

SAN JUAN COUNTY
Marine Resources Committee

SAN JUAN LOCAL INTEGRATING ORGANIZATION

San Juan County Marine Advisory Committees
MRC-CAG-LIO
Meeting Agenda

Thursday, September 3rd, 2026
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
In-Person at San Juan Island Grange
152 First St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

9:00 AM	**Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott**
9:05 AM	**Public Comment**
9:10 AM	**Approve meeting agenda** – *All* **Approve MRC August meeting minutes** – *MRC Members*
9:15 AM	**Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates-** *Mike Ramsey*
9:25 AM	**Presentation:** Islands' Oil Spill Association (IOSA) Updates- *Elaina Thompson, IOSA*

9:55 AM	**MRC Updates/Business**
	• Planning for NWSC Conference Collaborative Activity- *Sam Whitridge*
	• DNR proposed mooring buoy statute update/comment period – *Frances Robertson*
	• Report on oil spill presentation at 8/20 San Juan County/Town of Friday Habor meeting-*Frances Robertson*
	• Update on Kelp/Eelgrass Outreach Grant- *Sam Whitridge*
	• Discussion re: San Juan County Representative Seat on the MRC-*Sam Whitridge*
	• MRC subcommittee updates
	  ○ Outreach & Education- *Katie Johnson*
	  ○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- *Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson*
	  ○ Seagrass Protection- *Olivia Graham/Katie Johnson*
	  ○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- *Adam Parrott/Kari Koski*
	  ○ Oil Spill/ERTV- *Charles Bookman*

10:40 AM	**Presentation:** SoundIQ Interactive Mapping Tool- *Suzanne Shull, NWSC/Padilla Bay Reserve*
11:10 AM	**Committee member updates and any other business**
11:15 AM	**Adjourn MRC Meeting** **Convene LIO Meeting**
11:15 AM	**LIO Business-** ***Katie Johnson*** • PSP Updates- *Jason Lim* • Potential Support Letter for On-site sewage systems (OSS) Dept of Ecology Grant Application- *Kate Combs/Mark Tompkins* • Report on August Leadership Council Meeting/LIO Presentation

	• Recreational Boating Association of WA Mobile Pumpout Program in the San Juans • Other Updates
11:50 AM	**Adjourn LIO Meeting** **Convene CAG Meeting**
11:50 AM	**CAG Business agenda-** *Sam Whitridge* • September Salmon Recovery Funding Board Meeting • October WA Salmon Coalition Meeting
12:00 PM	**Adjourn CAG Meeting**

While this is an in-person meeting, a virtual option is available via Teams for those who cannot attend in person:

Microsoft Teams

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https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/250980488408 52?p=AUmW6x8rcFwb5A5HBp

Meeting ID: 250 980 488 408 52

Passcode: RW9YM6Gm

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Phone conference ID: 331

MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance: Paul Andersson, Charles Bookman, Kailey Genther, Rich Goodhart, Russel Guerry, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Beth Tate, Joey Ullman, Flora Vaught, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria
Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public: Erin Casellas, Katherine Combs, Nathan Donnelly, Marta Green, Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst, Jessica Hudson, Colin Huntemer, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Kari McVeigh, Tida Rau, Frances Robertson, Suzanne Shull, Leah Skare, Kimbal Sundberg, Elaina Thompson, Mark Tompkins, Sam Whitridge

9:01 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:02 AM **Public Comment** *Marta Green*
To follow up on recent letter to Transport Canada, I want to clarify that the concern isn't solely based on increased oil exports, it's on ships – vessel carriers, tankers, etc. It's important to note that for a decade or more this has been a concern for our tribal partners. We sent a letter in January 2022 saying it's time to get serious about an ERTV in Sidney. There's been no real follow up since then. The website was last updated in 2023. It's time to work with Islands Trust to suggest to Transport Canada that we deserve an update now on their response.

9:06 AM **Approve meeting agenda** *All*
No changes, approved
Approve MRC August meeting minutes *MRC Members*
No revisions at this time. Sandy moves to approve, Kailey seconds. None opposed, all in favor, minutes approved.

