



SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources
Committee



Marine Advisory Committees

MRC-CAG-LIO

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, July 2nd, 2026
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

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9:00 AM	Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott
9:05 AM	Public Comment
9:10 AM	Approve meeting agenda – All Approve MRC June meeting minutes – MRC Members
9:15 AM	Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates- Christina Koons/Mike Ramsey
9:40 AM	MRC Updates/Business • Welcome new MRC Member (Russell Guerry) - <i>Sam Whitridge</i> • NWSC Legislative Site Visit Work Group Report- <i>Lovel Pratt/Mike Ramsey</i> • MRC Review of Draft Oil Spill Risk Letter for SJ County Council-<i>Charles Bookman</i> • Update on European Green Crab Discovery on Orcas- <i>Jess Newley</i> • MRC subcommittee updates ○ Outreach & Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i> ○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Olivia Graham/Katie Johnson</i> ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i> ○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge/Charles Bookman</i>
10:30 AM	Committee member updates and any other business
10:40 AM	Adjourn MRC Meeting

	Convene LIO Meeting
10:40 AM	LIO Business- <i>Katie Johnson</i> • Puget Sound Partnership Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i> • Integrated Water Resource Management Funding Update • August 2026 Leadership Council Local Forum
11:15 AM	Adjourn LIO Meeting Convene CAG Meeting
11:15 AM	Salmon Recovery CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i> • Report on Salmon Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Evaluation of 2026 Proposals • Planning for CAG Review of proposals at August meeting
12:00 PM	Adjourn CAG Meeting

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, Rich Goodhart, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Beth Tate, Flora Vaught, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Paul Andersson, Katalin Chapman, Katherine Combs, Tyler Davis, Gregg Dunphy, Simon Geerlofs, Russel Guerry, Lucas Hart, Colin Huntemer, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Kari McVeigh, Jess Newley, Jessica Owens, Tida Rau, Frances Robertson, Craig Smith, Elaina Thompson, Sam Whitridge, Jeff Whitty, Tillery Williams

9:04 AM Convene MRC Meeting

Adam Parrott

9:05 AM Public Comment

Simon Geerlofs

I'm a former Snohomish MRC member, I currently work at PNNL (Pacific NW National Lab) focused on energy resilience and challenges. I know you've been wrestling with the idea of tidal power. I want to introduce myself and let you know that the PNNL is an environmental research resource, simon.geerlofs@pnnl.gov

9:08 AM Approve meeting agenda

All

Addition to the agenda regarding proposed changes to Environmental Stewardship. Let's hold that for the Business Operations portion of the meeting, all who want to speak will have a max of three minutes, structured discussion. One other change is moving Charles' oil spill risk draft letter to the section designated for the ERTV subcommittee. No other proposed changes to the agenda – all in favor, agenda approved.

Approve MRC June meeting minutes

MRC Members

Mike moves to approve the minutes, Matt seconds. Lovel abstains, she wasn't at the meeting. Minutes approved.

9:15 AM Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates

Mike Ramsey

Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the meeting, but Christina sent highlights:

Morgan Errington, UW PhD student, gave a presentation on shoreline surveys and restoration, Morgan's contact information is marringt@uw.edu. She's an Orcas islander and available to talk to the MRC.

The science committee's offer to collaborate with MRC's is still open, please contact Dana Oster if interested.

Cecilia Gobin highlighted efforts for improved outflows from wastewater facilities, several comment periods open.

Anchor out tool kit and resources are available. Staff shared guidance about NW Straits logo use, please contact Jessica Owens with any questions. And Christina was honored at her outgoing meeting as SJC rep.

NW Straits Foundation is hiring a new executive director. NW Straits Commission Anchor out campaign is underway, promoting green boating during World cup traffic. Contact Allie Simpson with questions

Staff shared updated numbers on green crab trapping numbers in Samish bay including some egg-bearing crabs.

Elected officials Site visits in the coming month; Staff stated importance of highlighting MRC's to visiting legislators.

