



Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve Implementation Committee Meeting Summary

Prepared by Jamie Kilgo and Birdie Davenport

Tuesday, June 12th, 2018, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Civic Center Building, 322 N Commercial Street, Bellingham

Participants: Marie Hitchman, Kim Clarkin, Lyle Anderson, Rick Hann (*Cherry Point Citizen Stewardship Committee*); Sandy McMullen (*Birch Bay Water & Sewer District*); Eleanor Hines, (*ReSources*); Andrew Gamble, Travis Linds (*Petrogas*); Steve Mrazek (*BP Cherry Point Refinery*); Lovel Pratt (*Friends of the San Juans*); Birdie Davenport, Dennis Clark, Joelene Boyd, Erica Bleke & Jamie Kilgo (*Department of Natural Resources*)

1:00 p.m.

Welcome & Introductions, Meeting Agenda & Outcomes

- Kyle Loring has moved on, and Friends of the San Juans will be represented by Lovel Pratt.

1:15 p.m.

CPAR Implementation Plan Status

- The Aquatic Reserves Program is building capacity with staffing and partnership. We are also exploring ways to encourage scientific research that supports management of all reserves
- We have created more online and paper media resources to increase awareness and participation in the reserves program
- We solicited many presentations from subject matter experts to address priorities in the management plan and by request of the committee (shared list from past 4 years)
- Cherry Point Herring Technical Committee was formed to advise on research
- Request from committee member: post more of the presentations on the website (response: some may not be available due to author's wish to publish first, but we'll post all we can)
- Spring 2018 Cherry Point herring update from Todd Sandell with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW): Though final numbers are not yet available, significantly less herring spawn than last year. Most spawn was located in the Birch Point area. Genetic results should be available later this year.
 - Petrogas met with Todd Sandell to discuss funding herring research, such as a light trap
 - The Aquatic Reserves Program may be able to help with funding if there are partners that can help. We do not currently have the funding to take on large research projects.

Progress on priorities

- 2 years of Cherry Point herring field research (with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), with genetic results anticipated this year
- Baseline sediment sampling and analysis completed every two years -Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve CPAR) was among the cleanest of all the reserves
- Shoreline assessment and outfall monitoring. Nothing of concern was found (this could be repeated if determined a priority)

- Avian monitoring - Citizen Stewardship Committee (CSC) project
- Local outreach events - What's the Point and the Cherry Point Science Forum, organized by the Citizen Stewardship Committee (CSC)
- Outreach position - have been applying for additional grants to support this work
- Creosote debris removal team – a new MyCoast App is nearly ready for citizens to report creosote-treated wood and other large marine debris
- Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve data on the data viewer/interactive map <https://aquarim.dnr.wa.gov/default.aspx>
- Capacity building and researching creative ways to fund and support the reserves

Land Management supporting the Cherry Point Reserve

- Industrial dock lease inspections and progress on updates
- Birch Bay mooring buoys – consistent management yields results after several years of compliance work
- Resolution of many on-the-ground issues that affect the reserve

1:35 PM

Prioritization of Actions

Question: Read the 2016 priorities and look through the management plan – what should we be looking to do next? What questions do you have?

Context:

- Focused on implementing priorities of the current management plan
- The Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve will be due for a management plan review and update in 2020

Responses from the committee organized by topic area:

Cherry Point herring

- Seeks new sources of state funding for herring research
- Characterize herring spawning habitat on CPAR – overall view of the habitat quality for herring spawning in that area.
 - Primarily spawn on *Sargassum* and red algae (*Desmarestia spp.*)
 - Could we map the macro-algae/submerged vegetation (this may be information that we can extrapolate from the herring spawning surveys)
 - Look at our submerged vegetation program data
 - Need an overall habitat assessment - may be hard to do because it is such a dynamic system and there is a lot of variability over time

Current and potential impacts from industries

- How can we get the upland TreOil hazardous waste site to get completely cleaned up? Discussion ensued about –progress-to-date
 - Washington Department of Ecology (DOE) has already removed a lot of material (presentation at previous meeting)
 - There has been difficulty holding the property owner accountable
 - Too many other sites are higher priority for cleanup
 - Has groundwater been tested?

- Action item: Ask for update from DOE and ask what steps can be taken?
 - Presentation to the CPAR Citizen Stewardship Committee (CSC) from DOE about the TreOil Site in August
- Implication of Kinder Morgan (now Canadian Government) Pipeline on CPAR?
 - Potential impacts? Vessel traffic impacts?
 - What if they reroute additional capacity through existing Cherry Point terminals?
 - Cherry Point BP terminals are not currently set up to export large volumes in a cost effective way. The necessary approvals/permits to expand facilities to support export would be hard to obtain.

Research and Monitoring

- Identify research needs or data gaps and develop program with universities to support research
- What questions are our current citizen science projects able to address, or what can we change to help answer unanswered questions?
- Are there ways we can tie CPAR research with other aquatic reserves to answer regional questions? – Yes
- What are additional opportunities are there to tie projects together? (For example regional trends in intertidal surveys or bird surveys)
- How do we get data from regional institutions?
- New undergraduate program at WWU-Shannon Point: BS degree in Marine, Coastal and Watershed Science. Could be a good partner for reserve science.

