



**Nisqually River Council
Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2014, 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Nisqually Tribe's Natural Resources Office**

CAC Members Present: *Fred Michelson, Karelina Resnick, Ed Kenney, Bob Smith, Marjorie Smith, Phyllis Farrell, Carl Rotter*

Guests: *David Thorpe, Lois Ward*

Staff Present: *Morgan Greene*

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm. There was a motion to approve August's meeting minutes. They were accepted as written, as was the agenda.

Marine Protection Areas in Puget Sound, Asia, the Caribbean and the South Pacific – Ed Kenney, CAC Member; Local diving enthusiast

Ed joined the CAC tonight to discuss the importance of Marine Protection Areas. As an enthusiastic diver himself, Ed has traveled the world to over 50 MAP's with varying levels of protection. He has found that MPAs having generous no take zones established with the advice of local fishermen and the support of shoreline communities have much greater success than all other types. He started by sharing several pictures of soft coral and anemone species from throughout Asia, the South Pacific and Puget Sound.

To start, it is important to understand the problem. Many marine animals are valued as food in different countries, including the sea urchins and sea cucumbers exported from Puget Sound. This market has encouraged overharvesting, leading to drastic population declines and habitat loss. Some changes have been made: in the San Juan Islands, for example, there is a no take zone for sea urchins and sea cucumbers.

To better illustrate the problem, Ed asked the group several questions:

- 1) *What percentage of the Nisqually River is protected right now?* Approximately 80%!
- 2) *What percentage of Puget Sound has this level of protection?* Less than 1%. This is what Ed would like to discuss tonight. Ideally, he'd like to see 10% of the Sound protected with no take zones.
- 3) *When Steelhead spawn in the Nisqually, how many babies from each redd make it down to the refuge?* Around 200—a number much higher than many other Puget Sound rivers!
- 4) *How much money does an acre of fully protected marine area produce?* Fisherman-supported, well-monitored no take MPA's worldwide produce over \$80,000 worth of fish and invertebrates per acre. The 27-acre Edmonds Underwater Park in Puget Sound contributes over \$2 million to the local economy.

For those who are interested in learning more about international, national and local marine protection areas, Ed shared several websites. The first, www.piscoweb.org highlights the international movement towards marine protection and the establishment of marine reserves. National marine reserves can be viewed by visiting www.marineprotectedareas.noaa.gov. To view local sites, please visit www.wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/mpa.

In Puget Sound, there are “Marine Preserves” and “Conservation Areas.” Marine preserves have very few regulations, and generally protect single species or seasons. Conservation areas have no take regulations for most species.

Through his travels, Ed has noticed several things about different levels of protection that work and don’t work. Here are a few examples:

- Different fish species respond at different times. Short-lived species respond quickly; long-lived species take much longer to respond. At Edmonds Underwater Park and Apo Island, 20 years of protection led to dramatic recovery results.
- The benefits of growing larger fish in no take areas flow into unprotected areas nearby.
- Community support is vital. In many areas, the government draws an outline on a map. Enforcement quickly becomes an issue.

For more context, Ed gave two examples. The first is the Edmonds Water Park. Here, the local community recognized marine habitats were in decline and overwhelmingly decided to establish a protected area. It is largely volunteer run, and has had great success. Whereas many areas in Puget Sound struggle with invasive species, volunteers in Edmonds quickly identify, report and remove any invasive species found. There is also a network of underwater trails, allowing beginners through advanced users to explore the area. Although it’s only 27 acres in size, it has made an enormous impact in the surrounding area. To Ed, the success highlights the importance of protected status along with continued active management and community engagement. To view a video on the construction of the Edmonds Underwater trail visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_dXlbOFsU8.

The second example is that of Apo Island, the true success story in Ed’s opinion. The surrounding reef was once one of the most important coral reef fisheries in the world. Yet fishermen noted declining fish populations and a dwindling economy. The cause was unsustainable fishing methods, including heavy use of dynamite. The result: overharvesting and extensive habitat destruction. Local fishermen were soon traveling great distances to capture any fish at all. After unsuccessful government intervention, a university professor began working with local fishermen. He showed them nearby protected reefs, and the fishermen were impressed by the large fish populations. They soon set 10% of their own coral reefs under no take protection and, within three years, saw enormous recovery. The positive results inspired Apo Island residents to set strict guidelines for the remainder of the island, and developed a marine guard consisting of local volunteers. Within 30 years, the region was almost fully recovered. Now, Apo Island has a thriving ecotourism economy, healthy coral reefs, and a younger generation dedicated to marine protection. Unfortunately, the marine reserve was destroyed by a typhoon in recent years; local residents, however, are working to set aside another area of the reef. They may protect up to 25% of the area! The video Ed showed is here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8oNhckPjFM.