9:07 AM technical difficulties with Teams and internet connection; Katie figures it out

9:13 AM **Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) Updates** *Mike Ramsey*
Meeting started with 'speed dating with a scientist' with a UW professor from SMEA, she talked about the economic effects of domoic acid in algal blooms on the crab fishery. Collaborative sessions with MRC's are ongoing to advise on new project ideas, contact Dana Oster by September 18th if we want a session in 2026
The DNR proposed changes in mooring buoy statutes during the 2027 legislative sessions to show support for proper installation and maintenance, along with addressing issues around unpermitted buoys. There are some links for people to visit. I was surprised other MRC's don't have as much of an issue as we do with unpermitted buoys. I mentioned we'd likely submit our own letter of support for the new legislation. Other MRC's are sharing their plans for legislators' visits to the SJI's. Frankie sent a request to Rep. Larsen's office about light hawk flights
The NW straits reauthorization bill is passing through the House and Senate the Commission will meet in person on September 25th at the Pacific Rim institute in Coupeville, Island County. Next 'speed date with a scientist' is with someone from Seagrant, more info available at the Commission's events page. Mike needs to miss that meeting; Matt said he'd fill in if need be. Matt's not here today, ACTION: check with him to see if he's available Sept. 25th.
Adam: question, what is domoic acid?
Beth: It's a dinoflagellate-produced neurotoxin. It can be serious in shellfish and in marine mammals via food chain
Mike: you should watch the speed date with a scientist presentation from the NWSC meeting
Lovel: to follow up on Mike's report, would it be helpful for the MRC to produce some kind of white paper about our concerns about buoys that we can share with other MRC's?
Adam: yes, and we have room later in the agenda to talk about that

9:21 AM **Presentation: Islands' Oil Spill Association (IOSA) Updates** *Elaina Thompson*

Elaina shares slides, here to report on what we're doing. Shows membership of current board (including a couple of people in this meeting, Beth Tate and Frankie Robertson). IOSA works to prevent spills and it's the first line of response. It'll take at least four hours for any mainland response to mobilize and arrive. Beyond initial response, we work on training recruits and volunteers to strengthen communication and relationships. I'm constantly going to mainland and to Canada to help create connections in advance so that when things go wrong those relationships are already built. What we do: immediate first response, sustained monitoring, local equipment caching and transport/staging, and local liaison and coordination –filling in gaps.
Case studies: 40' powerboat grounded on Southern Lopez. First, there were varying communications on its exact location. The boat broke up quickly. We immediately found the property owners through volunteers on Lopez. We did initial cleanup of debris, helped transport Ecology folks from ferry down to the site.
El Capitan, an 80' derelict tug, sunk at dock. The Coast Guard said it was de-fueled but there could be 600gallons residual fuel, so we put boom around it right way. Another key take-away was about renewing fuel products. We continue to monitor and try to prevent things like this from happening.
-About 50% of what we do is investigating minor sheens at marinas. For example, we found one small vessel leaking out diesel fuel from its vents. We boomed the boat and figured out the problem and stopped the leak. It turns out they'd had an inspector earlier that day who had left a fuel vent open
-Elaina shows a map of recent incidents 2023-5 with IOSA responses. There are 15 cached response trailers throughout the islands. Incidents have happened all throughout the islands (including two on Sucia).
-IOSA is a two-staff organization. We're able to do what we do due to volunteers. Anyone who wants can take a HAZWOPER class. We have about 50 volunteers throughout the islands with 24-hour hazwoper certification. They need to attend a minimum of four training sessions to maintain that. IOSA provides infrastructure for that volunteer program. Elaina shares training calendar, https://www.iosaonline.org/training. Monthly trainings rotate locations and types. That helps keep us response ready and familiar with all types of locations and activities.
Some stats: 80% of our problems are local vessels. 30% of response are grounding or sinking incidents. In terms of equipment, we have 12,500' of response boom among 15 response trailers on SJI, Lopez, and Orcas. We have two response trucks. Permanent headquarters at the FH Airport. Recent milestones: 40th anniversary last fall in 2025. We switched status to 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Attended a couple of conferences where we presented. Led our largest joint drill ever in 2025; planning another one for May/June 2027. Completed a financial audit. We recently created a drone response program in February 2026. IOSA funding comes from SJC, State, industry and community donors. Our budget includes staff, office & operations, equipment, training, IT, capital funds.
There's the big tanker problem, but also the 'death by a thousand cuts' problem: the fear that little oil spills are happening. We respond to 10-15 incidents a year and minor things may be happening in the background all the time. Interested in ideas to mitigate those small spills. Our derelict vessel coordinator in this county is indispensable and I'd hate to see that position go away. Some upcoming operational goals for IOSA include the need for a volunteer stipend program so we can guarantee volunteers are available. Improving technological capability, like RapidMap - an Arc-GIS based map for real-time tracking. True sustainability will require funding, structure, and relationships. I'd love to make our funding more sustainable.
QUESTIONS
Lovel: Now that IOSA is a primary response contractor (PRC), if you do respond, is there payment for those services from the responsible party or from Coast Guard or Ecology?
Elaina: Not yet because we just became a PRC. Going forward, we might for certain large-scale incidents. But we are funded in part by the State already for the small-scale responses we do like sheens. But it's a rigorous process for a PRC - we can invoice for it, like if there's a state-fund open. Like El Capitan, we could have invoiced for that
Lovel: I encourage you to seek out more sustainable funding sources. This biennium will have a huge budget deficit
Elaine: I hope next year we can hire a full-time budget and outreach manager
Kim: what would IOSA's role be in a major oil spill, e.g. one from the shipping lanes? & What will be the focus of the 2027 operational drill exercise?