Land use/marine impacts/planning

- What is the habitat function of the Gulf Rd salt marsh in the Cherry Point system? Is the contributing stream still a Coho Salmon spawning stream?
 - Think about the salt marsh in an ecosystem context
- Historical summary of CPAR area land and water uses, such as fishing history, settlement and pre-settlement and shoreline uses. (This may be addressed in management plan update.)
- Any way to assure protection of salt march from upland development impacts?
 - Critical Areas Ordinance (county) may prohibit
- Boat launching, driftwood harvest, beach fires at Gulf Rd – what are the ecological impacts?
 - One of the few public access points to the reserve (although beach is privately owned by SSA Marine)
 - A lot of garbage is deposited
 - May be difficult to manage because it is private tidelands
- Prioritize derelict crab pots and fish nets removal in the aquatic reserves?
 - Have asked Northwest Straits (NWS) to prioritize reserves, especially if we are able to provide funding. Recommend working through the adjacent MRC to get NWS to prioritize reserves.
 - NWS has done a lot of work at Smith and Minor Island, will check on work done at CPAR

- Any tracking of Dungeness crab populations within the reserve?
 - WDFW manages Dungeness crab populations and they have given presentations to other reserves - we could get information specific to CPAR if the committee is interested.

Water quality

- Population in Birch Bay is going to grow in the next 10 years
 - Expected population growth from 7,400 to 12,900 in 2036
 - How do we incorporate and plan for these land-use changes in the Cherry Point plan update? Considerations:
 - Continue/increase water conservation efforts to reduce discharge to reserve
 - Review Birch Bay Comprehensive Stormwater Plan for potential coordination with reserve
 - Understand how the county's Birch Bay drive and pedestrian reconstruction/restoration project (called "the berm") may impact reserve
- Collecting data to support management and partner with other organizations to get fisheries and oceanographic information (share data viewer link)
- Municipal stormwater is a huge issue – for example Birch Bay Water Treatment
 - Dripping and driving, addressing non-point source and runoff
- Working on restoring Terrell Creek – other opportunities?
- Increased outreach and education about what citizens can do to improve water quality
- Don't want protections to affect ability to respond to spills – both activities are compatible
- Question: Is the plan update meant to be completed in 2020 or started in 2020?
 - The previous plan took two years to complete, but updates can be completed in less than a year. It will require an extra CPIC meeting (total of three) in the year the update is done. We anticipate having it done by the end of 2020.

Question: How can we build capacity?

- Potential partners who can help raise/receive donated funds: businesses, foundation, educational institutions
- Would it be statewide or by reserve?
 - Needed for the statewide reserves program
 - Washington Land Trust Alliance
 - May need someone with a broader mission – support research?
- Something like Northwest Straits Foundation but with a different mission

Follow-up:

- Consider interfacing with the Southern Killer Whale task force. Currently 3 working groups:
 - prey availability working group - Dave Palazzi represents Aquatics
 - vessels working group– Lovel Pratt, Friends of the San Juans
 - toxins working group
- Post WDFW herring spawn surveys on website and any available reports
- Report back on CP Dungeness crab populations and potential presentation from WDFW
- Report back on derelict crab pot and fishing gear removals in the reserve (NW straits)

3:00 pm

DNR updates

- Due to state Capital Budget delay in being passed, our Puget SoundCorps team is smaller than normal and they have been very busy with all the recurring monitoring and outreach projects, plus:
 - 2018 sediment sampling
 - Green crab monitoring (new project)
- DNR land management update
 - Went back out to Birch Bay in May 2018:
 - No new buoys or boats
 - Will be going out again after July 4th to ensure progress is sustained
 - To address anchoring of NRC booming vessel in reserve (outside their leasehold) at Phillips 66, DNR developed some options that were given to Phillips 66 to get a near-term and long-term solution that ensures continuous oil spill pollution prevention and response.
 - Q: Could their leasehold footprint be changed?
 - A: Would require a Commissioner's order to change reserve boundary, which is not likely
- What's the Point? is this Saturday (June 16th) at Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve

3:10 p.m.

Partner Updates

- Petrogas update:
 - Pier maintenance and upkeep has been deferred in the past by previous owners, so we've been working on taking care of the creosote-treated pilings. We are committed to doing things right the first time and cannot install new treated lumber, so we have paid divers to go down and wrap carbon fiber around the pilings and then inject epoxy. The wrap and grout seals the old creosote-treated pilings and prevents creosote from leaching out. We have spent almost a million dollars to do this and will spend about a million over the next year. Will end up doing about 300 pilings (there are around a thousand total). Life expectancy on wrapped pilings is 50 years. Pier was built in 1966.
- Citizen Stewardship Committee (CSC) update:
 - – Adopted Gulf Rd so they will be able to do regular cleanups. Next cleanup is planned for July Sunday 8th at 10 am.
 - Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month, 4-6 pm at REsources

Next steps

- Next meeting in early November 2018

3:30 p.m. Adjourn