

Grays Harbor County Department of Public Services

# Grays Harbor County Marine Resources Committee Informational Workbook

Prepared for the Grays Harbor County MRC  
Exploratory Committee

John M. Kliem and Deborah A. Holden,  
Creative Community Solutions

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## Introduction

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### ***“Should Grays Harbor County form a Marine Resources Committee (MRC) and if so, what structure and tasks should it have?”***

This is the question the Grays Harbor Board of County Commissioners is asking of their MRC Exploratory Committee. Over the course of the next six months, the MRC Exploratory Committee will take on this task by

1. Examining the state enabling legislation;
2. Looking at the experiences and accomplishments of other MRCs organized under the Northwest Straits Commission;
3. Exploring the type of MRC organization and projects that best reflect our coastal needs; and
4. Developing a report and presenting their findings to the public and the Board.

The Board also requested the project consultants to assemble background information to help them, the Exploratory Committee, and the citizens understand more about MRCs and what they do. The result of this effort is this MRC Informational Workbook.

Inside this Workbook, the reader will find basic information about the purpose and organization of MRCs in Washington State, as well as what they do and how they go about it. The organization of the Workbook includes:

1. An overview of the MRC organization structure,
2. Detailed profiles about the existing MRCs under the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative,
3. A discussion about potential start up issues with the new Coastal MRC programs, and
4. Appendices with other useful information.

Information in the Workbook comes from source documents, internet research, and personal interviews of staff from each of the MRCs, the Northwest

Straits Commission, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Electronic versions of the Workbook contain Internet hyperlinks that take the reader to on-line resources.

The interviews perhaps provide the most valuable material in the Workbook, as they contain first-hand perceptions and experiences in setting up and managing MRCs as well as provide advice to Grays Harbor on avoiding some of the pitfalls they have and continue to experience. Grays Harbor County expresses their appreciation for the time each MRC spent talking to the project.

The county's MRC Website also complements the Workbook by providing copies or links to the source documents cited within it. The MRC Website also contains links that the reader can explore about the individual MRCs and organizations talked about as well.

## Section 1: Marine Resource Committee Models in Washington

Marine Resource Committees (MRCs) are grassroots, county appointed committees with the purpose of restoring and protecting marine resources. MRCs do projects and activities that reflect local priorities, use sound science, and bring about measurable results.

Currently, the only officially established MRCs in Washington State are those associated with the federally created and funded Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative.

The State of Washington passed legislation in 2007 to create its own system of MRCs for other counties bordering the Puget Sound and Pacific Ocean coastlines. Grays Harbor County is the first county under that legislation to explore forming a MRC under this new state system.

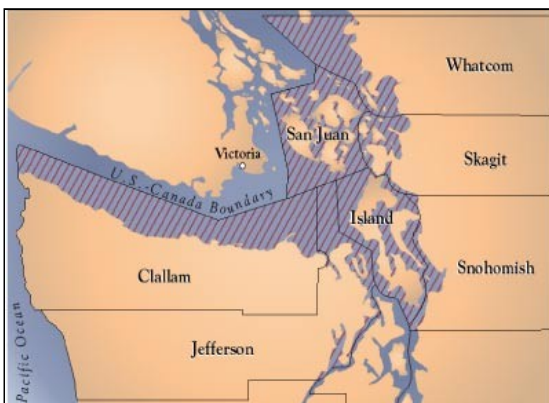
This section explores the fundamental organizational structure of both systems.

### The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative

Out of concern for declining marine resources within the Northwest Straits, Congress established the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative (referred to as the Initiative) in 1998 to encourage scientifically sound, locally supported marine conservation measures.

*See Appendix A for more detail on the history of the Initiative.*

**Figure 1: Map of the Northwest Straits Initiative**

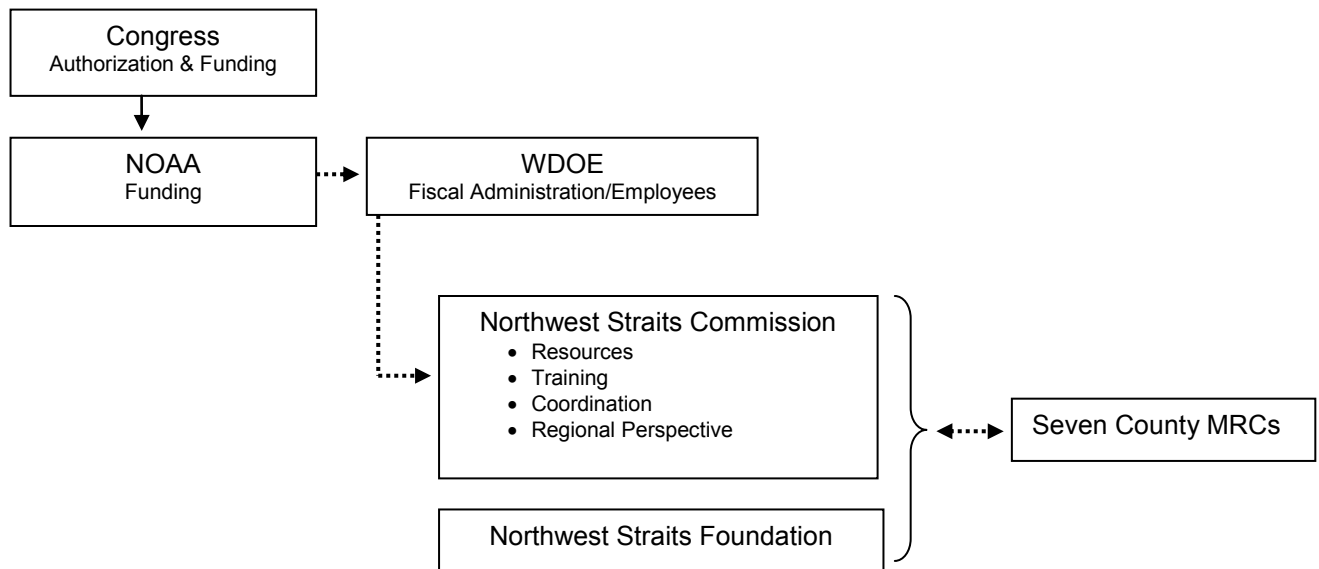


The Northwest Straits region includes the U.S. marine waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the San Juan Islands and northern Puget Sound reaching from the southern borders of Snohomish and Jefferson counties to the Canadian border. Seven counties, 15 tribes, many cities and other local governments have jurisdiction in the region.

Source: NW Straits Commission

Congress authorized the Initiative as an independent program under the general auspices of the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA). In a nutshell, the Initiative allows seven counties to form independent Marine Resource Committees (MRCs). The Initiative also set up an umbrella organization, the [Northwest Straits Commission](#) (NWSC), to channel funding, provide technical assistance, and facilitate regional planning to the individual MRCs. In Fiscal Year 2008, the Northwest Straits Initiative received \$1,562,000 from the federal government.

**Figure 2: Northwest Straits Initiative Organizational Model**



## The MRCs

See Section 2  
for a profile of  
each MRC.