Matt: if you can't make it to any of these meetings, Mike, let me know & I'll cover

9:18 AM MRC Updates/Business

- Welcome new MRC Member, Russell Guerry

Sam Whitridge

Officially welcome Russell, you may know him from his role at OPALCO, he's been attending meetings since last summer when we began discussing the potential tidal project. We're excited to have you on the committee

Russell: If there are ever any updates needed, please let me know & I'll provide all the information I have

- NWSC Legislative Site Visit Work Group Report

Lovel Pratt/Mike Ramsey

Mike: I'm planning to attend the planning meeting on July 17th

Lucas: we've formed a multi-MRC site visit work group this year. We're trying to build out a structure for MRC's to collaborate in planning the site visits, ensure MRC work remains at the forefront of legislators' minds. We've highlighted the green crab issue to legislators in Whatcom's district. There will be an Olympia Oyster restoration on August 11th. We'll have our second meeting on July 17th, provide opportunities for folks to learn from each other. If this works, we may keep this as a collaborative work group to coordinate our communications with legislators

- Proposed Changes to the Environmental Stewardship (ES) Department

Kari M.: By law each department must propose a budget, historically in July. In previous Council budget deliberations, departments would present budgets and decision packages. But now our budget is not stable and we're facing various reductions. Jessica Hudson directed departments to conduct reviews. We're hoping to start this process earlier to give us more time throughout July. On June 30th we accepted that feedback.

Kendra Smith, Director of ES, was on leave for about two months; that has now been extended. Jessica Hudson and Tillery Williams took over ES's budget and tasked the County manager with finding efficiencies and savings. The proposal that was put forth eliminated the ES director position in order to maintain the rest of the staff. Kendra's position was paid from utilities, but if that position is canceled, we can maintain all ES functionality, committees and commissions and switch the administration so that the Deputy County manager could take money from the utilities for 50% of his salary. Total savings would be around a quarter of a million dollars. There will be an upcoming process that's complicated and will be completed by the end of November.

Lovel: Kari, is the Council considering going back to the voters on this on the November ballot?

Kari M.: can't answer, we haven't discussed that yet. I think we should go back and do it that way. I believe that's on the agenda for an upcoming Council meeting. These are all incredibly painful decisions. We're just aiming for the least painful that can still maintain functions. I would love to hear a stronger sense about how people feel about going out for another levy lift. We'll need to consider that option going toward 2028.

Charles: The ES staff do an incredible job developing and administering projects and programs. They must continue to do so with strategic purposes at forefront. What needs attention is leadership on the fundamental strategies. As we consider administrative changes, it's important to stress strategic leadership at executive and elected level. E.g. leadership at Environmental stewardship has been very focused in recent years on funding, we've elevated these issues to PSP. Leadership is important to keep long-term issues going

Kari M.: I hope everyone in the State is aware – requirement that presidential executive orders be included in all grants. Comment period closed July 13th. It will be difficult due to conflicts State has with some executive orders

Lovel: I spoke at Council meeting Tuesday & shared perspective from Friends of SJ's. We asked for Kendra to be able to present her recommendations to Council. I'm sympathetic to what Council is dealing with now. The services and jobs that people depend on that are on the line. I want to recognize what an incredible department ES is and what a competent and successful team Kendra has built. They've brought in so much money for so many projects. It's so successful because it's such a solid team. The prospect of dividing it up is problematic and unfortunate and I hope it doesn't occur. It's a real strength and why they're so successful and able to bring so much money into SJC.

Kari M.: we heard you very clearly

Paul: from the CD point of view, many opportunities to work with ES that have come from the success of this team, it's been so effective to have everyone under the same roof. We have close relationships with the whole team.

Working together allows them to write grants and bring in money together. I've voiced my concerns.

Flora: Agree with Lovel what said. I've attended many Council and committee meetings and I've been so inspired by the ES team's cooperation. Many in the community are concerned about this prospect

Mike: do you have a breakdown of Kendra's position and how it adds up to \$250K? and where would we find a breakdown of the county budget process?

Kari M.: Tillery is here and he can put that forward/explain where that can be found

ACTION: Tillery can put something together in an email to Sam to distribute to MRC members

Adam: County is in a rough spot and tough decisions need to be made. The MRC's role remains the same – to make recommendations to Council. We help raise a lot of money for Environmental Stewardship and do so efficiently due to having that team together in the same department. ES is a big part of preserving the Island environment we love. I recommend to Council that they look at what it would do to the efficiency of that team to split them up.

