



MRC Members

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

Rick Beauregard (NWSC rep)
Scientific
Term 1: 01/31/2027

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

Alexi Guddal
Conservation/Environmental
Partial: 01/31/2026

Joe Hoats
Economic
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Kathy Ketteridge (Vice-Chair)
Citizen-at-Large
Term 1: 01/31/2026

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

Mike MacKay (NWSC alt rep)
Scientific
Term 2: 01/31/2028

Avery Maverick
Recreational
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Paul Meyer
Conservation/Environmental
Term 1: 01/31/2029

Andrew Shelton (Chair)
Economic
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Mary Lou Steward
City of Blaine, Mayor

Colin Wahl
Scientific
Term 2: 01/31/2029

Vacancies

Recreational Interest

Nooksack Tribe Representative
Lummi Nation Representative

WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING AGENDA | March 6, 2025 5:00pm – 7:00pm
ZOOM [LINK](#), Meeting ID: 829 8756 4534 | Passcode 868735
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.

Time	Agenda Item	Lead	Action Y/N
1.	Introductions and Determine Quorum	Andrew	
2.	March 6 Agenda <i>Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.</i>	Andrew	Y
3.	Approval of February Meeting Summary <i>Review and approve summary as final.</i>		
4.	Community Updates <i>Community members attending the meeting who wish to address or update the Committee on MRC related matters will be provided up to five (5) minutes to speak.</i>		
5.	5:15 Puget Sound Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy development: Bree Turner, WA Department of Natural Resources <i>Member input needed on marine vegetation priorities in Whatcom County.</i>	Bree Brief MRC Comp Comments	Y
6.	5:45 Whatcom 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update – Environment and Climate Chapters <i>Approval of committee input to draft Comprehensive Plan chapters assigned for 2025 update.</i>	Andrew	Y
7.	6:00 Staff Updates: MRC Policies and Procedures, Shore Friendly workshops, RFP <i>Approval of Policies and Procedures addendum.</i>	Austin	Y
8.	6:10 MRC Project Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPAR Intertidal Monitoring • Beach Seine with Schools • Olympia Oyster • Vessel turn-in event 	Mark Mike Jackie Austin	
9.	6:40 MRC Partner Committee Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Council • Port of Bellingham • City of Blaine • Northwest Straits Commission 	Kaylee Kurt Mary Lou Rick	
10	~7:00 Adjourn		

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In Attendance: Austin Rose (staff), Rick Beauregard, Paul Meyer, Glen Alexander “Alex”, Beth Lorence, Kurt Baumgarten, Jackie Dexter, Kaylee Galloway, Mark Fairhart, Alexi Guddal, Colin Wahl, Andrew Shelton

Others: Julie Hirsch (Garden of the Salish Sea Curriculum), Bree Turner (DNR, Habitat Strategic Initiative Lead (HSIL)), Marian Berejikian, Jeff Whitty (Northwest Straits Commission), Eddie Nosal, Rachel Latchford (WDFW HSIL), Alan Chapman

- 1. Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Austin began the meeting, in absence of the MRC Chair and Vice-Chair, with the tribal acknowledgement and roundtable introductions. A quorum was present.
- 2. March 6 Agenda:** The March agenda was approved with adjustments including Port of Bellingham update earlier in the agenda and an addition to staff updates.
- 3. Approval of February Meeting Summary:** The February meeting summary was approved.
- 4. Community Updates:** No community updates.

Port of Bellingham: Kurt mentioned that the Port has finalized an agreement with DNR to support the Vessel Turn-In event anticipated for mid-July. The planning team is discussing advertisement avenues, and the work will likely be done at one of the Squalicum boatyards. The Port Commission approved entering into a grant agreement with Department of Ecology for \$300,000 to begin design work on some habitat enhancements and cleanup work between the Roeder Avenue and Holly Street Bridge.

- 5. Puget Sound Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy development:** Bree Turner, WA Department of Natural Resources, Marine Vegetation Lead, [Habitat Strategic Initiative](#) (HSIL). A briefing was provided to members in the meeting packet. Bree provided the MRC an update on the Puget Sound Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy development process and the themes that have emerged from the initial plan analysis. During the fall of 2024, HSIL began synthesis of the existing strategies and priorities from the two recovery plans: the [Puget Sound Eelgrass Recovery Strategy](#) and the [Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan](#). The preliminary analysis resulted in four draft strategies: *research and monitoring*; *protection*; *restoration*; and *outreach*. During early 2025, existing plan information will be expanded upon in close coordination with marine vegetation workgroups, tribes, and partners for input and alignment. More opportunities to comment and stay engaged with this process were shared.

