



**SAN JUAN COUNTY**  
**Marine Resources**  
**Committee**



**Marine Advisory Committees**  
**MRC-CAG-LIO**  
**Meeting Agenda**

**Thursday, March 6th, 2025**  
**9:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**In-Person at San Juan Island Grange**  
**152 First St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250**

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

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9:00 AM	<b>Convene MRC Meeting – Adam Parrott</b>
9:05 AM	<b>Public Comment</b>
9:10 AM	<b>Approve meeting agenda – All</b> <b>Approve MRC February meeting minutes – MRC Members</b>
9:15 AM	<b>NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC- Christina Koons</b>
9:20 AM	<b>Presentation: Introducing Moorbuoys- Tyler Clark, Founder, Moorbuoys</b>
9:35 AM	<b>MRC Updates/Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion regarding federal funding cuts- <i>Kendra Smith</i></li><li>• Planning for MRC projects for 2025-2027 NWSC grant- <i>Sam Whitridge</i></li><li>• Update on Marine Managers Workshop and Marina Operators Roundtable- <i>Katie Johnson/Frances Robertson</i></li><li>• MRC subcommittee updates<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Outreach &amp; Education- <i>Katie Johnson</i></li><li>○ Plastic Free Salish Sea- <i>Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson</i></li><li>○ Seagrass Protection- <i>Beth Tate/Katie Johnson</i></li><li>○ Derelict Vessel Prevention- <i>Adam Parrott/Kari Koski</i></li><li>○ Oil Spill/ERTV-<i>Sam Whitridge</i></li></ul></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other subcommittee updates</li> </ul>
10:30 AM	<b>Presentation/Discussion:</b> Opportunities for MRC Engagement and Recommendations Related to Vessel Impacts- <i>Lovel Pratt and Frances Robertson</i>
10:55 AM	<b>Committee member updates and any other business</b>
10:55 AM	<b>Adjourn MRC Meeting</b> <b>Convene LIO Meeting</b>
11:00 AM	<b>LIO Business agenda – <i>Katie Johnson/Sam Whitridge</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSP Updates- <i>Jason Lim</i></li> <li>Early planning for San Juan Local Forum at August Leadership Council Meeting</li> <li>Debrief on February presentation on the EPA/LIO Funding Model</li> </ul>
11:40 AM	<b>Adjourn LIO Meeting</b> <b>Convene CAG Meeting</b>
11:40 AM	<b>CAG Updates/Business- <i>Sam Whitridge</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Review of 2025 SRFB Letters of Interest</li> <li>Planning for April 3-4 Salmon Recovery site visits</li> </ul>
12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Adjourn CAG Meeting</b></li> </ul>

**MRC, CAG and LIO Committee Members in Attendance:** Paul Andersson, Matt Arata, Charles Bookman, David Checkley, Kailey Genther, Patti Gobin, Brian Goodremont, Olivia Graham, Adam Parrott, Lovel Pratt, Mike Ramsey, Karin Roemers-Kleven, Craig Smith, Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria

**Ex-officio, County support staff and members of the public:** Katherine Combs, Tyler Clark, Paul Cline, Vincent Feliciano, Jane Fuller, Rich Goodhart, Marta Green, Katie Johnson, Kari Koski, Jason Lim, Dana Oster, Frances Robertson, Kendra Smith, Joey Ullman, Sam Whitridge, Marjorie Wonham

9:04 AM **Convene MRC Meeting** *Adam Parrott*

9:05 AM **Public Comment** *none*

9:06 AM **Approve meeting agenda, Approve MRC February meeting minutes** *MRC Members*

Sandy moves to accept the agenda, Olivia seconds, the agenda is approved.

Lovel had a few edits for the February minutes to clarify some wording on page 2 around Friends of SJ's eelgrass signage, she added the video link to her presentation at the task force meeting

Sandy moves to accept the minutes with those changes, Matt seconds. All in favor. The minutes are approved.

9:07 AM **Introductions around the room**

9:14 AM **NWSC Meeting Report to the MRC** *Sam*

Feb 28<sup>th</sup> there was a Commission meeting. The NW Straits Retreat is scheduled for April 3-4 at Padilla Bay, that'll be commissioners and MRC staff – Katie Johnson will represent us (same dates as salmon recovery site visits).

Puget Sound Day on the Hill, April 29-May 2. The reauthorization of NW Straits Initiative will be a top priority.

Skagit MRC is collaborating with Swinomish, NW Straits Foundation and other partners on a derelict crab pot removal in Skagit Bay. They'll be using ROV's and staging a demonstration with Oceanbotics in Cornet Bay

Dave: is NW Straits affected by budget cuts in WA?

