



## **Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee**

### **2015 ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Jan 1, 2015 – Dec 31, 2015

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[www.jeffersonmrc.org](http://www.jeffersonmrc.org)

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Northwest Straits Project: Jefferson Marine Resources Committee Operations & Projects

Task 1 Deliverable: 2015 Annual Report

**PugetSoundPartnership**

LEADING PUGET SOUND RECOVERY

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**Successes/Highlights of the Calendar Year**

- 1,254 volunteer hours for MRC projects
- Successful new rain gardens partnerships & interpretive signs
- Expansion of Port Townsend Voluntary No-Anchor Zone

**INTRODUCTION**

The Jefferson County MRC continues to emphasize on-the-ground projects and education/outreach on emerging marine resources issues. Long-standing projects have included work on Olympia oysters, Voluntary No-anchor Zones and shoreline landowner outreach.

In 2015, the Jefferson County MRC worked on a wide range of issues and projects including Voluntary No-anchor Zones, public outreach programs, interpretive signs for a shoreline restoration project at Fort Townsend State Park and installation of more rain gardens in the City of Port Townsend.

JCMRC received operating funds from U.S. EPA through the Northwest Straits Commission/Puget Sound Partnership. Project funding to assist with a shoreline landowner workshops was provided by Northwest Straits Foundation, which also provided funding to support citizen science monitoring and stakeholder engagement for the local Fort Townsend State Park nearshore restoration project.

**ADMINISTRATION, MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION**

**Meetings:** Monthly MRC meetings often included a guest speaker or special topic of interest as well as updates on the NW Straits Commission/Foundation, Puget Sound Partnership, MRC projects and updates from partners. All meetings are open to the public. Topics covered by guest speakers this year included Hood Canal Coordinating Council overview, Port of Port Townsend bio-char project, NW Straits Foundation update, WDFW Shellfish Management program, WDNR Aquatics Reserve program, effects of ocean acidification on marine plankton and carbon cycles and a Port Commissioner Candidates forum on marine issues.

The MRC participated in Puget Sound Partnership's Local Integrating Organization (LIO) meetings in order to contribute a marine water and nearshore focus to the process. We submitted three Near Term Action proposals to the Strait ERN and Hood Canal Coordinating Council LIOs. Representatives also attended semi-monthly Chumsortium meetings (a group of local government, tribal government and NGO's coordinated by

North Olympic Salmon Coalition that meets regularly to coordinate local salmon and restoration projects).

**Administration & Program Development:** MRC staff provided administrative support (grant reports; tracking budgets; and recording matching funds, in-kind support and volunteer time). Staff also managed contracts and prepared grant applications for MRC projects. The MRC executive committee met almost monthly to provide additional guidance to staff.

**MRC Website:** The JCMRC website [www.jeffersonmrc.org](http://www.jeffersonmrc.org) continues to provide information about programs and projects. Announcements of programs (MRC monthly meetings, shoreline landowner workshop), projects (Fort Townsend and eelgrass no-anchor zones), sidebars on new members and links to other articles of interest were included on the webpage.

**Other:** 1,254 volunteer hours (projects, meetings and trainings)

## **VOLUNTARY NO ANCHOR ZONES**

**Port Townsend Eelgrass No-anchor Zone Expansion:** With all permits in hand, new buoys were installed on September 4, 2015, a week before Wooden Boat Festival. DNR amended the existing Port Townsend buoy permits to include the new area. City of Port Townsend permits for the signs were also updated.



Updated informational brochures were distributed at the Festival. New signs were installed at three public sites, and three signs given to the Port of Port Townsend for them to install on their buildings. A half-page ad in the Port Townsend Leader in September 2015 announced the installation of the new buoys to the public.

**Outcome:** Voluntary no-anchor zones protect eelgrass beds from damage due to boat anchors. We are now protecting approximately 36 more acres of eelgrass beds. Target audience was reached through brochures distributed at the Wooden Boat Festival, a large ad in a local newspaper and new interpretive signs.

**No-anchor Zone Maintenance & Outreach:** DNR permits for Mystery Bay and Port Hadlock buoys were renewed and combined into one Right of Entry DNR permit in 2015 (expires May 31, 2020). The buoys are currently working well, so no maintenance work

was required this year. These buoys are in sheltered bays and stay in the water year-round.



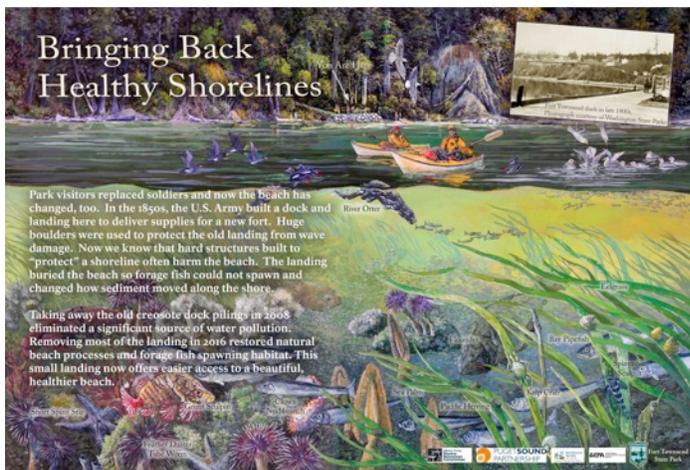
The Port Townsend seasonal buoys were all pulled for the winter in December 2015 by MRC members, with boat and skipper assistance from the Port of Port Townsend. Buoys were cleaned and stored, with small floats left to mark buoy locations, and put back in the water in spring 2016. Re-installation work in 2015 included a complete overhaul of hardware to replace worn parts and fix problems with twisting lines on all 6 existing buoys.