9:52 AM • Update on European Green Crab Discovery on Orcas *Jess Newley*
Friends of the San Juans has taken the lead in surveying for green crab molts in SJI's (Jess shares screen)
European Green crab are good at using estuaries. They have five marginal teeth at front of carapace on either side of their eyes, and they don't get much larger than a fist. First sighting in SJC was in Westcott Bay in 2016, following that event green native shore crab took a big hit. And note – color is not a good way to identify a crab!
Jess uses a graphic to show negative effects European Green crab can have on nearshore habitats like eelgrass. Outside of SJC, there are more populations being discovered and developed. They're going to get here. Increasingly important to have trained eyes on beaches looking for these invasive species.
Last week of May 2026, Amy Springer's middle school class went to Crescent beach to practice a molt search and a student found a European Green crab molt – it's appearance was fairly orange/red. Since these crab first arrived, there have been targeted monthly searches. Now the idea is to get more trained eyes doing more surveys. The main point is early detection. Once detected, WDFW rapid response – at Deer Harbor there were 208 traps and found one live male green crab quite large so a few years old, meaning he's escaped monitoring efforts/
There's a great collaborative system communicating about this. Last year when a molt was found at False Bay by an FHL student, WDFW followed with rapid response and caught eight live male green crabs.
These findings correspond with strong El Nino patterns, like this year. Friends of SJ's plays an important role. We use our network of members to access various beaches and do surveys. Molt searches work and they've become the real way we're finding European Green crabs. Since we started these efforts, Friends have trained over 300 community members to do molt searches. On SJI/Lopez/Orcas also Crane and Waldron. Also hosted a train-the-trainers workshop with Lisa from WA SeaGrant, trained some environmental leaders
Jess provides resources, Emily Grason, management egrason@uw.edu; Lisa Watkins, Statewide Molt Search watkinsl@uw.edu, and Jess Newley for SJC Molt Search jess@sanjuans.org.
Frankie: this is another great use of MyCoast. Go get the app on your phone, <https://mycoast.org/wa>

QUESTIONS:

Matt: native habitat of Green crab?

Jess: they're from Europe, they love estuaries. But where they live their populations are controlled by a parasite

Mike: did you say they can't be killed by law? Then what can be done at the policy level on this issue?

Jess: that law was implemented to protect native crabs, many were being killed due to mistaken identity. Instead report it with GPS location. If there's an outbreak the agencies will come and kill them

Beth Tate: our invasive species team hit the SJI's really hard last year; if they get a report they'll take it seriously and set up a lot of traps in the area. In the trapping effort they're careful to separate native species from invasive

Jess: yes, I've been very impressed with the State response, contributing a lot of time and resources. We've been coordinating to provide private property access. We have a lot of shoreline, so many places to look

I look forward to continuing to work with the ES and with MRC's to keep these invasives out of SJC!

10:10 AM • **MRC Subcommittee Updates**

o Outreach & Education

Katie Johnson

A lot of fun upcoming summer activities. Dock talks on July 17 and August 1st. Flora came out last time, passed out flags and talked to a lot of people. We're six weeks away from the County Fair in August. MRC has a booth with ES. I'll send out that signup sheet, we still need volunteers to man the booth

We have the green village speaker series, Saturday at the Fair at 11am Olivia & Flora & Lola will lead a presentation

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

Katie Johnson

We're celebrating plastic-free July with some fun videos and posts, e.g. e'll talk to kiddos with nurdle-collecting parties and a plastic-lid-free coffee ship. Planning to enter the trashion fashion show, Sunday of the Fair at 5pm. We have some good ideas around using boat wrap in wedding attire with a message about rethinking our marriage to plastic. Anyone who wants to be involved is welcome! Hope to get some kids and doggos in the show.

Adam: I definitely want to be a part of trashion fashion

o Seagrass Protection

Frances Robertson

Frankie: Olivia is diving now for the eelgrass stressors project. July is a heavy fieldwork month. I've been flying aerial surveys, we have 13 scheduled across the season and I've done four so far. Seeing the islands from above gives a real perspective on why this place is so special. We continue to do vessel counts at known eelgrass sites.

Adam: does it look like a lot of boats at anchorage already?

Frankie: yes, we're moving into peak seasons. I expect to see a smack load this weekend on July 5th

Sandy: meanwhile at FHL, there's a Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) project involving several REU's at Picnic Cove on Shaw Island where there's intertidal decline of eelgrass. We'll report those data at the end of the summer. Another project on seed bank and nursery set-up, I'll report on that in September as well.