At the core of this federally authorized and funded program are the local county Marine Resource Committees. The seven counties allowed to organize Marine Resource Committees under the Initiative are:

- [Clallam County](#)
- [Island County](#)
- [Jefferson County](#)
- [San Juan County](#)
- [Skagit County](#)
- [Snohomish County](#)
- [Whatcom County](#)

“The **mission** of the MRCs, guided by sound science and the needs of the Northwest Straits marine ecosystem, is to address local marine issues, recommend remedial actions to local authorities, and build local awareness of the issues and support for remedies.” ([Murray-Metcalf Report 1998](#))

MRCs would accomplish their mission by doing projects “that will drive real, substantive resource restoration and protection” in the Northwest Straits. To this end, there are five broad performance benchmarks to guide projects and measure their progress. The Initiative implements the benchmarks by tying funding to them through grant contracts. All MRC projects using Initiative

### **PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS FOR MRCS IN THE NORTHWEST STRAITS INITIATIVE:**

**MARINE HABITATS** – Protect and restore marine, coastal and nearshore habitat, prevent loss and achieve a net gain of healthy habitat areas

**MARINE LIFE** – Protect and restore marine populations to healthy, sustainable levels

**MARINE WATER QUALITY** – Protect marine water quality of the NW Straits region, and restore the health of marine waters

**SOUND SCIENTIFIC** – Collect high quality data and promote its use and dissemination

**OUTREACH AND EDUCATION** – Promote stewardship & understanding of NW Straits marine resources through education and outreach

funding must comply with these benchmarks.

The type of projects a MRC would undertake to implement the benchmarks might include:

- Helping to assess marine resources, problems in concert with governmental agencies, Tribes, and other entities
- Identifying local implications, needs, and strategies associated with the recovery of Puget Sound salmon under the Federal Endangered Species Act in concert with governmental agencies, Tribes, and other entities
- Working with the Puget Sound Ambient Monitoring Program (PSAMP) and other entities to enhance the scientific baseline and monitoring program for the marine environment of the Northwest Straits
- Identifying current actions and the need for additional measures
- Prioritizing actions
- Working closely with county leadership to implement local marine conservation and restoration initiatives
- Coordinating with the Northwest Straits Commission on marine ecosystem objectives
- Reaching out to the public and other key constituencies on such issues as the link between healthy marine habitat and healthy resources and how MPAs can play an important role in habitat protection

Under the Initiative, MRCs committee membership required the following representation:

- Relevant scientific expertise
- Constructive and knowledgeable individuals
- Balanced representation from:
  - Local government, especially planning staff
  - Affected economic interests, such as ports and commercial fishers
  - Recreational interests, such as sport fishers

➤ Conservation and environmental interests

Each MRC receives their basic funding through a non-competitive grant from the Initiative through the NWSC; in 2007, that amount was \$92,000. Some counties in the Initiative provide additional funding and/or in-kind services, such as staff time. Individual MRCs also apply for grant funding from other public and private resources.

### ***The Northwest Straits Commission***

Assisting each MRC in their mandate is the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC), a separate entity with its own budget, board, and staff. The purpose of the NWSC is to provide an ecosystem focus as a whole for the Straits, mobilize science to focus on key priorities, guide and provide resources for to the MRCs, and serve as a forum for coordination and consensus building. The NWSC also does its own projects that carry regional importance for all of the MRCs, such as the [Derelict Fishing Gear Removal Program](#).

The [board of directors](#) for the NWSC consists of MRC representatives, appointees by the governor, and a tribal representative appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. On a staff level, there is an executive director and three other positions.

Funding for the NWSC comes from the same source as the MRCs. It costs the Initiative around \$360,000 annually to support the staff and activities of the NWSC.

### ***The Roles of NOAA and WDOE***

The lead federal agency responsible for passing funding to the NW Straits Initiative from Congress is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). On a state level, the [Washington Department of Ecology](#) (WDOE) serves as the fiscal agent for the NWSC and the staff actually are WDOE

employees. The headquarters for the NWSC is at the [Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve](#).

Despite these financial connections, the NWSC acts autonomously in its operations from these agencies. Similarly, each MRC falls completely under its own county's jurisdiction. However, as with any grant relationship, each party must meet contractual obligations that significantly influence individual actions.

### ***The Northwest Straits Foundation***

The NWSC established the Northwest Straits Foundation as a separate nonprofit organization to access additional funding. Having the separate nonprofit decreases the NWSC funding reliance on the federal government and increases the amount of funding available to do projects. The foundation secured \$600,000 in 2007.

### ***Five-Year Evaluation***

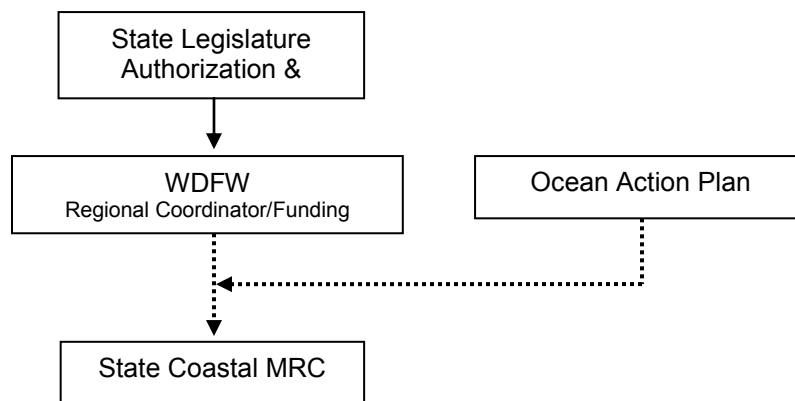
The initial authorization by Congress required a [Five-Year Evaluation Report](#) to determine if the Initiative should still receive federal funding. That evaluation happened in 2004 and the Initiative passed with positive marks, including the following recommendations:

- Congress should reauthorize the Initiative for an extended period
- Increase funding to roughly \$1.6 million annually
- Replicate the Initiative to other areas of Puget Sound (*the report did not mention the Pacific Coastline at that time – editor's note*)
- The Initiative should plan for achieving ecosystem-wide benchmark goals over the next 5, 10, and 20 years

## Washington State Marine Resource Committees

The success of the Initiative inspired the Washington State Legislature to pass a “state version” in 2007. [Chapter 36.125 of the Revised Code of Washington](#) (RCW) guides those counties bordering Puget Sound south of the Northwest Straits and along the Pacific Coastline in setting up their own MRC. It also provides the option that Jefferson and Clallam Counties, both members of the Initiative, may establish subcommittees within their existing MRC, or create new MRCs altogether, for their Pacific Coastlines.

Figure 3: State Coastal MRC Organizational Model



### ***The Intent and Role of State MRCs under Chapter 36.125 RCW***

The legislature did not stray far from the basic intent of the Initiative – it essentially mirrored the basic concept of a citizen-based, nonregulatory approach for marine ecosystem restoration and protection ([RCW 36.125.005](#)).

***The mission of these MRCs are to “...address, utilizing sound science, the needs of the marine ecosystem local to the county initiating the marine resources committee ([RCW 36.125.010](#)).”***

***The MRC is to accomplish the mission by reviewing “current data and resource conservation and management programs and make prioritized recommendations for additional measures that might be***

**necessary to enhance protection of marine resources.” The role each MRC plays in making these recommendations involves:**

1. Utilizing existing data and, to the extent necessary, helping to gather new data on the health of local marine resources;
2. Making scientifically based recommendations on local candidate sites for Marine Protected Areas;
3. Working closely with local and state officials to help implement recommendations of the marine resources committee;
4. Promoting public outreach and education around marine resource conservation and management issues; and
5. Engaging in any other activities that the initiating county deems appropriate.

### **State MRC Organizational Structure**

The state legislation allows any of the authorized counties to form a MRC in cooperation with all cities and special districts bordering marine waters. Adjacent counties can coordinate their efforts if they choose to do so. On the Pacific Coastline, that includes Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties ([RCW 36.125.020](#)).

A county can choose to delegate management and oversight of a MRC to one or more municipalities within its jurisdiction if they are willing to take on the responsibility.

Membership on a state MRC is very similar to that of an Initiative MRC, which includes balanced representation from:

- Local government
- Scientific experts
- Affected economic interests
- Affected recreational interests
- Environmental and conservation interests

Additionally, counties must invite tribal representatives to participate on the MRC.