MRC members Nam Siu and Dale Moses added information notices to an on-line navigational mapping app called Active Captain, so boaters using this app are informed about the no-anchor zones and why it is important.

This year's photo-monitoring was conducted during the 2015 Wooden Boat Festival when a large number of visiting boats compete for mooring or anchoring space. The No-anchor Zone project report has more details.

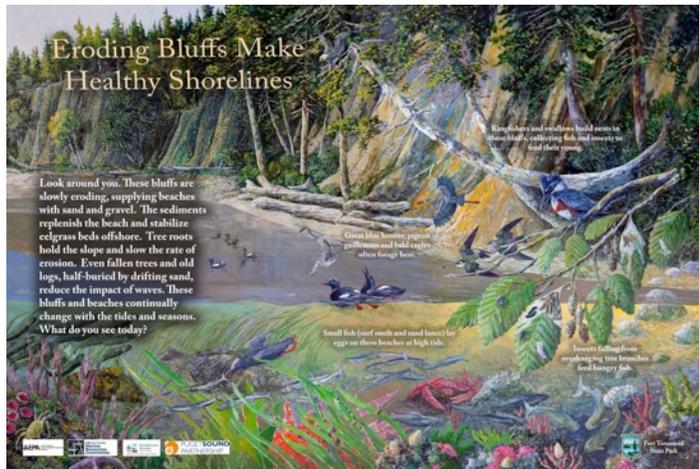
Outcome: One of the outcomes is increased number of boaters who know about these voluntary no-anchor zones, especially when the buoys are not there.

## **FORT TOWNSEND STATE PARK INTERPRETIVE SIGNS**



The MRC worked on interpretive signs for the Fort Townsend shoreline restoration project this year. Project construction was postponed until early fall 2016 and signs will be installed when construction is completed. One sign was funded by the Northwest Straits Commission grant and a second sign funded through the Northwest Straits Foundation. The final sign design and artwork was approved by the MRC in September 2015.

Final production will be completed in partnership with WA State Parks. The MRC also provided a project updates to the Friends of Fort Townsend State Park and local community members and volunteers. They also tested a visitor's survey that will be used in the summer of 2016.



**Outcome:** Artwork, design and clear messaging was developed for two beautiful interpretive signs that will educate the public about shoreline habitats and impacts of armoring. Installation will be completed in 2016.

## **RAIN GARDENS**

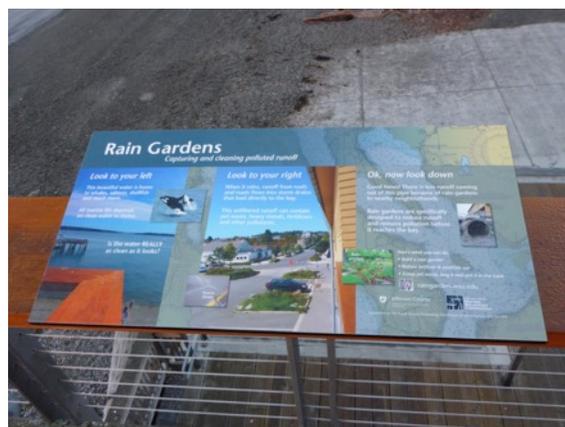
In 2015, new interpretive signs were installed at two rain gardens and on the Northwest Maritime Center (NWMC) balcony overlooking the outfall pipe into Port Townsend Bay.



Two new rain gardens had been installed along Garfield Street in Port Townsend in November 2014 (part of the FY2015 NWSC grant.) These rain gardens were placed in the City's Right of Way, but all parties, including adjacent landowners, agreed to defined roles and responsibilities (MRC, City of Port Townsend, landowner, and staff/volunteers from WSU Extension Master Gardeners and Beach Watchers programs). In 2015, monitoring and maintenance included checking for effectiveness,

replacing dead plants and finalizing monitoring protocols for intercepting surface flow in those installations.

In December 2015 a draft Assessment Prioritization Report for Bioretention Projects in east Jefferson County was completed, which identified high, medium and low priority rain garden project sites. This will guide site



and

selection for the MRC's 2016 rain garden projects.

Outcomes: Attractive signs help interpret the rain gardens for the public and make a clear connection between the outfall pipe on the beach and where that water comes from. We also strengthened partnership with City of Port Townsend public works and County water quality staff (JCPH) who want to expand this program. With our WSU Extension partner, we engaged community volunteers --WSU Beach Watchers and Master Gardener volunteers continued to help with weeding and mulching in 2015.

