone and continue discussions with the MRC. Members are encouraged to conduct vessel counts and collect photos for review in September or October. Due to limited boating activity seen, there remains concerns that this location is not appropriate for a no-anchor zone.

9. MRC Partner Committee Updates

- **WWIN/Speaker Series**: Whatcom Water Week is occurring September 10 – 18. There is an opportunity for the MRC to partner with ReSources, Surfrider Foundation, and the Ocean Conservancy on a beach cleanup event for International Coastal Cleanup on September 17. Water Week culminates with Bellingham SeaFeast. Members expressed interest and availability to have a booth at the event. SeaFeast will feature a new event – Plastic Matters – to raise awareness of plastic use and impacts to waterways. This event includes a static plastic trash art display and a weeklong activity where participants pick up plastic and trash around the County that can be brought to the waterfront for weighing. Prizes are available for winners (highest weight of trash).

- **County Council**: no report

- **Port of Bellingham**: no report

- **Northwest Straits Commission**: report included in Staff Update (Collaborative Conservation Workshop and CDS funding schedule)