

Protection Island Aquatic Reserve Implementation Committee Meeting Summary

Prepared by: Jamie Kilgo

Monday, November 16, 2015, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Gardiner Community Center | 980 Old Gardiner Road

PARTICIPANTS: Craig Wester (Admiralty Audubon); Anne Murphy (Jefferson MRC); Torbin Blichfeld (Sequim Bay Yacht Club); Bob Boekelheide (Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society); Bob Steelquist (local resident); Janine Boire (Port Townsend Marine Science Center); Sue Ellen Riesau (Olympic View Community Foundation); Betty Bookheim, Jamie Kilgo, Bill House (Washington State Dept. of Natural Resources).

2:00 p.m.

Introductions & Meeting Agenda

2:10 p.m.

Citizen Stewardship Committee (CSC)

Information

- Provided the draft grant application for Protection Island Aquatic Reserve Citizen Stewardship Committee
- Olympic View Community Foundation will act as the fiscal sponsor
- Will work with partner groups such as Audubon and Marine Science Center for volunteer base

Discussion

- *Q:* How constrained are we by the management plan and previously prioritized actions?
 - *A:* Management plans are updated every 10 years, as necessary. We will develop an updated work plan for the next 2 years based on current priorities.
- *Q:* Question about the administrative overhead for the grant.
 - *A:* Will follow up. [The “Task 1 Administrative” column refers to budget for the full time DNR project position that will support the Citizen Stewardship Committee].
- *Q:* Question about boat work near Protection Island.
 - *A:* Would need to work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for permissions.
- *Q:* Is there currently a list of all research and monitoring projects taking place within the reserve?
 - *A:* We have a list of current DNR projects, but not a list of all research projects by universities, Port Townsend Marine Center, WDFW, etc.
 - *Comment:* We need a comprehensive matrix of all work that has been done and is being done. Start with literature review cited in management plan (Nightengale 2000). Would be a good project for an intern or student.
- *Comment:* Jefferson MRC did video surveys near Protection Island to look at kelp beds about 8 years ago. Could be interesting comparison site. Work on getting this data.

- *Comment:* The Marine Science Center has a 3 year grant for citizen science and a base of 160 volunteers. A Citizen Science symposium is to be scheduled. Good partnership opportunity.

2:20 p.m.

Review of Management Action Priorities

Information

- Reviewed Survey Monkey results. Presentation available upon request.
 - Inventory existing data and support collective data repository & identify data gaps and organize inventory efforts were the highest priority projects.
 - Forage fish beach spawning surveys & derelict fishing gear and creosote removal were secondary priorities.
 - Additional projects not included in the list of priorities were:
 - Non-native vegetation removal (and other restoration efforts)
 - Multi-beam bottom survey and benthic habitat inventory
 - Potential impacts from oil spills and naval activities
 - Increase public access and education about the marine ecosystem
 - Citizen science project: regular cruises through the aquatic reserve, designed to monitor important observable habitats and species.

Discussion

- *Comments* - Additional projects taking place within the reserve that should be investigated:
 - Use the reserve as a sentinel site to leverage more research
 - Battelle & DNR are currently working on nearshore light transmission in seagrass beds project at 150 sites within Puget Sound (John Varnette and Jeff Gaekle are the leads)
 - Eyes Over Puget Sound may cover the reserve area

2:30 p.m.

Implementation Planning

Discussion

Reviewed project ideas that were based on management plan actions and suggestions made at previous meetings.

Citizen Science Projects:

- *Monthly boat surveys:* Monthly boat cruises through the reserve area to record marine bird, marine mammal and forage fish observations.
 - Marine Sanctuary has developed protocols for offshore bird surveys – available online
 - Marine Science Center has done marine mammal and bird boat observation trips around Protection Island for 18 years. No set protocol and no densities. Also complete Jelly Watch surveys that could be incorporated in the boat surveys.
 - Need dedicated boat owners – Would members of the Sequim Bay Yacht Club be interested
 - Reimbursement available for larger boats?
- *Land-based bird surveys:* Bird surveys by the Miller & Quimper Peninsula bluffs using Cherry Point protocol; Pigeon Guillemot surveys using Nisqually Reach protocols
 - Seattle Audubon currently is running a Puget Sound Seabird project and surveys are completed at 2 sites nearby, but not within the reserve
 - COAST has several survey beaches nearby
 - Pigeon Guillemot surveys are currently being done by USFW on Protection Island

- Suggestion was made to conduct land-based surveys on Miller or Quimper Peninsula
- *Kelp kayak surveys*: Using the Marine Resource Committee protocols
 - Jefferson MRC is involved and protocols are still being worked out
 - *Q*: Aerial kelp surveys are conducted by DNR, how does this enhance this effort?
 - *A*: Could verify aerial surveys, is more fine-scale
 - Comment that this seems like a duplication of effort
 - Kelp presence/absence surveys could be combined with boat surveys. A drone could video record transects.
- *Forage fish beach spawning surveys*: To complement existing Puget SoundCorps surveys
 - Not much interest in citizen surveys. Comment about how to report herring balls or evidence of forage fish to WDFW.
- *Sea star wasting disease surveys*:
 - Marine Science Center currently monitors one site near the reserve. May be of interest.
- *Compile and analyze trends from Christmas bird counts*: Olympic Peninsula Audubon and Admiralty Audubon offered to share their data and summarize trends.
- *Marine debris removal and plastics surveys*: to understand marine debris and toxics accumulations
 - Gull plastics ingestion study and a micro plastics study include sites within the reserve.
 - COASST also includes marine debris surveys – data is online
 - Puget SoundCorps regularly remove and document debris when they complete their forage fish beach spawning surveys

Monitoring and Research:

- *Data inventory & gap analysis*: Complete a literature review and gap analysis
 - Need more information on resource harvest & recreational fishing from WDFW
 - Need to know who is basing management decisions on what type of data
 - Additional strategic planning for the reserve program to understand how data is used in management
 - Ensure citizen science projects compliment, not duplicate other projects.
- *Water quality monitoring*:
 - Possible collaboration with Jefferson County
- *Disappearance of kelp on Dallas Bank, discuss potential causes, stressors, projects*:
 - Would like to hear from Helen Berry at a future meeting.
- *Multi-beam bathymetry and benthic habitat surveys*: Interested in bathymetric surveys, especially Dallas Bank

Actions

- Monthly boat surveys were a top interest of the committee. A sub-committee will be formed to keep discussing purpose, protocols, and logistics of citizen science projects. Suggested speaking with researchers and other experts.
- Data inventory and gap analysis was also a top priority. Committee suggested finding an intern or student.
- Committee would like to hear presentations from Helen Barry and Scott Pearson at future meetings.

3:55 p.m.

Next Steps

- Sub-committee will continue to discuss citizen science surveys and stewardship. Please email if you would like to be involved.

- Plan next meeting in about 3 months once grant funding is available, most likely at Cape George. Will send out a doodle poll to determine exact date and time.
- An all-hands Citizen Stewardship Committee meeting for all the Reserves will be scheduled in early 2016 near Seattle.

4:00 p.m. Adjourn

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