

Snohomish County Marine Resources Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Summary
June 17, 2026, 4:30-6:30PM
Meeting Location: Online

MRC Members Present

Julie Schlenger, Chair
Brienne Townsend, Co-Vice Chair
Richard Strickland
Becky Passarella
Dawn Presler
Heidi Stewart
Allan Hicks
Phil Salditt

MRC Ex-Officio Members

David Bain, MRC Ex-Officio Member

Others

Jeff Whitty – NW Straits
Anna Kagley
Cynthia Harbison - DNR

MRC Members Absent

Cory Champagne (Sara Maxwell Alternate)
Natasha Coumou (Heidi Stewart Alternate)
Anya Voloshin
Sara Maxwell, Co-Vice Chair

Staff

Joycelyn Blue, SWM Senior Planner and MRC Staff
Cali Weber – Snohomish County, MRC Staff
Brenly Lott - Snohomish County, Marine Ecology Intern

Summary of Decisions

The MRC and Cynthia Harbison discussed possible ways to partner on the Statewide Kelp and Eelgrass Health Plan moving forward. The MRC welcomed the new intern, Brenly Lott.

Welcome and Introductions

MRC Co-Vice Chair Brienne Townsend opened the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting at 4:30 PM.

Brienne introduced herself and asked for self-introductions from the meeting participants.

After introductions, Brienne Townsend read the Snohomish County Tribal Acknowledgement.

“We acknowledge the original inhabitants of this place, the Sah ku mehu (Sauk-Suiattle Tribe), the stulag^wábš (Stillaguamish Tribe), and the sduhubš (Snohomish) Skykomish, Snoqualmie and their successors the Tulalip Tribes. Since time immemorial, they have hunted, fished, gathered on, and taken care of these lands and waters. We respect their sovereignty, their right to self-determination and honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. We will strive to be honest about our past mistakes and bring about a future that includes their people, stories, and voices to form a more just and equitable society.”

With this tribal acknowledgement, we open our time together by honoring the ancestors whose feet first knew these lands, and whose paddles still know the waters of what we now call Snohomish County.”

Approval of MRC Meeting Summary

Richard Strickland made a motion to approve the May 2026 meeting summary. Heidi Stewart seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

DNR Marine Vegetation Efforts – Cynthia Harbison, DNR Environmental Planner

Cynthia is an Environmental Planner with the Aquatic Resources Division of DNR and is currently the Program Lead on the Statewide Kelp and Eelgrass Health Plan.

Cynthia presented the marine vegetation work being completed at DNR, including the Snohomish Kelp and Eelgrass Protection Zone, current DNR priorities, and the Statewide Kelp and Eelgrass Health Plan.

The MRC discussed ways to partner moving forward including the upcoming shoreline vegetation monitoring, collaboration on outreach messages, integration of DNR aerial imagery and MRC kayak data, and exploration of voluntary no-anchor zones through NW Straits.

Welcome to Marine Ecology Intern, Brenly Lott – Joycelyn Blue

Brenly is the 2026 summer Marine Ecology Intern. She has a B.S in Marine Biology and Ecology and will be pursuing her master’s degree at the UW School of Marine and Environmental Affairs in the fall. Her interests include regenerative aquaculture, marine vegetation, and conservation. She will be joining fieldwork including kelp monitoring, forage fish surveys, and opportunities with other groups in the County. For her independent project for the summer, she will be working to analyze past years of forage fish data in reference to the grain size analysis results and other beach factors. She will be working to create a final report summarizing any findings.

Project Updates/Announcements – All

NWSC – Phil Salditt

- Lucas is forming a workgroup composed of 1-2 reps from each MRC to discuss hosting state legislator site visits over the next few months that highlight MRC work. This is connected to a NWSC External Relations Committee strategy to raise the profile of our work with the state legislature. The goal is to visit at least one site per legislative district this summer. The workgroup would focus on creating key messages, prioritizing site visits, and leading visit coordination locally. Lucas is currently reaching out to MRCs and talking with MRC Commission reps about workgroup formation.
- The Science Advisory Committee’s offer of a collaborative session with MRCs is still open. Several MRCs have already scheduled sessions. Reach out to Dana Oster if your MRC is interested.