Elaina: we participate in large scale oil spill by providing the resources we have. We'd likely have a drone in the air providing feed until larger organizations arrived, we'd help with boom deployment. Other small organizations would be involved. Someone would be asking me a lot of logistic questions about the airport, barge companies, and other local knowledge. Help with site assessment and local coordination, providing volunteers.
And to answer the second question, first planning meeting for that drill is December 2026. But main agenda will be to bring all those people out to SJC and have honest conversations about how hard it is to get out here. Hope to do it at the FH Labs. Planning to invite Canadian response partners.
Adam: do we have MRC members who are IOSA volunteers?
Elaina: yes, several

10:01 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

• Planning for NWSC Conference Collaborative Activity- *Sam Whitridge*

All MRC members should have received an invite now. RSVP's requested by Oct 19th. The conference is in PT Nov 6-7. The item we need to start planning for is the SJC MRC collaborative activity we want to feature. I emailed everyone about that. Need to let Sasha know by October 2nd. Last year we focused on recreational vessel impact work, two years ago we focused on derelict vessel work, we've focused in the past on the ERTV issue. We need input from the MRC on what we want to feature this time. The collaborative activity will happen on the first day.
Adam: I think the aerial surveys on mooring buoys would be interesting
-some discussion of issues with mooring buoys including tourism, liveaboards, and small number of boat-launches
Joey: the overall lack of moorage is an issue. There are ones you can reserve at State parks but those are limited. Enforcement is an issue. And the difference between materials for an illegal buoy and the cost of a fully permitted and properly installed buoy is $1500 vs. $10K. Very easy for folks to put in cheap and easy moorings.
Frankie: there are two different topics here – the aerial surveys which is an HSIL project focused on boat presence in eelgrass areas. And separately there's the mooring buoy project which is a proposed MRC project
Lovel: it may be helpful to have a list of MRC projects we can choose from
Sam: there's the derelict vessel work and the ERTV work (which we've focused on before), but we haven't high-lighted PFSS at a conference. The eelgrass protection work may be more ready to present in a future year.
Frankie: in 2019 we highlighted whale warning flags
Adam: Maybe some younger members could get involved.
Kari: PFSS and whale warning flags are both programs that could be highlighted as models to grow more regional
KRK: just like the name says, Salish Sea, it's larger than just this island. It doesn't require a lot of funding to be visible. Like what PFSS did at the Fair this year. Something like that can really lend itself to a display.
Adam: I like the idea of making it about what we've done as an MRC that others could model. It's always great to have an MRC member involved, it can be a joint presentation with a staff person and MRC member
Sasha: it'll be similar to last year, starts out with a round of lightening talks – brief update about the project to the full group. Then break up into groups and host a table – someone needs to give initial presentation and someone needs to host the table, can be same person or not – think of brief rounds six times so everyone can rotate around.
Sam: it depends who's attending, we have about a month to figure that out. At this stage need general agreement.
MOTION: Adam asks members, raise your hand if you want to focus on both PFSS and whale flags as programs other MRC's could model? All are in favor, the motion passes
Sam: If you are attending, please RSVP by Oct 19th and reach out to Sam about reimbursement for hotel
Lovel: will staff we able to attend? Sam and Katie will both go. Frankie hasn't decided.

10:20 AM • DNR proposed mooring buoy statute update/comment period *Frances Robertson*

Frankie: the DNR are planning to update mooring buoy code 79.104.430, specifically affects the type of mooring buoy associated with a shoreline property. If you have a shoreline property you're entitled to a mooring buoy.