Sam: the reauthorization is a concern, and other concerns. We'll talk about MRC grants in business updates.

Kari: is some champion from our region going to Day on the Hill?

Sam: we should discuss, Frankie? Jane?

Jane: former councilmember Wolf attended both of last two years. If you feel there's value in my going, I would respect that. Contemplating strategically who shows up to that event is important. I'd go as a representative of the MRC but also as a County Councilperson representing all the environmental interest in the county

Lovel: best person would be you as Councilperson, you can network with other representatives, great if you went

Frankie: Jamie also attended as a Councilperson. Christina will not be able to attend.

Kari: should you meet with folks who have gone before to help prepare?

Lovel: there are staff at PSP who coordinate Day on the Hill and the schedule, I can send you that contact info

**ACTION:** Lovel and Christina will spearhead helping prepare Jane

Sam: I'll send Jane some information as well, help with registering etc.

Jane: I'll plan to connect with Jamie, and I'll look forward to hearing from Lovel, Christina, and PSP contact

9:24 AM **Presentation: Introducing Moorbuoys** *Tyler Clark*

More boaters visit the SJI's every year and mooring supply hasn't kept up with pace. Moorbuoys is a mobile app to connect boaters with buoys. We think we can save eelgrass by using existing buoys. Existing Resources = 114 state park buoys, about 50 at Sucia. But across SJC there are 1800 existing buoys, just need to ensure they're properly inspected & maintained. Action plan: first step is community engagement. Presentation on Lopez last month. Step

2, enroll all the buoys in a maintenance program. Step 3, coordinate with DNR. Step 4, Launch mobile app in May 2025, working with the developer of Ferry friend. Like a vacation rental site, every buoy will list inspection date and minimum water depth/max vessel length (capped at 45'). You can filter by features, like nearby restaurants. We want to collaborate – diagram shows overlap of MRC's initiatives with Moorbuoys' goals e.g. monitor vessel impacts, buoy usage data, etc. We believe our mission promotes DNR's to encourage public use, ensure environmental protection, and foster water-dependent uses. [support@moorbuoys.com](mailto:support@moorbuoys.com)

#### QUESTIONS

Q: how do buoy owners sign up?

Tyler: if people have a private buoy, they can register it under a master license that authorizes it for rental. We wouldn't replace a buoy unless necessary. We'll make sure it's inspected and up to par

Q: how would we access usage data?

Tyler: we can collect, filter and provide data in whatever way is useful to County/MRC in a logical format

Frankie: I'm interested in the intersection of boating with sensitive habitats. How this is different from OnBuoy?

Tyler: we're developing the app first, they don't have an app yet. We're focusing on SJC and using a first-come first serve model. We offer hourly rates, flexible pricing for buoys. Flexible check-in and checkout times.

Dana: We are in early days launching a shared [www.AnchorOut.org](http://www.AnchorOut.org) webpage to display all the voluntary no-anchor zones across WA and BC and help with boaters best behavior. We have OnBuoy and Dockwa both currently listed as potential buoy rental resources. We can add a link to Moorbuoy as well once its running

Frankie: we counted 1800 mooring buoys in 2022, and we know more have been installed since then, probably c2000 now, that's a third of all the mooring buoys in WA. Based on data provided by DNR, 800 or so are authorized. The majority are unauthorized and pretty hinky. We've been doing field surveys to verify aerial image data. Many are at questionable depths. Do you have a means of verifying if someone applies that they have all their permits?

Tyler: part of signup is buoy authorization number is required; owner name needs to match.

Frankie: difficulty of getting permits for mooring buoys. We'll need to look into removal of mooring buoys that aren't in appropriate locations and that aren't up to specifications

Joey: I facilitate a lot of buoy permitting in SJC. The big problem is even with a DNR number, county, state, and federal permits (including Army Corps of Engineers) are also required. Applicants can get a DNR number before federal processing and that's where most buoys get stopped by Tribes who are saying no now to all buoys. It's a complicated process. Removing mooring buoys is difficult – pulling up buoys is going to require complex equipment

Jane: Joey's comments speak to the broader look that needs to be given to this whole initiative. Identifying buoys, is that the fundamental scope of the project County was undertaking and was that completed?

Frankie: to date, we've undertaken mapping using aerial imaging of mooring buoys in the county. Now we're doing field verification, comparing with satellite imagery and doing a change analysis. Friends of SJ's did a shoreline infrastructure study in 2009 to look at where buoys have been put in and removed with special attention to sensitive habitats. As Joey said, Tribes aren't permitting mooring buoys because overshadowing infrastructure chips away at their tribal rights. They've been requesting a statewide mooring buoy tracking database. Trying to get a handle on which are authorized and what new ones are getting put in

Jane: what about enforcement? Whose responsibility is that?