- Mindy Roberts, Puget Sound Partnership Executive Director, noted that the 2026-2030 Action Agenda is nearing completion. Track progress at <https://psp.wa.gov/2026AAupdate.php>.
- Last month, the Commission explored the idea of having a regional European green crab molt search project. MRCs discussed the idea in their recent meetings. Questions were raised about how this would fit with other partners already performing molt search. The Commission noted that the idea has been discussed with Washington Sea Grant, WDFW, and other partners who confirmed there could be a role for NWSC and MRCs. Funding does not currently exist to support NWSC/MRC engagement. These are early conversations to explore interest in case funding comes available in 2028 or later. A future NW Straits Commission meeting will include a presentation from the Sea Grant molt search program lead, Lisa Watkins.
- Last month, MRCs were asked to consider what they would do with a bigger budget. MRCs shared input and questions with the Commission. Lucas clarified that the exercise is an informal discussion to generate ideas in case ongoing NWSC budget requests result in additional funding. Since this is only an exercise, formal requests for proposals to MRCs are not being developed currently. If funding were to come available, the funds would be subject to the existing NW Straits Commission funding policy. MRCs are encouraged to continue discussions and capture ideas to reference as needed in the future.
- Jessica Owens shared progress to date on the NW Straits Commission communications plan. This included baseline awareness survey outcomes and actions from the 2026 NWSC retreat. One outcome is the NW Straits Commission 101 is now available as a recording online: <https://vimeo.com/user862642/nwstraits101?share=copy>. Jessica also requested Commission feedback on a NWSC relational map graphic.
- The Commission will meet virtually on June 26 and in-person

LIO – Phil Salditt

- Culvert and Fish Passage grant opportunity

Derelict Vessel MRC Grant – Allan Hicks & Sara Maxwell

- The subcommittee met on June 1 and discussed the best way to finish filling in the profiles and framework.
- The subcommittee is going on the boat tour to see derelict vessels June 23.
- By talking with the Port of Everett the subcommittee learned that some vessels have already been removed.
- Several members and staff participated in the first meeting of the NWSC derelict vessel group.

Marine Vegetation MRC Grant – Julie Schlenger & Dawn Presler

- Final versions of the one-pager and poster are complete. The subcommittee is beginning outreach to local boating groups and areas frequented by boaters.

Forage Fish Monitoring – Phil Salditt & Julie Schlenger

- Picnic Point and Meadowdale –June 16, July 27, Aug 13
 - Phil mentioned cross-training with another member to do a handoff of the lead role next year.
- Howarth – June TBD

Outreach – Dawn Presler

- The group is preparing for the Sustainamania event and the ETAP beach cleanup on Sep 26.
- The group is working on designing a pull-up banner about the MRC and its work.

Crabber Outreach – Brie Townsend

- Projected dates for crabber outreach at the Port of Everett are two days Fri July 3 and July 4 both 6am – 10am. Members can sign up via the link Brie sent.

Kelp Monitoring – Brie Townsend

- Dates and back up dates for kelp monitoring have been selected.
- The group met on June 16 to check in before monitoring begins.
- Brie, Dawn, Joycelyn, and Brenly completed their self-rescue course. Julie is scheduled to complete hers.

Oil Spill Preparedness and Prevention – Julie Schlenger

- None

Beach Watchers – Jonathan Robinson

- Molt Blitz – June 26, training date and event location to be announced
- Quarterly beach cleanup at Picnic Point was on June 3. There were 13 volunteers and we picked up 190lbs of trash.
- Beach cleanup at Meadowdale on July 9th from 10am to 12pm. Council member Nate Nehring will be present along with a complimentary shuttle to and from the beach.

Upcoming Events

- Forage fish monitoring
 - Picnic Point and Meadowdale – July 27
 - Howarth –July TBD
- MRC July meeting will be virtual

Other Updates?

- NWSF director Don Hunger is retiring and is actively looking to fill the position
- Ardi Kveen, the founding executive director of ORCA is retiring.

- Current comment period on Snohomish County Community Wide Climate Resilience Plan.
- October Planning Retreat has been moved to first Wednesday in October, the 7th. This will be one hour longer than typical meetings and will be in person.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.