They'd like you to register. The proposal will change the request to register to a requirement to register. That's something the Tribes have been wanting for a long time – a database of known mooring buoys. It would require a processing fee to manage costs. They're concerned this will increase costs for buoys permitting. The code outlines some of enforcement rules and some procedures for trespass buoys. Public comments are due September 14th.
Beth: these are good changes, but I worry that the enforcement piece won't be in place by the time this comes online. Unfortunately, mooring buoy enforcement is far down WDFW's list for now. I've talked about ways people can get previously installed buoys legitimized and up to speed, like an education blitz. There is a huge backlog now due to federal permitting and Tribal comments. Just suggesting things may need to happen in a different order.
Mike: when Alex from DNR presented about this she said it was in part to concerns we had raised here in SJC. So, anything we can do to improve this rule-making we should. And we should listen to Joey when it comes to buoys.
Joey: I'm a mooring buoy permitting specialist so I deal with all kinds of agencies. Some of our biggest issues come from Lummi and Squamish tribes and encroaching on those Tribes' usual and accustomed treaty fishing rights. Applications are getting halted and there are still companies operating that will put in cheap unpermitted buoys. Reminder – mooring buoys need four separate permits from different government levels and organizations. Biggest issues are how to disincentivize illegal installations and how to make more moorage available.
Frankie: we're working to understand what's in our waters, which are authorized and start exploring what actions could be – e.g. no anchor zones. But like joey said, tribal concerns are that the more infrastructure is going in the water, the less access they'll have. Shoreline owners are entitled to a mooring buoy directly off their shoreline
Kari: my perception from doing the mooring buoy surveys is that we're the county with the most shoreline so there's a lot out there. This is a maritime culture and entitlement to buoys is part of it
Mike: I see almost no enforcement happening on anything. Locally my sense is that we need to affect our own change. Like Kari said, we need to shore up our wild west culture and enforce our own environmental laws.
Kailey: can mooring buoys be seasonable? Can they not destroy the bottom?
Joey: the question is when do people want to use the balls – people want to use them at the same time as Tribes want to fish. Removal and replacement and storage is thousands of dollars.
Frankie: it is the wild west; we have a big problem with enforcement. There's a business license requirement in the town of FH but not in SIC. If there were, illegal buoy installation could be a way to lose your business license.
Beth: what I like about idea of a license is that it provides another avenue for accountability.
Joey: if contractor does anything wrong, the client is on the hook for it

10:46 • Report on oil spill presentation at 8/20 San Juan County/Town of Friday Harbor meeting *Frances Robertson*

I provided a presentation to joint Town/County council meeting on oil spill presentation. I included efforts in the County that paved the way toward oil spill prevention work, environmental cooperation agreement with Canada, and the adoption of the MSA in 2004, etc. I highlighted the ERTV cost evaluation from 2019 as well as vessel drift and response analysis from 2021 to provide background for current Council members. I took the opportunity to highlight the Goodwin Island incident with a tanker suddenly operating not under power in February 2026.
Lovel: I would encourage us to have a white paper that summarizes all that, especially since we have a regular rotation of Council members and new MRC members who may not know that history. Could you put that presentation into some kind of format that could be shared? And on the topic of the ERTV, Canada has put the Atlantic Eagle and the Atlantic Raven into service and now there's one stationed in Saanich inlet. Would they respond to any vessel in distress, even American? That is the case with the Neah Bay vessel
Frankie: my understanding is that the US and Canadian Coast Guard have very good coordination.
Marta: January 2022 was the last joint letter from SJC and Islands Trust; reminder that the point of that letter was to study that proposed response and moving a vessel to inland waters.

10:58 AM **Presentation: SoundIQ Interactive Mapping Tool** *Suzanne Shull*

We've recently revamped the interactive mapping tool – Suzanne shares slides. Best way to get there in through the NWStraits webpage, https://nwstraits.org/our-work/soundiq
-lists out functionalities and how to get started
-Start with 'about' page – shows where to give feedback, and a main map with a lot of tools. Then there are pages built off that which are part of the data gallery. You can go to different categories, linked to main map.
Getting into main map, splash tool shows all the tools inside. Links to videos of how to use.
Explore what's on the SoundIQ map, zooming into SJC. Legend displays the data that MRC has on SoundIQ. Layers are different groupings of data – we as an MRC may or may not have data in each of the categories. You can change base map to a different view. You can draw on it or print. e.g. the kelp page. There's a layers list, stars show the number of years a site was sampled. Can scroll through the other layers (Suzanne shows examples)
Another example is eelgrass, a category in which SJC has a lot of data. There are surveys in which eelgrass was present/absent, shows extent in various years.
There is a protocol to submit new data to SoundIQ, requires metadata. We already have a lot of shoreline modification data on SoundIQ but the metadata are limited. We'd like to get some of the photos that link to the data and some of the metadata. And you can review whether this is still something you want on SoundIQ.
Lovel: Friends has all those photos. ACTION: Lovel will put Suzanne in touch with people at Friends of SJ's.
Suzanne: now we want to build out the database, link to reports showing how data were collected, etc.
There's also data on forage fish, historic survey data collected by MRC's that may not be on WDFW site.