Frankie: isn't Picnic Cove one of the eelgrass stressor sites for the HSIL project

Sandy: yes and we are coordinating with that team

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

Kari Koski

piggybacking on what Frankie just said, we've been doing mooring buoy counts as well as vessel counts, putting eyes on all the shorelines in the County. We've put out some PR about what we're doing, we're often right in front of people's houses with a County logo on our boat. We saw a smack of jellies along one survey! And we've been reporting to the MyCoast app. If you see things, please report. And we'll be working with IOSA in the parade and their boat the 'oh no' – it'll be a boat in trouble with some candy-filled boom

It would be great to have a subcommittee meeting to get on the same page about how we do surveys

New legislation and new process for derelict vessel removals, so I'll be attending a meeting about that next week
If anyone has questions or want to come out on a boat for a survey, please let me know

10:23 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV & MRC Review of Draft Oil Spill Risk Letter for SJ County Council *Charles Bookman*

Some weeks ago, we had a joint meeting with SJC Council and Islands Trust focused on the increase in oil traffic in our region. Since 2016, three-fold increase in petroleum transportation on west side of SJI going to greater Vancouver ports. If all plans are completed, it'll be a seven-fold increase. A sense at that joint-meeting that Inslee's letter to Canada expressing concern had been helpful. So, with encouragement of Councilmember Paulsen who chaired that meeting, our Council drafted a letter to the Governor ensuring he's aware of what's happening and the increase in risk (thanks to Lovel and Fred Felleman who participated). We don't just need a letter, we need engagement with Governor's counterparts in Canada. We've circulated our letter and it's open for comment.

Sandy: I read it and sent some brief comments to Sam. I want there to be more detail about potential impact to kelp and eelgrass habitats in the SJI's. Not just inserted, it needs to be a rewrite with that in mind

Lovel: Canada is announcing today (at 5pm) the route for their new pipeline. If they route it toward the Salish Sea, it'll increase tanker traffic by one million barrels a day. If that happens must be included in this letter

Beth: I can share some language from the WDFW comment letter which can be copy and pasted.

ACTION: Beth can support this by sending along the letter (but can't help edit our own letter)

Charles: agree with Lovel, if that decision is so imminent we should wait. And we can fit in kelp and seagrass.

Adam: moving forward, email circulation about these edits but plan to get this letter to Council by next meeting?

Charles: can we approve this by email following revisions? We should have a final version ready in next week

Sam: yes, we can do that over email – not with a lot of discussion that violates public meeting act but if it's a clear thumbs up all around. May not get on the agenda for the 13 or 14th but if not then then by the meeting on the 28th. We'll need to get it to them at least a week before to get it on their agenda, so circulate by end of next week
ACTION: Charles will aim for that timing. After Canadian decision is announced and after receiving WDFW letter.

10:34 AM **Committee member updates and any other business** *none*

10:34 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**

10:39 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

10:39 AM **Salmon Recovery CAG Updates/Business** *Sam Whitridge*

Sam shares spreadsheet, there were two projects pulled from the rant round as projects of concert. Left with a simple list of two projects – Picnic Point Conservation easement with Land bank, and Removing chronic impacts from eelgrass with the Friends of the San Juans

Sam reviews total allocation – not yet set in stone – looks like about \$1.16 million available (includes an amount in SRFB funds we borrowed last year that needs to be returned to another lead entity)

10:41 AM • **Report on Salmon Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Evaluation of 2026 Proposals**

For the TAG, the Friends' project got top ranking. TAG wants to fully fund that project, and then Land Bank would get partial funding reduced from their ask. But they have some other matching funds, so they can work with landowners toward final negotiations. It's a straightforward grant round

10:43 AM • **Planning for CAG Review of proposals at August meeting**

Next step is for MRC as CAG members to score proposals before next MRC/CAG meeting on August 6th. Sam will send updated version of score sheet and criteria. Sam needs scores from CAG on each of the proposals. You may comment on technical aspects, but CAG score should just reflect the socioeconomic impacts on community. It's ideal for Sam to get these scores before the August meeting and then we can spend the meeting discussing and finalizing our ranked list. We need to finalize at that August 6th meeting in order to submit August 7th as required.

Lovel: have you heard any concerns about granting the partial funding to Land Bank?

Sam: yes, we've started discussing it. They're largely receiving PSAR funds that won't come through until July 2027, that needs to be factored in as well. If they can't agree on a sale price and these funds can't be used, then in twelve months the funds would come back to us to utilize in our next year's grant round. So, if the project can't go forward based on the partial funding, we'll have opportunity to increase funds. TAG liked the idea of maybe using those funds to scale up the Friends' project

10:48 PM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**