If a county does not initiate action in forming a MRC under Chapter 36.125 RCW, county residents may petition the county to do so. The county has sixty days to respond to the petition and must do so in writing, including stating their reasoning behind their decision.

### **Regional Coordination**

Unlike the Initiative, regional coordination will not be under an autonomous umbrella organization like the NWSC. Instead, the coastal MRCs will rely on the [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) (WDFW) for this role ([RCW 36.125.030](#)). The state MRCs in Puget Sound will rely on the [Puget Sound Partnership](#), another state agency organized under the Governor's Office. The regional coordination role of WDFW under Chapter 36.125 RCW minimally requires them to:

- Coordinate and pool grant applications and other funding requests for marine resources committees;
- Coordinate communications and information among marine resources committees;
- Assist marine resources committees to measure themselves against regional performance benchmarks;
- Assist marine resources committees with coordinating local projects to complement regional priorities;
- Assist marine resources committees to interact with and complement other marine resources committees, and other similar groups, constituted under a different authority; and
- Coordinate with the Northwest Straits commission on issues common to marine resources committees statewide.

### **Washington's Ocean Action Plan**

State Coastal MRCs and WDFW have the additional requirement of collaborating with federal, state, local, and tribal governments and private interest groups in addressing ocean policy issues ([RCW 36.125.050](#)). The legislature identified “[Washington’s Ocean Action Plan: Enhancing Management of Washington State’s Ocean and Outer Coasts](#)” (2006) as the guide for developing local and state ocean policy. The Ocean Policy Work Group developed the plan, which consisted of representatives from state agencies and commissions, county commissioners (including Grays Harbor County’s Al Carter), state legislators, stakeholder groups, and ports.

The six goals identified in the plan for Washington’s ocean and coastal resources are:

1. Manage the state’s ocean and coastal areas to protect valuable marine resources and maintain ecosystem health while ensuring the vitality of coastal communities, through: effective, sustainable fisheries management; development of a state marine aquaculture policy; use of ecosystem-based management; and investigation of developing renewable ocean energy technologies.
2. Protect the coastal environment and its communities from the threats of marine hazards, such as storm surge and tsunamis, the effects of global climate change, and increased erosion, through improved research and management and increased planning efforts. Through state work, ensure continued coordination to prevent and manage pollution and marine debris.
3. Enhance the sustainability and resiliency of outer coast communities through appropriate economic development practices that honor the historical practices of the past, maintain present successes, and plan for future uses to maximize benefits to the state’s residents.
4. Increase state attention on ocean-related scientific research and observation practices that satisfy coastal management needs while furthering integrated and coordinated scientific knowledge of the state’s marine environment.
5. Inform all state citizens of the vital importance of the state’s ocean resources by collaborating on ocean literacy programs in state K-12 education and expanding public outreach on ocean issues.

6. Create a state interagency team on ocean policy to coordinate state policy and consult and collaborate with tribes, local government, ports, and interested citizens.

Effort on the Ocean Action Plan has now shifted to developing a [detailed work plan](#). This responsibility falls on the [State Ocean Caucus](#), a group consisting of state agencies and the [Washington Sea Grant](#) program.

## **Section 2: Marine Resource Committee Profiles**

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The diversity of how the seven existing MRCs function under the Initiative demonstrates the great flexibility of that system. Many of the county MRCs are quite different from one another, with each one reflecting the unique needs and orientation of their communities.

Through a series of personal and telephone interviews, the Grays Harbor County MRC project had the opportunity to gather information and perceptions about each one as well as the system as a whole. The structure of the interviews was to answer many of the questions that citizens asked at an introductory meeting/workshop back in February 2008 about how MRCs work and what they do.<sup>1</sup>

In summary, the interviews revealed the following general points about MRCs in the Northwest Straits:

- Most MRC boards approach their work as a “hands on” group. These boards generally oversee or even do the work themselves, often with the aid of subcommittees, citizen volunteers, and other nonprofits. A smaller number of boards take on an “advisory role” they act more like a planning commission; identifying directions and projects and then hiring out their completion.
- Most MRCs depend on the funding channeled to them through the NWSC or the Northwest Straits Foundation. A few MRCs receive some financial or in-kind support from the counties. Only the Snohomish MRC received a substantial funding contribution from its county government.
- The success of MRC projects depend on attracting and sustaining a strong group of core volunteers.
- Strategic planning is important for targeting its limited resources (money, time, and volunteers) in the most effective manner possible. The danger is taking on too much and accomplishing nothing.

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<sup>1</sup> The notes from this workshop are available in Appendix C.

- Paid staffing is relatively small; in most cases, even highly successful MRCs run with just part-time professional staffing. However, dealing with operational duties, like reports, invoicing, and contracting, requires substantial time commitments that staff and board members often share.
- Having strong partners that share interests is a necessity for most MRCs.
- Many MRCs feel that their citizens are unaware about their work.
- Good relationships among MRC board members are very important and a quality chair often makes or breaks how well the board functions.
- Most of the MRCs do not work closely with one another, nor do all of them work closely with entities within their counties, such as watershed planning groups and lead entities.
- Tribal participation is very active in some MRCs to non-existent in others. All of the MRCs would like to see more tribal involvement.

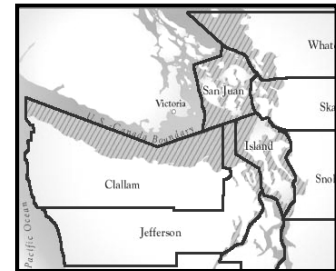
The profiles for the NWSC and each county MRC that follows below in this section provide more specific information from these interviews. Appendix B includes a "MRCs at a Glance Summary," which compares MRCs with one another as well as containing additional information.

## Northwest Straits Commission

### Ginny Broadhurst, Director

The current Director of the Northwest Straits Commission is Ginny Broadhurst. Ginny works directly with the Lead Staff & Chair of each Marine Resources Committee through monthly meetings at Padilla Bay, and annual Training Conferences. Ginny and her staff are also available on a day-to-day basis for assistance to the local committees.

The MRCs have transformed over the past 8 years. The commissions each continue to work on environmental concerns that are pertinent to their area and continue to keep citizen volunteers engaged, but Ginny is beginning to see a change in the volunteer base. A large percentage of citizen volunteers are retirees and some of the original volunteers are beginning to leave, taking with them their unique historical knowledge. New commission member volunteers find that it takes about a year to get oriented to the MRC.



***Ginny views the role of MRCs as being a way to include people in the community on local priorities without government involvement.***

### Organization of NWSC

The Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) has:

- 4 full-time employees
- 1 half-time person on contract for the Foundation
- Funding through the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE)
- 36% of Initiative funding goes to NWSC for programs, operations, & administration
- Funding gets distributed equally among the 7 MRCs
- NWSC received grant monies totaling \$700,000 in 2007

Ginny advised that it can be difficult to spend the money well, especially when it is up to the citizens to decide what projects they want to work on while the money is ultimately controlled by the benchmarks.

It is important to consider that it takes time for an MRC to write up each proposal for funding. Ginny offered a word of caution on an MRC taking on a large project such as shoreline restoration. Large projects are risky and difficult to accomplish; there needs to be a vested interest in completing the project. One way to overcome the difficulty of accomplishing a project is to get more than one MRC involved in the same project. An example is that currently 3 MRCs are working toward restoration of the Olympic Oysters. Finally, Ginny admitted that it is easy for an MRC to get scattered by trying to work on too many issues at one time. MRCs should shy away from controversial issues, and should focus on:

- Caring about marine environment
- Opportunities to do science based and educational work
- Recruiting volunteers that have the time commitment
- Educating without advocating

**NWSC / MRC  
Annual Conference  
Nov. 7-8, 2008  
Red Lion, Pt. Angeles**

## **Clallam County MRC**



### ***Cathy Lear, Lead Staff, ex-officio Representative***

Cathy Lear has been an employee of Clallam County for 8 years and has been assigned to work with the MRC for the last 3 years.