• Table until October meeting:
Update on Kelp/Eelgrass Outreach Grant *and* Discussion re: San Juan County Representative Seat on the MRC

11:12 AM • MRC subcommittee updates
o Outreach & Education *Katie Johnson*
We'll be collecting volunteer hours in another month; we want to track those hours
And stay tuned for a potential kelp workshop on island coming up in October.

11:13 AM o Plastic Free Salish Sea *Katie Johnson*
Katie: save the date for Fall GICU (Great Islands Clean Up) on Saturday Sept. 26
Kari: we handed out 12 bags to collect shrink wrap from vessels, we were able to get wrapping from about 36 small boats, about ¼ ton (500 lbs. of plastic wrap). Like 74K plastic bags, like 5 years of individual's efforts. All three businesses that supported us are ready to pass costs along to clients. The cost includes the bag which we'd deliver and collect, we're trying to figure out what cost will be, possibly a deterrent to some to shrink wrap in first place.

11:15 AM o Derelict Vessel Prevention *Kari Koski*
I spent last few days doing Hazwoper training with IOSA, great to improve communication and coordination. The last week spent some efforts in which Coast Guard rescued a few people who dropped off boats which then drifted around. We were scrambling to pick up the pieces of the boats.
Investigating using NWStraits regional DV funding to move forward with the abandoned sailboat in Jensen Bay, and looking at removal of small, unregistered boats. Now looking for any fallout from big winds in past couple days.

o Seagrass Protection *Katie Johnson*
Katie: thanks for doing boat surveys, please keep it up. Frankie has a few more aerial surveys. wrapping up season.

11:18 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV Charles Bookman
To recap: we sent our letter to the Governor in July. I followed up on that with Kari McVeigh about the fact that the issues in that letter are not well known, it may help to do some public education. The rescue tug issue is persistent.

The discussion at County Council on August 25th was robust and emphasized the need to work with Canadian Islands Trust. I was heartened, all the Council members were involved, it was spirited. It seems like there have been overtures to work together with Islands Trust. I recommend watching the video, it starts 5 minutes in. Meanwhile, our congressman Rick Larsen directly addressed the Coast Guard about these issues. All the right people are saying the same things. Thanks to everyone here who has helped on this, people are talking about this Next step is to see what our Council does with overtures from Rick Larsen's office and from Islands Trust
And the incident in February with the bulk carrier at Goodwin Island. We decided in our comment letter to Canada – that choke point at Turn Point is only like 3 miles, if there's a ship adrift there it can't wait several hours of response time. That's why the emphasis on having response assets right there
Nathan: regarding whether or not dilbit can be cleaned up, there is no technology that can do that
Sam: the State oil spill response office may be able to come to our October 1st meeting to talk about that
Marta: was the County all copied on that communication with Larsen?
Lovel: yes, I shared that with everyone. And that's great if we get a presentation from Ecology

11:27 AM **Committee member updates and any other business**
Adam: I'd like to add to our agenda in October some of the things we said about mooring buoys dealing with business licenses and enforcement. I think there may be an action item about something we can recommend to Council that we can flesh out there
Kailey: at least one of our youth members is now at college. We should circle back about youth membership now that they're at college. As a committee I'd love to look at how they see their actions continuing to help
Adam: I think we can add that to the agenda next month when we talk about education and outreach
Joey: quick update – we replaced 12 mooring buoys up at Sucia

11:29 AM **Adjourn MRC Meeting**

11:57 AM **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:57 AM **CAG Business agenda** *Sam Whitridge*

- September Salmon Recovery Funding Board Meeting

Final meeting is in two weeks, September 15th where all grants get approved by the State.

- October WA Salmon Coalition Meeting

Coming up on October 6th, planning for next salmon day in Olympia in the start of the next legislative session.

11:58 PM **Adjourn CAG Meeting**