Requests for rain garden assistance have grown. For example, the Port of Port Townsend and WSU Extension installed another rain garden in same priority drainage area in May 2015 after seeing how well the Garfield Street rain gardens worked. The artwork and text for the Port's interpretive sign was based on the MRC signs at Garfield St.

### **CITIZEN SCIENCE: OLYMPIA OYSTERS, KELP & FORT TOWNSEND**



Olympia Oysters: In 2015, volunteers monitored the 2014 Discovery Bay Olympia oyster habitat enhancement project for seed set on the shells that were set out in 2014. With assistance from WDFW, protocols were developed for citizen science volunteers to begin annual data collection. Initial results are encouraging, but long-term data is needed to confirm the effectiveness of this approach. Volunteers also helped collect data from standardized shell strings provided by the Puget Sound Restoration Fund.

In preparation for 2016, MRC volunteers and WDFW staff also completed an initial site survey of potential test sites for a Quilcene Bay project this coming year.

Bull Kelp: MRC members joined other volunteers around the region to test protocols for monitoring bull kelp as part of a Northwest Straits regional project. The goal is to provide long-term information about changes to kelp beds in local waters. Following field testing and collaborative workshops held at the NW Maritime Center and in Bellingham,



they are now refining project objectives, strategies and protocols.

Fort Townsend: MRC and community volunteers continue to monitor for forage fish spawning activity at the proposed nearshore restoration site at Fort Townsend State Park. In 2015, volunteers collected data on beach slope, large woody debris, sediment types and forage fish spawning. The Northwest Straits Foundation provided initial funding support for the project. Starting in October 2015, the NW Straits Commission is providing funds to continue this citizen science monitoring work into 2016.

Outcomes: Engaged citizen scientists are collecting data and contributing to regional science programs.

## **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

The 2015 Education and Outreach Plan guided activities for 2015. Direct contacts: 638 people. Indirect contacts: difficult to measure, but reached by media ads, Rose Theatre ads, shore stewards news, email list serves, etc. as described below.

### **Presentations and Programs—**

1. Board of County Commissioners presentation (3 commissioners, Feb 2015, audience members not counted, but approximately 10)
2. Port Townsend City Council presentation April 20, 2015 (6 Council members, audience members not tallied, but approximately 15)
3. Annual Quilcene Community meeting brief presentation (Feb 2015, approximately 20 people)
4. Oil Spill Preparedness workshop with NW Straits Foundation (Jan. 2015, 20 people representing local Ports, Fire Districts, emergency management county and city agencies.)
5. Shoreline Landowners workshop (March 2015, 65 people. November 2015, 37 attendees)
6. SoundIQ presentation to Chumsortium (Feb 2015, approximately 8 people) Chumsortium includes representatives from local salmon groups, County public works, the Conservation District and the Jefferson Land Trust) and is also open to the public.
7. Friends of Fort Townsend State Park Annual Meeting (24 people, April 2015)
8. Citizen science monitoring trainings at Fort Townsend State Park (33 people, April & May)
9. WSU Extension Beach Naturalists Training (23 students, Apr 2015)
10. Jefferson Dept of Community Development Director and SMP Planner (2 people, August 2015)
11. Diggin' for Dinner clammer education program (56 people, May 2015) including water quality messages
12. Public/guests at MRC meetings (25 different individuals)

13. An educational booth at the 2015 Wooden Boat Festival on Sept 11-13. 242 conversations about marine issues during the 3-day festival
14. Conducted initial visitor surveys at Fort Townsend State Park (49 contacts, counted by volunteers) about shoreline armoring perceptions.

### Press Releases & Media Coverage

1. Article in the local newspaper featured the new rain gardens in Port Townsend (Jan 7, 2015)
2. Letter to the Editor published in the PT Leader (June 17, 2015) about sustainable and safe shellfish practices and thanking Diggin' for Dinner instructors.
3. KPTZ local community radio program June 8<sup>th</sup> about shellfish & Diggin' for Dinner event (radio program repeated several times).
4. Three theatre trailer ads at the Rose Theatre focusing on clean water, with different actions that people could take. Ads ran six times in the 30 minutes before each movie over a three-month period (Sept –Nov). Theatre has continued to run the ads during the 2015 holiday season.
5. Press releases for March & November Shoreline Landowner Workshops and May Diggin' for Dinner event in shore stewards email list (267) and other electronic lists.
6. Indirect contacts included placing a half-page ad in the Port Townsend Leader in September 2015 about the Voluntary No-Anchor Zones in Port Townsend, Port Hadlock and Mystery Bay (distribution 7,000 people)

Outcome: We hope these efforts have increased public understanding of marine issues and give people ideas about actions they can take to help improve the health of Puget Sound. With limited resources, we did not measure or evaluate how effective these outreach efforts were at actually changing behaviors.

*Two of the Rose Theatre Trailers:*