### ***Issues at Inception***

Citizens were concerned that their MRC would have to deal with another layer of bureaucracy.

### ***Ongoing Difficulties***

- Administrative tasks – they are always up against deadlines for deliverables on their contracts to the NWSC. The contractual elements are time consuming.
- Having enough volunteers to do the work. The MRC is very hands-on and they love to do good projects. Volunteers have to be willing to participate on projects, outreach & education, and public events. MRC members have to make sure they're communicating with each other and getting things done.

### ***Funding***

MRC relies mainly on funding through the NWSC.

### ***Organization of MRC***

- There is one half-time position and one position that is variable, but tends to be .25 FTE or less. The Department of Community Development administers the grant funds.
- 15 MRC volunteers; WSU Beach Watcher volunteers.

## ***Community Involvement***

Clallam County has a growing population of young, active retirees, a “gold mine for volunteers.” They are bright, energetic, involved, love to get things done, and are doing most of the work. The MRC held a series of well-attended citizen outreach workshops. They talked about a wide range of topics to uncover a rich body of knowledge from citizens.

Currently Clallam County MRC is contracting out about half of its on-the-ground work.

## ***Tribal Involvement***

Tribes are all involved with the MRC. A lot of the marine land is under tribal and Federal jurisdiction.

## ***Advice***

- Create a forum to talk about the coast as a geographic unit in terms of physical, species, trends and threats
- The forum could play a supporting role through direct involvement, project management, and funding
- The MRC structure should be flexible, form partnerships, and collaborate.

## **Island County**

### ***Rex Porter, Executive Director / Private Contractor***

Rex Porter is a consultant working one-quarter time for the MRC.



### ***Issues at Inception***

To function well an MRC should:

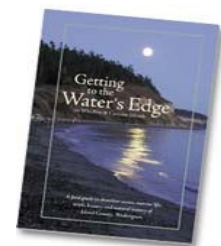
- Choose to work on projects that really matter to the members
- Know its resources
- Recruit reliable people to be members

### ***Ongoing Difficulties***

The MRC is continually learning how to use volunteers wisely. Volunteers need a high level of commitment.

### ***Funding***

Funding is the biggest challenge for the MRC. It does not receive any funding from Island County. The MRC applies for other grants and leverages small funds into large projects.



Proceeds of book sales help fund MRC

### ***Organization of MRC***

- 2 paid positions: Executive Director (County Lead, 1/4-time) and staff member from WSU ext. (MRC Coordinator, 3/4-time)
- 13 MRC volunteers, each responsible for heading/managing a project

## ***Community Involvement***

Citizens attend MRC meetings when there is a “hot” topic like (moving) the ferry landing, tidal power, and salmon recovery. There is good citizen participation on projects.

## ***Tribal Involvement***

Tribes have not been involved with the MRC historically. However, a representative from the Tulalip Tribe began recently attending meetings.

## ***Advice***

Concentrate on 3 things: Data Collection, Restoration, and Education & Outreach. The Coastal MRC Advisory Committee Members should:

- Attend some NWSC meetings and become engaged before committing to serve on a committee;
- Sit in on several MRC meetings to see how much commitment is involved;
- Start with enough dedicated people and build rapport with another county;
- Work together as “sister MRCs” and mentor to help each other learn; this brings affiliation with each other, partnership and co-use of funding on similar projects, pride and personal gratification.

## **Jefferson County**

### **Pat Pearson, WSU Extension**



MRCs work so well because they have local control. The NWSC provides a buffer between DOE and the local MRCs that allows MRCs to remain grassroots.

### **Issues at Inception**

Prior to Pat's hire, the lead staff role had been passed around. It was difficult in the beginning because people didn't realize the level of commitment expected.

At conception of the MRC program, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) were the major focus and a fundamental part of work that MRCs were "benchmarked" to set up. There was huge opposition to creating MPAs.

Volunteers had to learn to work together well to move toward benchmarks. The MRC isn't a place to try to take on personal issues. Expectation is to have a high level of commitment with focus on assessing and prioritizing marine needs.

### **Ongoing Difficulties**

- Finding short-term projects "to get people going" and long-term projects. To be successful, only take on a couple of projects at a time, don't try to do too much.
- Not enough people to do the work. The MRC began allowing an alternate for all MRC members. Having additional people really helps with workload.

### **Funding**

The MRC works from a 2-year funding cycle. Grants are created and submitted to the NWSC. They don't rely on but do apply for outside grants.

### ***Organization of MRC***

- 3 paid positions: County Lead, Contractor (MRC Coordinator), Minute Taker (part-time)
- 15 MRC volunteers plus alternates
- Outside hire: site feasibility area studies, eelgrass studies, artwork, buoy removal

### ***Community Involvement***

Stewardship is through Beach Watchers, Beach owners, and WSU Shore stewards. Annual outreach includes 3 workshops a year focusing on marine issues. There isn't much citizen participation on projects so MRC members do the work.

### ***Tribal Involvement***

The Jefferson MRC has always had a tribal seat on the membership. Although it has been vacant for a while, it is currently filled with Aleta Erickson who represents the Jamestown S'Klallam tribe. We have a letter from several of the tribes endorsing her as the rep on the Jefferson MRC.

### ***Advice***

- Stay away from issues that are controversial
- Have work group for each project
- Hire a lead contractor with a strong science & organizational background
- Establish good relationships with the Commissioners and each other

## **San Juan County**



### ***Mary Knackstedt, County Staff***

San Juan County was the prototype for MRCs in Washington. The MRC began in 1996 with \$10,000 of county funding as a local citizen advisory group for marine issues.

### ***Issues at Inception***

Deciding what work they wanted to accomplish was difficult in the beginning. In 2004, the County designated the entire county as a Marine Stewardship Area (MSA) and asked the MRC to develop a management plan for the MSA. The plan was completed in 2007 and after taking it to the community at 4 public workshops; they identified the following 6 strategies to focus their work:

1. Foster a marine stewardship ethic in residents and visitors.
2. Manage upland & nearshore activities to reduce harm to marine habitat and water quality.
3. Reduce directed harvest and bycatch of selected species.
4. Reduce bioaccumulative toxins in the marine environment.
5. Reduce the risk of large oil spills to San Juan County waters.
6. Preserve and manage public access to natural shorelines and marine views, coupled with strong stewardship and compatible behavior expectations.

### ***Ongoing Difficulties***

- Some volunteers are maxed out. Volunteers work about 6- 20 hours a month. There is a temptation to do too much; they try to do a few things very well.
- The general public isn't as aware of the program as they could like.

### ***Funding***

The MRC relies on funding through NWSC and San Juan County and has to come up with 2-year work plan. There are required deliverables to NWSC based on the NWSC's benchmarks.

San Juan County provides about \$50,000 /year and office space to support the San Juan MRC.

The Commission keeps good relationships with Senators Murray and Cantwell who fight to keep funding for the project.

### ***Organization of MRC***

- 1 full-time paid positions: MRC Coordinator
- 1 part-time position: County, Salmon Lead Entity, and the San Juan Initiative (Puget Sound Partnership) share out-reach hire
- 15 MRC positions, 13 are currently filled.

### ***Community Involvement***

The MRC recently developed an electronic newsletter, stewardship guide, and new logo to assist with outreach efforts and inform citizens about the San Juan Marine Stewardship Area. The MRC has several sub-committees heading projects.

### ***Tribal Involvement***

Kit Rawson, the Chair of the MRC, works for the Tulalip Tribes.

