



**MRC Members**

Glen Alexander (“Alex”)  
Citizen-at-Large  
Term 2: 01/21/2027

Rick Beauregard (Vice-Chair)  
Scientific  
Term 1: 01/31/2027

Jim Boyle  
Conservation/Environmental  
Term 1: 01/31/2026

Jace Cotton  
City of Bellingham, Council

Jackie Dexter  
Economic  
Term 1: 01/31/2027

Mark Fairhart  
Citizen-at-large  
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Kaylee Galloway  
Designated, County Council

Joe Hoats  
Economic  
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Kathy Ketteridge  
Citizen-at-Large  
Term 1: 01/31/2026

Elizabeth Lorence  
Conservation/Environmental  
Term 1: 01/31/2026

Mike MacKay  
Scientific  
Term 2: 01/31/2028

Avery Maverick  
Recreational  
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Andrew Shelton  
Economic  
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Heather Spore (Chair)  
Scientific  
Term 1: 01/31/2025

Mary Lou Steward  
City of Blaine, Mayor

Dan Sulak  
Recreational  
Term 1: 01/31/2026

Colin Wahl  
Conservation/Environmental  
Term 1: 01/31/2025

**WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING SUMMARY | August 1, 2024 5:00pm – 7:00pm**  
**ZOOM [LINK](#), Meeting ID: 848 5509 7034 | Passcode 280586**  
**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.		<b>Introductions and Determine Quorum</b>
2.		<b>August 1 Agenda</b> <b>Action:</b> Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.
3.	5:00	<b>Approval of June Meeting Summary</b> <b>Action:</b> Review and approve summary as final.
4.		<b>Community Updates</b> <b>Objective:</b> Community members attending the meeting who wish to address or update the Committee on Committee related matters will be provided up to five (5) minutes to speak.
5.	5:15	<b>Staff Updates:</b> Visit with local elects ( <i>Brief Sheet 5.1</i> ), current grant update, subcommittee involvement ( <i>Brief Sheet 5.2</i> ), Northwest Straits Conference, project proposals, project leads <b>Objective:</b> Provide staff with opportunity to relay information and updates to the full MRC. <b>Action:</b> Committee guidance on grant amendment
6.	5:45	<b>Project Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kelp</li> <li>• Olympia Oyster – <a href="#">Chuckanut</a> and Drayton</li> <li>• Wildcat Cove</li> <li>• Forage Fish</li> </ul>
7.	6:15	<b>MRC Partner Committee Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Council</li> <li>• Port of Bellingham</li> <li>• City of Bellingham</li> <li>• City of Blaine</li> </ul> Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC)
8.	~7:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjourn</b></li> </ul>

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, September 5th, 5:00pm – 7:00pm, HYBRID. Please check out the [MRC calendar](#) for meeting dates and formats.

*Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are to contact MRC Staff at least 4 business days in advance.*

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**In Attendance:** Austin Rose (staff), Andrew Shelton, Dana Flerchinger (staff), Kaylee Galloway, Mark Fairhart, Dan Sulak, Colin Wahl, Joe Hoats, Avery Maverick, Jackie Dexter, Rick Beauregard, Heather Spore, Kurt Baumgarten, Mary Lou Steward

**Others:** Alex Haase (NWSF Intern), Julie Hirsch (GSSC), Maggie Taylor (Nooksack Indian Tribe, Natural Resources), Kristy Lee (Whatcom Land Trust), Jacob O' Donnell (GSSC)

**1. Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Heather began the meeting with roundtable introductions. A quorum was present.

**2. August 1 Agenda:** The August agenda was approved.

**3. Approval of June Meeting Summary:** The June meeting summary was approved.

#### **4. Community Updates:**

Kristy Lee with Whatcom Land Trust inquired about the MRC participating in a moderated panel discussion titled "Protecting Our Waterways: Community Stewardship in Whatcom County" during Whatcom Water Week. The event will take place on September 17<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-8pm, with other panel participants from NSEA and the Whatcom Conservation District. The goals of the panel are to describe the role that local organizations play in enhancing water quality and habitat in Whatcom County and to discuss how folks can contribute. The panel is expected to run about 1-1.5 hours at Transition Outpost. The rest of the time will be to eat, socialize, etc. Austin will communicate with the committee via email about MRC member participation.

#### **5. Staff Updates:**

- **Visit with local elects:** Austin provided an update on the recent visits of elects including Senator Patty Murray and Representative Rick Larsen. Rick Larsen visited Bellingham on July 5<sup>th</sup> and met with Jim Boyle, Glen Alexander, and Councilwoman Kaylee Galloway. Members spoke to Representative Larsen about current MRC projects, and Rick discussed his co-sponsorship of a bill supporting reauthorization of the Northwest Straits Initiative. Senator Patty Murray visited Padilla Bay on July 16<sup>th</sup> to learn about MRC project highlights and to express support for reauthorization of the Northwest Straits Initiative.
- **Current grant update:** Austin described amendments being made to the current NOAA grant as the beach cleanup task did not occur this summer due to logistics and because the Olympia oyster feasibility study did not occur in Drayton Harbor. The remaining funds from both of these tasks will be shifted to the admin task to support staff time through 2024.
- **Subcommittee involvement:** An MRC subcommittee has been working with the Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District to identify shared priorities and avenues of collaboration with the MRC. Another subcommittee was created to discuss the feasibility of the MRC taking on intertidal surveys at Cherry Point in the coming years. Mark Fairhart shared that Dana, Austin, and Alex met to discuss the MRC taking on these surveys. MRC staff supported continuing the project in coming years if the MRC is interested in pursuing this opportunity as it should not include much staff time and support. Based on discussions with the MRC grant manager, Austin expressed that 2025 would likely serve as a pilot year for the surveys before the MRC formally integrates this project into the MRC grants due to the logistics of having to put together a QAPP for the project.
- **Northwest Straits Conference:** The Northwest Straits Conference is being held on November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at the Delta Hotel in Everett. Members need to reserve rooms by October 15<sup>th</sup> if they'd like to attend. Members will have an opportunity to have a display /participate in a discussion about a project if they would like. If members are interested in helping with this or have an idea for a project discussion topic, please let Austin and Dana know.
- **Project proposals:** Project proposals for next grant round will be due in May of 2025. We will need to have more discussions on this topic as it grows closer, possible starting in January.