Frankie: there's none. DNR has one enforcement officer for both terrestrial and marine. They have no capacity. A larger mooring buoy system may take a legislative push to get DNR the capacity they need

Joey: Jenjay has about 200 clients that are hung up – they have their DNR numbers but their buoys are not permitted without national approval through Army Corps.

Kari: I question how the app won't be used for nefarious purposes. Also concerned about shorelines without public access, and there's no public transport – many neighborhoods and places where boaters can't go ashore

Tyler: There isn't a way now to keep boaters off private buoys. But we won't share GPS coordinates until payment plus we'll have the registrations and credit card number for the boat on the app, we have ways to deter them from

not vacating the buoy. And as for shoreline access – every buoy in the app will say whether that's included or not and plan around that. We're also working with places like Fisherman Bay that have lots of buoys – working with dock to identify a tie up place. People are already doing it in an unauthorized way.

Joey: curious about standards for inspection. Many different designs for buoys. How to standardize service?

Tyler: we're talking with Jenjay, you guys are a great service. Every buoy will be dived within Park standards

Jane: It seems this is worthy of an MRC subcommittee to do more robust problem identification and explore the scope of how this county's MRC/Dept. of Environmental Stewardship could engage in addressing the problem.

- The public talk on Moorbuoys in Friday Harbor will be at the San Juan Island Library 5:30 on April 10<sup>th</sup>

Patti: mooring buoys are a great topic for Tribes and everyone to problem-solve together. We face the same issue in Tulalip. It impacts our treaty fishing rights. Frankie, let's work on this, try to pull a meeting together

Frankie: yes, that's where we're headed next with this buoy assessment work

Jane: considering scope of this issue, it may need a subcommittee to address it. now seems a ripe time to move.

ACTION: add this to agenda for the next meeting, creating a subcommittee around buoy network

Frankie: Tyler, we should connect offline, especially if the MRC stands up a subcommittee dedicated to this issue.

#### 10:07 AM **MRC Updates/Business**

- Discussion regarding federal funding cuts

*Kendra Smith*

The marine program is predominantly grant-funded. It's a combination of state and federal grants, including the LIO and NW Straits grants. These are congressionally approved funds, as is NOAA funded work for salmon recovery. A lot at stake at federal level. Need to consider how to fund the marine program going forward. Kendra describes the current funding situation for the marine program and how to cover staff –likely need to cover a shortfall of \$150K or so from federal funds. talked to the Auditor about how to migrate away from being a grant-funded program. The idea of the Marine Pass was to be a potential revenue source. It's a good time to migrate to a new funding model.

Craig: it occurs to me that this Moorbuoy app could generate funds, adding fees that go to County (like tourism tax)

Dave: seems important to educate more about the services the MRC and staff provide to help with advocacy

Tyler: Craig - If we get 800 buoys on the Moorbuoys app, a \$5 tourist fee, over 100 day peak season = \$400,000.

Jane: Recently at conference in DC, we were asked by congressional representatives to report how we're being affected. Please share with Jane if critical processes are being impacted. The state financial situation is worse than Governor Ferguson realized, there will be state cuts. I'd like to be in touch about the sourcing of your funding

#### 10:26 AM • Planning for MRC projects for 2025-2027 NWSC grant

*Sam Whitridge*

Quick update on grant-planning for the next biennium. RFP released this week for MRC proposals. The discussion of state/federal funding gets at core MRC support grant. There are federal EPA and state shoreline funding and separate 2-year grant from NOAA. Olivia had some great ideas. Now is the time if you have project ideas to suggest.

We have some core tasks continuing – The derelict vessel program, PFSS, eelgrass protection work which includes vessel monitoring. Funding the marine managers workshop, marine stewardship outreach related items, etc.

Kailey: is Cattle Point interpretive signage still in the works?

Katie: Working to get in touch with DNR, they're in charge of state facility. They'll find out about that this summer.

-Full proposals due May 29<sup>th</sup>, leading up to that we have consultations/discussions around projects, refining

Dana: the RFP also has helpful project and funding criteria that are important to review for project development.

Opportunity for consultations with the NW Straits science advisory committee on one of our projects, time for those meetings in May and June. Proposals don't get finalized until August so they can be tweaked as needed

#### 10:33 AM • Update on MMW and Marina Operators Roundtable

*Katie Johnson/Frances Robertson*

Thinking about how to proceed with a Marine Managers Workshop, especially with travel ban.