Links shared in the chat include:

- [a feedback forum](#)
- [upcoming virtual workshop registration](#)
- [e-mail list serv, to stay informed](#)

Discussion questions included:

- *What are major opportunities and challenges to kelp and eelgrass conservation/recovery in Whatcom County?*
- *What are ways that we can align the Implementation Strategy with Whatcom County MRC kelp and eelgrass conservation and recovery priorities?*

- 6. Whatcom 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update** – The draft Environment and Climate chapters for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update have been accessible through a google drive for members to review and suggest edits/comments. This allows the entire committee to review suggested changes and approve as a group. Some members requested more time to review the Climate chapter and include references to carbon sequestration

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and marine vegetation. Further communication will be done via e-mail.

7. Staff Updates:

- **MRC Policies and Procedures:** Members approved the 2025 addendum to the MRC Policies and Procedures, including the roles of Committee members and MRC staff. Members electronic signatures will be included, and the document will be finalized for the year. Rick Beauregard mentioned that the 2025-2027 Northwest Straits Commission Request for Proposals includes language regarding conflict of interest. The Whatcom MRC Policies and Procedures also includes a conflict of interest policy. It should be ensured that there are no inconsistencies between the two statements.
- **Shore Friendly workshops:** The MRC will be co-hosting two Shore Friendly workshops with the Northwest Straits Foundation: 1) Saturday, March 13 @ Pt. Robert Community Center. Optional beach walk with Herarra consultant. Workshop topics include: coastal processes, sea level rise, alternatives to bulkheads, vegetation and stormwater management and 2) Vegetation Contractors workshop on Friday, March 21 at the WECU Education Center in downtown Bellingham. Information is on the MRC homepage.
- **Request for Proposal:** The Northwest Straits Commission distributed the 2025-27 MRC Grants Request for Proposals. Staff will be working with MRC leads to develop project specific proposals. Further discussion should be expected for the April meeting.

8. MRC Project Updates:

- **CPAR Intertidal Monitoring:** Please mark your calendars! June 12 and July 24 are the days that have been selected to conduct the intertidal monitoring with the Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve. 8-12 people will be needed. 2 Naturalists have been scheduled to assist. There are opportunities to join another group doing these kinds of surveys in advance of those scheduled in Whatcom. Mark will keep the group informed. The committee was reminded that this survey effort by the MRC is being piloted this year to see if it is feasible for the MRC to adopt this survey as a consistent MRC program/project. Members were encouraged to check in with Mark if interested in joining a subcommittee to discuss larger questions about why the data is important for the MRC to attain. Rick Beauregard suggested connecting with the Northwest Straits Commission Science Advisory Committee to help.
- **Beach Seine with Schools:** The schools selected for the 2025 Beach Seine with Kids program are: 4/22 Field Event: Harmony Elementary School (52 students), 5/6 Field Event: Carl Cozier Elementary School (47 Students), and 5/20 Field Event: Acme Elementary and Alderwood Elementary School (67 students combined). MRC member help on event days is needed.
- **Olympia oyster:** Staff with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF) will be doing two site assessments for Olympia oysters in Drayton Harbor. March 31 and another date in April or May. PSRF is at capacity with regards to space at the hatchery. The Drayton Harbor Oyster Company has given approval to store the MRCs order of cultch at their farm – which, is extremely helpful as the MRC works on the assessment and permit process. The MRC will be working with the students from Bellingham Technical College to conduct the North Chuckanut Bay population survey May 27 and 29.
- **Vessel turn-in event:** Staff updated the committee about the vessel turn-in event being planned in partnership with the Port of Bellingham, NWSC, DNR, and WA Department of Ecology. The plan is to begin advertising in March/April and the event is tentatively planned for July/August. Staff have been in

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communication with both Lummi Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribe staff, which likely help share information about the event. Advertisement opportunities were discussed.

9. MRC Partner Committee Updates:

- **County Council:** Kaylee mentioned upcoming Council agenda items that may be of interest to MRC members. The Council is actively discussing the Comprehensive Plan update – particularly around growth in the county. The Council is preparing for their annual retreat and have requested an update on the next budget, and will be continuing their efforts around budget prioritization. The Council has an extensive legislative agenda – a lot in the capital or behavioral health and public safety. Kaylee and MRC staff will present as part of the College of the Environment/Salish Sea Institute speaker series on March 13.
- **City of Blaine:** No report.
- **Northwest Straits Commission:** Rick asked the committee to consider working with the Commission’s Science Advisory Committee if there is a particular project in question. The Commission is looking for help with annual meeting planning. A knowledge base has been put together for DEI resources. The annual retreat is scheduled for April 3-4.

10. Adjourn:

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