### ***Advice***

- Partnership with other groups
- Have good science connection
- Focus on long term issues that have community support

## **Skagit County**

**Tracy Patton, Ric Boge, and Rick Haley, Skagit County; Paul Dinnel, Citizen-Scientist**



Tracy Patton is the current MRC County staff support lead for Skagit County. Ric Boge and Rick Haley have worked as staff support in the past. Paul Dinnel has been with the MRC since 2001.

### ***Issues at Inception***

- Difficulty in getting the tribes engaged.
- Trying to establish MPAs. The tribes were adamant against establishing MPAs. Most recreational fishermen were also very concerned about loss of opportunity although after attending public workshops they now support MPAs. Skagit MRC plays a supporting role in MPA establishment, with any future establishment of MPAs being left to the resource co-managers (WDFW and the treaty tribes).
- County Commissioners were very suspicious of the idea. They questioned why the County had to oversee the MRC, what the MRC was doing, etc. They soon recognized the value of the MRC: at a very low cost by the County, things were getting done, people were working together, and they were having fun.

### ***Ongoing Difficulties***

The MRC has a lot of projects which makes it challenging. It can sometimes be difficult getting contracts written, approved and signed within a reasonable timeframe.

### ***Funding***

MRC relies on NWSC for funding. They don't need to get more money because the volunteers are so strong – they accomplish the work with the money they have.

### ***Organization of MRC***

- 1 paid position: County Lead (1/2-time)
- 18 volunteer members with strong Sub-Committee Coordinators
- One MRC member is responsible for taking minutes and Sub-Committee Coordinators are responsible for handling project reports

### ***Community Involvement***

Each project goes to sub-committee. The coordinator is responsible for getting the work done, writing up the reports, and seeing the project through. The strength is with the coordinator who has to be willing to take on the job and become invested in the project.

Community involvement is an integral part of the MRC's work. Skagit MRC is able to get projects off the ground and achieve long term success by developing strong partnerships and sharing resources. The MRC sponsors several education and outreach events throughout the year. One of their most popular events is the annual Fidalgo Bay Day celebration.

### ***Tribal Involvement***

Three of four tribes are active members. Despite legal differences, individuals can work together from a bottom-up trust building approach and get important work done.

### ***Advice***

- Achieve Consensus
- Diversity

- Bring your Passion to the Table
- Good Science

## **Snohomish County**

### ***Stef Frenzl, Marine Steward***

The MRC has always been staffed by the County.  
Stef has worked on the MRC for 3 years.



### ***Issues at Inception***

- MRC member ownership of tasks; great ideas but most MRC members have little desire or ability to take on work
- Snohomish County oversees MRC activities; MRC was originally established as an “advisory” role with the ability to perform projects
- Difficult to understand marine issues due to little if any data
- MRC instructed by County not to focus on regulations and to primarily focus on projects
- Large urban population brought weak connection to issues

### ***Ongoing Difficulties***

Many of the same issues continue. Some specific problems are:

- County staff does majority of work, MRC members have limited participation
- Finding and/or maintaining strong leadership
- Recruiting new members
- Limited funding with uncertain budget from year to year
- General citizens aren't really aware of MRC
- It takes a lot of time, money, and staff to accomplish large-scale projects that have meaningful, on-the-ground results

### ***Funding***

Funding comes from both the NWSC and Snohomish County as well as outside grants. MRC's current annual work plan is approximately \$350,000.

### ***Organization of MRC***

- 2 paid position: 1 full-time MRC Lead Staff and a 1/4-time MRC Coordinator
- Paid WSU Beach Watchers (\$30,000 per year)
- 1 Intern WA Conservation Corps
- 11 MRC members

### ***Community Involvement***

Community involvement is primarily through NGO partnerships including Beach Watchers, People for Puget Sound, Sound Stewards, Nearshore Cooperative, etc. It has been difficult developing and sustaining an MRC volunteer base. The MRC has focused on building partnerships with other organizations who can work in alignment with its priorities.

### ***Tribal Involvement***

Two of the tribes have formal positions on the MRC.

### ***Advice***

- It can take many years to collect data (5 years for Snohomish MRC) and implement on-the-ground projects
- Project data goes to NWSC – there needs to be a way to share the information
- The current model isn't staffed enough to achieve multiple, large-scale projects that span a variety of issues
- MRC members are getting burned out - replacing members who are limited in their ability to participate can be politically difficult
- Develop an organizational structure that uses the group's strengths and minimizes its weaknesses

- Unless MRC members have special expertise, staff must coordinate large-scale projects

## **Whatcom County**



Erika works in the Public Works Department of Whatcom County. She stated that the MRCs work in the Straits because of the regional perspective offered by the NWSC. Each MRC can focus on what's critical to them in their area as well as how they can work together on similar tasks.

### ***Issues at Inception***

Determining where MRCs fit into the restoration community was difficult. The MRC researched what was being done in the area, data that had been collected, and where there were gaps. Other issues:

- Poor member participation leading to resignation
- Limited budget and staff.

### ***Ongoing Difficulties***

- All members are expected to show active participation and must participate in at least one sub-committee and/or ad hoc committee.
- They continue to explore where the MRC fits in the community, and play a supporting role to larger restoration, protection, or assessment projects where needed.

### ***Funding***

Whatcom County MRC is primarily funded through grants from NWSC.

### ***Organization of MRC***

Whatcom County MRC structure:

- 1 paid employee (0.7 FTE), plus additional staff for technical and administrative support (0.1 to 0.25 FTE): Whatcom County Public Works Department

- 19 volunteer members with alternates and sub-committees
- Community of long-term volunteers and active recruitment of new volunteers
- Beach Watchers, Beach Naturalists, and community volunteers
- MRC hires consultants for specific projects and partner with other groups

### ***Community Involvement***

Education and outreach efforts include public workshops 4 times a year. The MRC gets great community support on projects such as clam surveys and water quality testing.

### ***Tribal Involvement***

There are two designated seats for the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe on the MRC. The Lummi Nation has had consistent representation on the MRC and subcommittees for 2-3 years. The tribes voiced concerns regarding the MRCs role in creating Marine Protected Areas.

### ***Advice***

- Take a couple of years to work with other local groups and determine the MRCs niche in the restoration community
- Emphasize the level of commitment expected of volunteers
- Recruit volunteers and choose people who will meet the MRCs expectations; active and committed members are necessary

## **Section 3: Start Up Issues for State Coastal Marine Resource Committees**

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There is a lot of work involved in initiating any new program and the Coastal MRC system will prove no different. After comparing the Initiative with Chapter 36.125 RCW as well as listening to the viewpoints of those engaged in the interview process, it is evident that there are a number of practical and policy issues that WDFW and Grays Harbor County will need to work out together to resolve over time. Because both the state and the county are just beginning their program development efforts, this section encourages both parties to start addressing these issues below early on.

### ***Long-Term Funding***

The fact that one program is federal and the other is a state one is very important to note, particularly in relationship to funding. It is unclear at this time which legislative body will have the long-term resources or commitment to carry either program fiscally. The state's legislation opens the door to creating ten MRCs and two regional coordinators under the state system, a financial commitment would exceed the funding levels appropriated by Congress under the Initiative. It is unknown at this time as to whether the state will be capable of financially matching the same funding levels to its system that the federal government currently provides to the NWSC and each MRC.

Grays Harbor County, including future Coastal MRCs, will need to work closely with the legislature on an ongoing basis to maintain appropriate financial resources. This will happen if MRCs to communicate clearly and frequently to legislators the value of their contribution to the state's coastal resources.

## **Regional Coordinator**

The NWSC serves as the regional coordinator for the MRCs under the Initiative. Under the state's Coastal MRC program, WDFW will play that role.