Katie: for marine operators, a lot of enthusiasm but more available in late fall so we'll continue toward that end

- MRC subcommittee updates

10:34 AM o Outreach & Education

*Katie Johnson*

WA Seagrass crab team is looking for more members, if interested Katie can send you info

Karin: Cindy and I want to set up a meeting with you, because the other part of outreach needs to be about reaching out to underserved or uninvolved groups of people

o Plastic Free Salish Sea

*Karin Roemers-Kleven/Katie Johnson*

Monthly beach cleanups are going great, YCC picked up at Jackson last week. We have cleanups on each of the next three months. GICU (Great Islands Clean-up) on Lopez April 12<sup>th</sup>, then Orcas/Shaw/SJ on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

10:36 AM o Seagrass Protection

*Katie Johnson*

Please help with vessel surveys, even a data point of zero is useful. Count opportunistically at site locations. Our MRC has been invited to participate in North Sound vegetation strategy lunch, happening April 2<sup>nd</sup>. To hear about DNR's implementation process for marine veg projects, and network with other folks around the North Sound.

o Derelict Vessel Prevention

*Kari Koski*

I just attended national conference with Towboat and debris program – looking at vessels' end of life. They had a lot of good ideas, I came back with some Follow up from winter storms. All work done for the six boats we worked on, getting reimbursed from state. Looking forward to a clean green boating season.

10:40 AM o Oil Spill/ERTV

*Sam Whitridge*

No specific updates, but the upcoming presentation will touch on that more broadly

10:41 AM short break

10:47 AM **Presentation/Discussion: Opportunities for MRC Engagement and Recommendations Related to Vessel Impacts**

*Lovel Pratt and Frances Robertson*

Friends of SJ's mission is to protect the Salish Sea. Today plan to discuss upcoming opportunities to advise County Council (list of specific items). I have a pdf of this presentation with links to all the source materials. Why are we concerned about impacts? Salish Sea region has 8.7million people, projected to be 10.5 million by 2040. That increases vessel traffic because goods are transported on the water. Lovel shows map of vessel traffic coming through Salish sea. All the ships going in and out of Port of Vancouver circumnavigate our islands. That's Canada's biggest port, 29 different terminals. One project causing impacts is the completion of the Transmountain pipeline expansion in May 2024, it'll triple the output of oil. It all goes through Haro Strait and Boundary Pass. This material is like oily sand diluted with a toxic material to enable it to flow through pipes. Map showing refinery in BC plus five in WA state. Vessel traffic route included in permit is completely to west of SJ's. But there is a pipeline coming from Sumas to the refineries in WA. So, some traffic is crossing from Victoria/PA directly to WA state. That tanker traffic is using our anchorage areas, waiting for a berth up in BC. Some tankers are in offshore drift as one map image shows. Between May and November there was a 930% increase in shipment of crude oil by tanker. There's an ERTV (Emergency Response Towing Vessel) at Neah Bay. If a tanker is at risk of running aground and recreating an oil spill, the ERTV would go to its aid. Map shows area the ERTV could respond to – not effective in Haro Strait/Boundary Pass. An ERTV stationed in either Sidney or Roche Harbor would be equally effective. Another component of our recommendations is a piece of legislation that didn't make it through this year. This is a bill that requires ships to use low-sulfur fuel, trying to address pollution. Scrubbers (exhaust gas cleaning systems)

are allowed to be used with heavy fuel. The scrubbers remove sulfur oxides and other pollutants from effluent that would have gone into the air and dump it in the water. About 80% of scrubbers are open loop, 1.1% of scrubbers are closed loop and don't always discharge into water. The remaining scrubbers alternate between modes. Scrubber use is increasing. 4k% increase in use from 2014 to 2024. These have serious impacts on marine copepods and bioaccumulates within organisms and magnifies up the food chain for all eaters of seafood

Question: are there any requirements/recommendations about fuel? What are cost difference?

Lovel: there's a global treaty dictating the amount of sulfur in ship's fuel but allows scrubbers. The sulfur content can be higher in open ocean than inland waters close to shore. The low sulfur fuel is more expensive than heavy fuels. Hopefully a cruise ship would use low sulfur fuel all the way from WA to Alaska. For a tanker traveling across the Pacific, this is just a small portion of trip. Not hard to switch fuels. California has a low-sulfur requirement for a decades and same ships are coming here and there. Every five years must review oil spill preparedness requirements to ensure they meet best achievable protection according to state law, WAC 173-182-030 (31) – definition of non-floating oils. Showing map, "planning standard area" – in SJC it's the same geographic boundaries as County. To meet our standard, need capacity to recover a certain amount of oil in a certain amount of time – must arrive within a certain amount of time. SJC contracted a study in 2015, assessed all resources.