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- **Project leads:** There is going to be more emphasis placed on the role of project leads in the coming grant cycle. Project leads are expected to step up to take more of a leadership role in the coming years.

## 6. Project Updates

- **Kelp:** Kelp surveys have been completed at Alden Bank and Aiston Preserve. At Aiston Preserve, some of the kelp fronds looked a bit tattered/stressed, but the surveyors found a new bed to the north of the main bed that was larger in size than the existing bed. In early July, Mike MacKay, Bob Cecile, and Dana also ran a perimeter track around the kelp bed at Alden Bank, noting that the bed looked healthy with lots of forage fish and jellyfish observed. The MRC plans to survey Cherry Point, Point Whitehorn, and Southwest Lummi Island later in August.
- **Olympia Oyster – [Chuckanut](#) and Drayton:** Austin shared an email from the Olympia Oyster specialist with WDFW with recommendations on how the MRC could move forward with the efforts in North Chuckanut Bay. Jackie, Austin, Dana, and Jodie Toft with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund plan to meet shortly to discuss next steps for this project in Chuckanut Bay and Drayton Harbor. Jackie mentioned that there may be increased larval retention of Olympia oysters on the inside of Semiahmoo Spit in the gravel areas where the flow is lower, so this area may warrant further investigation. Jackie also recommended that 2025 serve as a pilot year in attempt to determine areas of larval recruitment in Drayton Harbor. Austin mentioned that PSRF is holding 1.5 tanks of seed for the MRC for the coming year.
- **Wildcat Cove:** Alex Haase, an intern with the Northwest Straits Foundation, shared a presentation about the efforts that she and Dylan Trainer (another Northwest Straits Foundation Intern) have been participating in down in Wildcat Cove this summer. Dylan and Alex have been assisting the MRC with eelgrass preservation efforts in Wildcat Cove by interacting with boat launch users at the Cove, collecting observational data, and educating cove users about intertidal organisms, invasive species, and eelgrass environments. Alex and Dylan started their work down in the Cove during mid-June and will continue until September.
- **Forage Fish:** Austin shared that Jason Morgan with the Northwest Straits Foundation is looking into restarting forage fish surveys at Aiston Preserve now that restoration efforts have been completed in this area. The MRC will discuss the feasibility of assisting in these efforts as more information becomes available. The MRC's participation would likely include sample processing, with Lummi Island residents assisting with sample collection and transport.

## 7. MRC Partner Committee Updates

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- **County Council:** Councilwoman Galloway shared that council recently approved a resolution to increase shelter capacity in our community and has been working on implementing a justice project (includes jail and behavioral health services). Council is also gearing up for next biennial budget. Revenues have been weaker than hoped, so the county is in a limited hiring freeze and trying to figure out the best ways to stretch the budget. Heather Spore inquired about the timeline for the County Comprehensive Plan review process for the MRC. The review process has been delayed and the MRC will be updated on when additional review is needed.
- **Port of Bellingham:** Due to technical difficulties, this update was provided via e-mail from Kurt Baumgarten on 8/5/2024. The e-mail was shared with the committee on 8/5/2024, and has been copied and pasted for this summary.

*Hi Austin and Heather -*

*Apologies for the connectivity issue at last week's meeting. Here are a few updates for the group:*

*Bellingham Shipping Terminal -*

- *Ongoing repairs and upgrades to the wharf including a "heavy lift" area and enhancements to the stormwater treatment system.*
- *Maintenance dredging and associated contaminated sediment removal*
- *In-water work into February 2025 and upland work into summer/fall 2025*

*I&J Waterway (Bornstein Facility)*

- *Demolition and rebuild of wharf, construct new bulkhead*
- *Maintenance dredging and associated contaminated sediment removal*
- *In-water work window into February 2025*

*Yorkston Fuel Site (Squalicum Creek Estuary)*

- *Remove fuel contaminated soil in upland*
- *Anticipated completion fall 2024*

*Little Squalicum Beach Stormwater Treatment*

- *Waiting on final permits*
- *Construction anticipated in 2025*

*Westman Marine Site (Blaine Harbor)*

- *Contaminated sediment removal and associated upland contaminated soil removal. Rebuild infrastructure.*
- *Permit application to agencies summer/fall 2024*
- *Construction schedule TBD*
- *WQ monitoring requirements addressed through permitting*

*Thank you -*

*Kurt*

- **City of Bellingham:** No update
- **City of Blaine:** Mary Lou Steward shared that Drayton Harbor Days will be held this weekend and that there has been an issue getting the Plover ferry up and running despite passing the inspection.
- **Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC):** July meeting highlights were shared with the committee via e-mail prior to the MRC meeting. Austin addressed the important highlights during the Staff Update.

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**8. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm. It was noted that the September MRC meeting is a HYBRID meeting. The correction is shown in track changes in this summary.

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