The MRCs play a major leadership role in running the NWSC under the Initiative; representatives from the individual MRCs make up over half of the voting members of its board. This group plays a significant role in making policy and funding decisions that greatly influence each MRC under the Initiative. Except for the authorization and appropriation by Congress, the NWSC essentially stands alone in running the Initiative – no other federal or state agency plays a policy oversight role. The NWSC in turn only assists the counties in implementing the MRCs under their jurisdiction. Advocates of the Initiative system say that this is intrinsic to preserving its grassroots approach.

Chapter 36.125 RCW sets up WDFW as the “NWSC” for the state Coastal MRC system. Looking at the legislation alone, the use of WDFW in this capacity could change the entire complexion of the regional coordinator role from that of the Initiative. The legislation is clear about *what* the coordinator role is to accomplish; however, it is not explicit as to *how* WDFW is to go about it. The department could choose to take on a strongly directive role or hand over decision making to a group similar in membership with the NWSC. Alternatively, it could be something in between.

Developing a model at WDFW will take time and will likely change shape as the program grows. Grays Harbor County is the only Coastal MRC at this time and the county must play an active part in defining the regional coordinator role despite undertaking its own developmental process.

## **Benchmarks**

The broad benchmarks under the Initiative define the boundaries of MRC activities. They also serve as “measuring sticks” to determine their progress towards addressing serious environmental issues in the Northwest Straits. The

Initiative developed these benchmarks before six of the seven MRCs formed (San Juan County MRC formed before Congressional authorization of the Initiative).

It is unknown at this time as to what the performance benchmarks will be for the state's Coastal MRC program. There is only one reference to them in Chapter 36.125 RCW, under Section 030, which requires WDFW to "Assist marine resources committees to measure themselves against regional performance benchmarks." The legislation includes no instructions as to how WDFW is to do this. Just as with defining the regional coordinator role, Grays Harbor County will again need to play a very active role in determining the benchmarks.

One point to keep in the mind's forefront is RCW 36.125.050, which references the Ocean Action Plan as a focal point for Coastal MRC collaboration with other public and private interests. The goals in the plan create a broad framework that could give any Coastal MRC sufficient breathing room to take on a wide variety of projects. These goals could serve as beginning point for benchmark discussions.

### ***Marine Protected Areas***

The experiences of Initiative MRCs with setting up Marine Protected Areas within their counties provide a cautionary note.

RCW 36.125.010(4)(b) calls out that state MRCs are to make "scientifically based recommendations on local candidate sites for [Marine Protected Areas](#) (MPAs)." WDFW manages the MPA program, which up to this time, has been exclusively in Puget Sound.

Establishing MPAs had been a benchmark of the Initiative since its inception: "Achieve a scientifically-based, regional system of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)." However, this benchmark proved highly controversial for many of the Initiative MRCs. Sport and nontribal commercial fishers have reacted negatively to the MRCs playing a role in this process. However, the strongest

opposition to the MPA program has been with the treaty tribes. The treaty tribes view the MPA concept as an infringement of treaty rights, especially when discussed at a venue other than at the co-manager's level. In the early years of the Initiative process, this issue kept the tribes from actively participating on the MRCs. Most MRCs eventually had to drop working on the MPA to avoid the controversy and move forward with making progress on other benchmarks. Tribal participation in most of the MRCs is just now starting up.

The 2004 Five-Year Evaluation Report recognized the controversy with the MPAs and recommended giving the benchmark more flexibility in how Initiative MRCs approach the issue (see pages 27-28 of the report). The outcome of this controversy was that the most recent benchmarks for the Initiative soften the emphasis on the MRC role in making recommendations about establishing MPAs. The benchmark now reads: "...making policy and scientifically-based recommendations about appropriate management tools to protect marine habitats, including designation of marine protected areas." This language shifted MPAs from being the only habitat protection and restoration outcome to what could be one of many options available in the MRC toolbox.

WDFW and the Coastal MRC program need to recognize the potential conflict that this provision in Chapter 36.125 RCW could create in this formation stage.

## **Appendix A: History of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative**

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In the mid 1980's, Congress authorized the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to study the inclusion of the Northwest Straits and the Olympic Coast into the [National Marine Sanctuary](#) program. Congress viewed both marine ecosystems as candidates for the program because of their unique natural and cultural features. Of the two areas, there was "...ample evidence to support the conclusion that the Northwest Straits ecosystem and some of its marine resources are in serious decline.<sup>2</sup>"

While there was public support for the sparsely populated Olympic Coast section, there was strong resistance to the concept in the Northwest Straits. Opposition to the program centered primarily around the fear that the federal government would administer the National Marine Sanctuary in a top-down fashion, leaving local citizens and governments without meaningful input.

Local disapproval reached a crescendo in 1994 when all seven affected counties passed resolutions in opposition to the designation. Two years later, NOAA officially terminated the designation process due to a lack of public support.

Rejection of the National Marine Sanctuary designation, however, was not an indicator of local acceptance of the decline of environmental conditions in the Straits. There was consensus among many local leaders and communities that "Disturbing trends in the Northwest Straits study area call for immediate action to avoid serious degradation of natural systems, scenic beauty, recreational viability, and freedoms that are likely to be curtailed if these trends develop into crises (Report to the Conveners 1998)."

San Juan County took the first step towards a local response to the situation when the Board of Commissioners appointed a Marine Resources Committee in 1996 to examine solutions to marine-related problems. The membership of this MRC consisted of scientists, politicians, fishers, business owners, and the public at large. The group soon

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<sup>2</sup>[Report to the Conveners](#), Murray-Metcalf Northwest Straits Citizens Advisory Commission, p. 3.

set to work by identifying priorities for bottomfish, reviewed the research, worked with the public, and developed bottomfish recovery zones.

The success of the San Juan MRC soon attracted regional interest as an example of proactive local effort focused on restoring the health of the Straits. Simultaneously, there remained strong commitment regionally to develop an alternative approach to dealing with pressing environmental issues in the Straits. Efforts gradually gained steam in 1997 when Senator Patty Murray and Representative Jack Metcalf established the Murray-Metcalf Northwest Straits Citizens Advisory Commission. The purpose of the 15-member Commission was to explore alternative models for protecting and restoring marine resources in the Straits and report their findings. In August 1998, the Commission released their "Report to the Conveners" that contained the following highlights:

- County-based MRCs that can provide the foundation for scientifically sound, locally supported marine conservation measures
- Membership on county MRCs should reflect balance and technical competency
- MRCs should have a clear mission, expert assistance, and access to federal financial resources
- An overarching Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) would provide an ecosystem focus as a whole for the Straits, mobilize science to focus on key priorities, guide and provide resources for to the MRCs , and serve as a forum for coordination and consensus-building
- A series of measureable Benchmarks for Performance would evaluate the success of the NWSC and MRCs

In October that same year, Congress adopted the findings of the Report to authorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative (HR 3461). The Initiative also provided federal funding for five years, an evaluation and monitoring requirement, and a six-year sunset clause that would require affirmative Congressional action to continue the program.