**Frankie presents:** the MRC's involvement in SRKW protection and recovery efforts started early; in 1994, banned landing and launching of personal watercraft in the SJI's. In 2000, MRC sent Kari to Mexico for a NAFTA conference. This is where 'Be Whale Wise' for outreach to boaters was born. More key dates through Governor's Orca task force in 2018-2019 (see ES storyboard). As County staff, Participated on intergovernmental work group. Since 2018, piloted the whale warning flag (now adopted statewide). A lot of work has regional impacts. We completed the West side marine spatial planning study (MSA recommendation #H.2). Participated in many regional and local outreach efforts (i.e. Dock talks, boat shows, etc.). Other accomplishments include the new bill signed into law in 2023 to keep away from whales, went into effect this year. BAP (Best Achievable Protection) process in Ecology – submitted to explore funding strategies to ensure stability for SRFW in emergency oil spill response

## QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

-question and discussion about a 'tug of opportunity' and its capacity to respond

-additional issue of staffing/personnel who can operate the vessel. Requires a ready team

Jane: last December I attended the Islands Trust Council conference in Victoria. SJ County has had a MOU between our jurisdictions to cooperate on various things Former council member Wolf was online to speak to the ERTV issue. They passed a motion as a Council to commit to collaborating with both SJC and Tribes in the area to advocate for an ERTV. They feel Tribal voices are incredibly powerful on this and would help leverage this issue on both sides of government. Based on this presentation, there's enough happening we should organize a one-day meeting to workshop how we can collaborate in strategic ways. I think the time is ripe to organize a working meeting with cross-border partners and Tribes on how collective voices could be made louder. Learn from each other on what's being done on oil spill prevention. Many things Gulf Islands are doing to prepare for smaller spills.

Lovel: the Neah Bay ERTV is paid for by ships that call to ports in WA but available full time to any vessel in distress, that means it's responding to vessels from Canada. There does need to be transboundary coordination

Adam: do we want an action item out to facilitate Jane's idea? Follow up on contacts to organize as the MRC?

-and can we still influence the agenda for the Marine Managers workshop?

Katie: in August LIO is meeting with Leadership Council to share what's important to us. We shared this ERTV work with the ECB recently. This issue would be a prime thing to bring up with them. That's on August 20-21

Adam: should we work on a list of people and organizations we want involved?

Lovel: we have an ERTV subcommittee, should that group meet to discuss this before our next meeting? YES

Is there interest in being involved in the BAP process? There will be work groups headed up by Ecology

Marta: How does this opportunity translate into another action? I support Jane's suggestion, this should be a stand-alone meeting of important partners, especially Tribal partners. I think that should happen before the MMW

Adam: yes, that'll be your focus in the ERTV subcommittee meeting, to set up that meeting

Jane: when Governor Inslee made final remarks about budget, he was in touch with Canadian consulate about interest in pursuing an ERTV, also some discussion with Coast Guard. Now we have a new governor it's a good time to remind that it's a prescient issue, but it was left on the table in December. Maybe Lovel could share that letter from the Governor. If there's already a subcommittee on this, it's best for them to work on this

Lovel: Ferguson had identified some funding to work with Canadian counterparts. Agree, we need to reach out to Ferguson and to new staff in the Governor's office

Adam: for that subcommittee meeting, please bring to the MRC actual items we can move on, maybe a letter of recommendation for Council to send to the Governor or a list of action items to move on to advocate for legislation

Patti: We had a meeting this past week with Coast Salish chiefs, met with Tulalip to see if we could reenact Coast Salish gathering. If there's any strength in numbers, First Nations have a lot to lose here, need right people at table

10:55 AM    **Committee member updates and any other business** *none*

11:48 AM    **Adjourn MRC Meeting** (LIO meeting 11:48 AM-11:58 AM)

11:58 AM    **Convene CAG Meeting**

11:58 AM **CAG Updates/Business** *Sam Whitridge*

11:58 AM    • Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met last month to review 2025 SRFB Letters of Interest

- Planning for April 3-4 Salmon Recovery site visits

Reminder that this will take the place of our regular Thursday MRC meeting. There will be carpooling opportunities, I'll send out an email call for RSVP's. There won't be a boat, just a couple of ferry trips

Next MRC meeting will be the first Thursday in May, May 1.

12:00 PM    **Adjourn CAG Meeting**