## Appendix B: Northwest Straits MRCs At A Glance

	Clallam	Island	Jefferson	San Juan	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom
<b>Paid County Employees</b>	2 grant coordinators			1 Coordinator	1 part-time "County Lead"	1 full time Public Works Dept	1 Public Works Dept (0.1- 0.25 FTE assist with administrative and technical support).
<b>Paid MRC Employees</b>	1 – 1/2-time position 1 variable position (.25 FTE or less)	1 WSU ext. (3/4 time) 1 – Executive Director private consultant (1/4 time)	1 staff member 1 contractor 1 minute taker  Outside hires: Buoy placement & removal, site feasibility areas, eelgrass studies, local artists.	1 Coordinator 1 part-time outreach position  Contractors		1 1/4-time 1 Intern WA Conservation Corps	1 grant funded position (0.7 FTE) Contracts for specific projects.
<b>County Funding?</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b># of Members</b>	13	13	15 + alternates	13 currently (9-15)	18 + alternates	11	19 + alternates
<b>Member enforcement</b>	3 consecutive absences is neglect of duty	Hold members accountable for project he/she is heading	Do a good job recruiting.		Committee pulls group back in to focus on getting the work done.  Members have a sincere interest in the work they are doing.		In the past, have asked members to resign if continually missed meetings. Members are expected to participate on at least 1 subcommittee.
<b>Member recruitment</b>	Application & recommendation	Recommended by BOCC or MRC	Newspaper & MRC recruits	Word of mouth	County	County	Website, e-mail list, press releases, information sharing
<b>Monthly Meeting</b>	1/ month	2/ month	1/month	2/month	1/month	1/month	1/month

	Clallam	Island	Jefferson	San Juan	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom
<b>Subcommittees</b>	Yes	Yes.	No, MRC doing all the work.  Hired a contractor as Lead	Yes.	Yes, strong subcommittees & volunteer base with Lead person responsible for getting work done, writing reports, seeing the project through. Lead has to be willing to take on the job and becomes invested in the project.	No.	Yes. Subcommittees have been formed for each of the program areas and communicate on a regular basis.
<b>Meeting Minutes</b>	Chair		Hire minute taker.	Hire minute taker.	Secretary.		Public Works staff.
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Working on.
<b>Hands On/ Advisory</b>	Hands On	Advisory	Hands On	Hands On	Hands On	Advisory	Hands on
<b>Tribal Participation</b>	S'Kallam Lower Elwha Makah Quileute	Tulalip	Jamestown S'Klallam	Tulalip	Samish Swinomish Upper Skagit Sauk-Suiattle	Tulalip Stillaguamish	Lummi Nooksack
<b>Funding</b>	NWSC and some \$ from other grants (NOAA)	NWSC and some \$ from other grants (NOAA, NFWF).  Sale of book "Getting to the Water's Edge"	NWSC and some \$ from other grants.  Originally had to apply for separate grants for funding and staffing costs.	NWSC. San Juan County	NWSC.	NWSC, Snohomish County, other grants.	NWSC.

	Clallam	Island	Jefferson	San Juan	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom
<b>Initial Difficulties</b>	Implementation of projects.	Funding; 2/3 of money goes to contractor.	Marine Protected Areas, an initial benchmark, was not well accepted.  Personality issues on Board.  Volunteers didn't realize the expected level of commitment.	Scope & scale of work.	Incorporating Tribal participation. Despite legal differences, individuals can work together from a bottom-up trust building approach and get important work done.  Tribes are adamantly against protected areas (MPAs).  Commissioners suspicious of idea.	Staff controls issues; bureaucratic, limited MRCs enthusiasm and impact.  Volunteers don't take on ownership of tasks, don't do work.  Urban county with weak connection to land.  Difficulty setting priorities.	Determining the role of the MRC in the restoration/ protection community. Addressed through marine summits which included inventory of groups & efforts and gap analysis.  Tribes had real concerns about MPAs.
<b>Current Difficulties</b>	Deadlines for deliverables on contracts - time consuming.  Administrative tasks.	Funding, fear of losing money earmarked by congress.  Involving & keeping smart people on committees.  Contractual deadlines.	Easy to take on too many projects. They aim to be successful and that dictates what can be done.  Grants take a lot of time, paperwork.	Use the same volunteers over and over; they're maxed out.  Workload issues in getting grant funding – it's too difficult to manage.  Temptation to do too much.		Shifting through the information load.  Volunteers are getting burned-out, very little turn-over.  Trying to match work programs.  Need MRC member participation.  Strong leadership.  Recruiting.  Limited funding, uncertain budget.	Determining role the MRC can play in major restoration projects.  Maintaining volunteers for multi-year projects.  Science doesn't always give black & white answers for restoration.  Determining which restoration projects will provide the greatest value.

	Clallam	Island	Jefferson	San Juan	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom
<b>Positive Feedback</b>	Oversight by NWSC through benchmarks.  NWSC funnel for money.	Everybody has priority project that he/she acts as Lead on.	MRCs work well because they have local control.  NWSC provides a buffer between DOE and MRCs.	Coordinate projects and funding with County Lead Entity.	Major strength of the program - all 7 MRCs function differently.  Low cost by County, things are getting done, people are working together even though they don't always agree; they're having fun.  Diversity of stakeholders.  Full consensus (extremely important to Tribes).  Minimal government interference.	Only MRC that gets County funding.	Working in partnerships with restoration projects is where they found their niche.
<b>Public Involvement</b>	Beach Watchers, Retirees, Boy Scouts, Concerned Citizens.	Beach Watchers, Waste Wise Volunteers, Shore Stewards, neighborhood groups on project level.	Beach Watchers, Beach Owners, WSU Shore Stewards.		Retired citizens. WSU Beach Watchers.	WSU Beach Watchers, Marine Stewardship, Nearshore Cooperative.	County helps with coordination with other groups.  Beach Naturalists, Beach Watchers, particular communities.

	Clallam	Island	Jefferson	San Juan	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom
<b>Projects</b>	<p>Derelict gear.</p> <p>Nearshore study of "marine environment" for upcoming Elwha dam removal.</p> <p>Coastal erosion, shellfish &amp; water quality, forage fish, nearshore marine habitat, rockfish.</p>	<p>Surveys: Eelgrass Forage Fish Shoreline Hardening Feeder Bluff Estuary Seining Pigeon Guillemot Water Quality Orca</p>	<p>Began by creating a digital archive of studies.</p> <p>Did gap analysis.</p> <p>Geoduck farming study.</p>	<p>Stewardship network.</p> <p>Sustainable Business network.</p>	<p>Bottomfish Oysters Creosote Tree Planting "Working Blue Print"</p>	<p>Mussel Watch.</p> <p>Contaminants Study.</p> <p>Surveys of forage fish spawning areas and juvenile Dungeness crab habitat.</p> <p>Marine Water Quality monitoring.</p> <p>Nearshore Habitat Protection.</p>	<p>Driven by program areas including rockfish and near shore.</p>
<b>Outreach</b>	<p>Series of Workshops; newspaper, radio, partner with other organizations – collaboration.</p> <p>Sponsor school field trips to Fiero Marine Life Center.</p>		<p>3 full-day workshops a year.</p> <p>Newspaper (4 pg insert) and partnering with local organizations.</p> <p>Signage.</p>	<p>Partnership with other groups.</p> <p>Electronic newsletter.</p> <p>Needs more outreach.</p>	<p>Annual event: Fidalgo Bay Day hugely popular.</p> <p>Seaweed &amp; Marine Animal identification cards printed &amp; distributed.</p> <p>Heron camera.</p> <p>Landowner workshops.</p> <p>Signage.</p>	<p>MRC isn't well known in County, community involvement is difficult.</p> <p>Beach Expos.</p> <p>Clean-up Events.</p>	<p>Four public speaker events a year.</p> <p>Outreach through projects, i.e., clam survey and water quality surveys.</p>
<b>Science Partners</b>	<p>Fiero Marine Life Center, Community Colleges, Tribes.</p>		<p>Pt. Townsend Marine Science Center.</p>	<p>Friday Harbor Labs.</p>	<p>Shannon Pt. Marine Center.</p>		

	Clallam	Island	Jefferson	San Juan	Skagit	Snohomish	Whatcom
<b>Advice</b>	<p>Form a forum to talk about the coast as a geographic unit in terms of physical, species, trends and threats.</p> <p>Keep structure flexible.</p>	<p>Get key people to invest time and visit some NW Straits MRC meetings. Build rapport with an existing MRC for mentorship.</p> <p>Form partnerships.</p> <p>Work on 3 things: Data Collection. Restoration. Education &amp; Outreach.</p>	<p>Pay someone to do dedicated staff time! A lot of work is involved.</p> <p>Stay away from controversial issues.</p> <p>Establish good relationships with the Commissioners and each other.</p>	<p>Coordinate with Lead Entity, reciprocal relationship is greatly beneficial.</p> <p>Focus on issues you really want to promote. Issues should be long-term with community support.</p> <p>Do a few things very well.</p>	<p>Suggest Coastal MRCs develop By-Laws.</p> <p>Diversity is critical. Gives MRC strength and credibility.</p> <p>Achieve consensus.</p> <p>Bring passion to the table.</p> <p>Sound science is critical.</p>	<p>Focus on things you can do.</p> <p>County should give MRC control to do projects.</p> <p>It takes time to gather data before beginning projects.</p>	<p>First couple of years is the most challenging time. You learn what you're doing and what's expected.</p> <p>Make sure you get the right people on your MRC knowing that they will need commitment.</p> <p>Work is challenging with limited resources.</p>
<b>ETC.</b>	<p>Good group communication and relationships MRC members.</p> <p>MRCs depend on volunteers.</p> <p>Hire web design consultant.</p>	<p>It takes about a year for a new member to get acclimated to the MRC</p> <p>An MRC should: Pick it's own battles; Choose projects that really matter to members; Know its resources; Recruit reliable people/members.</p>	<p>Have a work group for each project. Hire a lead contractor with strong science and organizational background to make sure projects get done.</p> <p>Form partnerships with local organizations.</p>	<p>The MRC keeps good relationships with Senators Murray and Cantwell who fight to keep funding.</p>	<p>Each MRC is a County entity.</p> <p>Benchmarks give MRC something to "shoot for."</p> <p>Meet with Commissioners annually.</p>	<p>MRC recommends projects but can not implement.</p> <p>Shy away from controversial issues.</p> <p>MRC structure like a non-profit.</p> <p>First 5 years spent time getting data.</p>	<p>In the early years there are a lot of unknowns.</p> <p>Long term projects are hard to do.</p> <p>May need to hire a consultant.</p> <p>MRC has regional perspective umbrella offered by NWSC and each MRC can focus on what's critical to them in their area as well as how they can work together on similar tasks.</p>

## **Appendix C: MRC Introductory Workshop Notes - February 7, 2008**

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### ***Summary***

On February 7, 2008, Grays Harbor County held a public meeting designed to give citizens an opportunity to express their "hopes, desires, fears, and concerns about establishing a MRC." The meeting was well attended by a broad citizen base. Citizens voiced their desire for local, grassroots representation that includes representatives from diverse stakeholder groups. They stressed the need for community education, research, and stewardship encompassing a holistic approach to watershed management and coastal land use. The fishing industry focused on the potential loss of fishing grounds that may come about through a Marine Protected Area. Citizens strongly support direct funding to the Grays Harbor County Coastal MRC.

### ***In attendance:***

Jody Kennedy, Jan McMillan, Arthur (RD) Grunbaum, Brady Engvall, Kathy Greer, Linda Orgel, Lorena Marchant, Al Carter, Lee Napier, David Hollingsworth, John Hansen, Dwight Eager, David Freed, Randy Lehr, N B Cuffel, Steve Berggren, Mike Desimone, Ron Averile, Rich Osborne, Claw Harwood, Steve Harbell, Theresa Julius, John Henricksen, Brook Priest, Doug Fricke, Mike Johnson, Don Harders, Ken Culver, Ray Toste, Eric Devlin, Ray L. Brown, Dan Ayers, Michael Golden Meeting facilitated by John Kliem and Debbie Holden.

### ***Featured Speakers***

Tom Cowan and Mike Dougherty gave presentations about their experiences in setting up and participating on Marine Resource Committees in San Juan and Clallam Counties. A question and answer period with the audience followed.

### ***Brainstorming Session***

During the workshop, the facilitators asked participants to brainstorm answers to the question: "What are your hopes, desires, fears, and concerns about establishing a MRC?"

Participants individually wrote their "hopes, desires, fears and concerns" on an index card. After considering their top 5 responses, they formed groups. Working together, the groups wrote out their responses on 8½ x 11 sheets of paper. These were collected in rounds and put on the board, discussed and grouped by likeness. Upon completion of the process, the information provided at the workshop was titled by group, as follows:

## Workshop Board

### Who do we go to for Answers?

Local Representation to the Powers that Be	Direct Funding – No Middleman	Diverse Local Representation	Land Use Issues	Foster Education and Marketing	Potential Projects for MRC	Research & Development	Protection of Fishing	Community Education & Involvement
What is the geographical extent of the group's interest?	Inadequate long term funding	Group represents a balance of stakeholders	Holistic approach to watershed management	MRC helps strengthen local economy (hope)	Salmon predator control	Concern of herbicide use on shoreline	Fear Wave Energy Replacing Fisheries	Emphasis on Education and Outreach to/from community
Political vs. Ecological boundaries	Increased funding for Coastal Communities?	Insure preservation movement doesn't prevent access to Marine Resources	Help deal with coastal land use (erosion, wetland, flooding vs. development)	Accommodate future growth / development	Invasive species issues will be addressed (hope)	Address water quality establish baseline	Potential loss of fishing grounds	Increase understanding of marine resources
Successful Ties to State and Federal agencies	Restoration of coastal, estuary & near-shore	MRC membership becomes politicized		Support historic marine based industries (hope)	Assessment and recovery of derelict gear	Stock assessment for marine fish and shellfish		MRC builds community around understanding and stewardship (hope)
Pacific / Grays Harbor County cooperation	Diverting funding from freshwater priorities	Strong organizational structure		Doppler Radar for Outer Coast	Removal of dikes / retaining walls – does it help fish?	Assessment for marine mammals		
Another Level of Government		Top-down or citizen led?			Return of "Salmon Box" Program	MRC stimulate marine research (build knowledge base) (hope)		

Local Representation to the Powers that Be	Direct Funding – No Middleman	Diverse Local Representation	Land Use Issues	Foster Education and Marketing	Potential Projects for MRC	Research & Development	Protection of Fishing	Community Education & Involvement
Effective input into state policy seat at table		Adequate volunteer participation – fear no volunteer base			Recognition of Coastal Issues (derelict gear, dredging, beach erosion, weather prediction, manage coastal development)			
Need for Meaningful Purpose & Projects		Locally led process						
MRC Representative as a voting member on State Ocean Committee		Have realistic expectations						
Close coordination with Lead Entities and Regional Organization		What does an MRC do?						

### What's Next

The county will be studying the results from the workshop and developing an approach for moving forward. The community should anticipate future workshops that will focus on developing an appropriate local MRC model that addresses the hopes, desires, fears, and concerns participants raised at this workshop.

Notes from this workshop and future communications about next steps will go to participants and other interested parties who have provided their email.

## **Appendix D: Key Informant Interviews**

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The editors would like to thank the following people for taking the time to meet with us and share their first hand experiences working on a Marine Resources Committee:

Cathy Lear, Clallam County MRC

David Freed, Clallam County MRC

Rex Porter, Island County MRC

Pat Pearson, Jefferson County MRC

Mary Knackstedt, San Juan County MRC

Tracy Patton, Skagit County MRC

Ric Boge, Skagit County Surface Water Manager

Paul Dinnel, Skagit County MRC Volunteer

Rick Haley, Skagit County Public Works

Erika Stroebel, Whatcom County MRC

Ginny Broadhurst, Northwest Straits Commission

Jodi Kennedy, Surfriders

Kathy Greer, Surfriders

Tim Smith, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife

Brie van Cleve, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife

Jennifer Hennessey, Department of Ecology, Ocean Action Plan