The main reason Ed is speaking to the CAC is to brainstorm suggestions for increasing marine protection within the South Puget Sound region. Here are some of the difficulties:

- There is a lack of structure/habitat. There’s an old sewer line and a few sunken boats off the beach of Steilacoom. This might be a good place to protect, because there is a shoreline reserve on the other side of the ferry.
- Gaining full community support, especially that of fishermen. It is crucial to start by gaining this support.
- Defining the word “protection.” In some way or another, most of Puget Sound is “protected” but to varying degrees. Setting a standard that promote greater biomass, fish size and diversity it essential.

There are also several actions that need to be considered first. This includes a study to determine where the best potential no take marine protection areas are. Research is also needed on current policy regarding fishing methods. For example, are bottom trawlers still allowed?

Carl moves that Ed contact WDFW to determine the best point of contact for marine protection areas. He will report back to the CAC. The motion was approved. Karelina shared an article with Morgan recently regarding similar topics; she will share with the CAC tomorrow.

Finalize Agenda and Goals – All CAC Members

It is time to finalize an annual agenda, covering August 2014-July 2015. This annual agenda does not mean its rigid, it's just trying to create a roadmap for topics to be discussed over the next year.

There are a number of topics already discussed:

- 1) Adding recreational access to lands within the watershed – *Ed and Carl*
 - a. Goal: keep abreast of Nisqually State Park planning and implementation; identify at least 2 properties for increased or improved access development; lead hiking activities to the best places
 - b. Actions: Establish a timeframe.
- 2) Expand the CAC Membership – *All*
 - a. Goal: Get 6 new member applications this year. Start increasing youth participation and others already evolved in watershed activities
 - b. Actions: Fred will write a letter to be shared through Don with CAC history within 2 months; Morgan will send David a membership application.
- 3) Coordination with NREP, NSS, and NLT. – *Debbie, Phyllis and all*
 - a. Goals: Get involved with NREP, NSS, and after school programs; identify ways to assist and strengthen the existing programs.
 - b. Actions: Add Karelina to all future communications, please!
- 4) Citizen Conservation Certificate – *Lead member TBD*
 - a. Goal: finish draft certification pledges and implementation plan
 - b. History: develop a certification program for homeowners to prove they are sustainable. It could also include a small fee for membership. Additional information will go online as a part of the website. Steve is working on putting the past drafts together.
 - c. Actions: Morgan will go through the documents and find a questionnaire to pass along to the CAC to review. She'll forward it to Karelina first to verify that its correct information.
- 5) Bees & Neonicotinoids – *Fred and Bob*
 - a. Goal: Have all neonicotinoid pesticides banned in WA State until the EPA is certain about the sub lethal affects on bees and other pollinators.
 - b. Actions: Fred will write letters to Bud Hoover and the WA Dept of Ecology. The NRC will review it first.
- 6) Climate Change – *Led by Morgan Greene; assisted by CAC members on that committee (?)*
 - a. Goal: Finish the planning process; begin implementation in early 2015.
 - b. Actions: keep the CAC up-to-date with progress and potential ways to get involved.
- 7) Tribal representation at CAC – *Bob Smith*
 - a. Goal: Obtain an accepted application from a Nisqually Tribal member
 - b. Actions: Invite Grace Ann to join the CAC and send her an application form. Ask Grace if there is anyone else interested in joining.
- 8) Produce an Emeritus Board of past NRC representatives – *Karelina Resnick*
 - a. Goal: Formulate with the Chair, David Troutt, purpose and schedule for annual meeting.

- b. Actions: Karelina has another example; she will convert it to be applicable to us. For the next meeting, Karelina will provide a draft purpose.
 - i. Purpose: get political connections and maintain local expertise for retirees.
- 9) Formulate a Nisqually Youth Council – *Karelina Resnick*
 - a. Goal: Plan for students from different parts of the watershed to serve on their own council and foster good watershed behavior and ecology through selected student projects each year.
 - b. Actions: develop the framework for it. Have Sheila call or email Karelina about this. Research possibilities for school credits.
- 10) Provide comments to NRC for forwarding our thoughts on Coal Trains and Coal Export Facilities in WA State to elected officials. – *Brought to attention by Grace Ann Byrd*
 - a. Goals: If Grace is willing to take charge of this topic, she will be responsible for bringing information to the CAC. It could also play a role in where they are putting ports. Goals TBD.
 - b. Actions: Further research is needed before making specific actions.
- 11) Marine Protection Areas – *Ed Kenney*
 - a. Goals: TBD
 - b. Actions: TBD

These will be re-written and passed out to the CAC. The word-smithing should be done by email. Please reply! Morgan will send them out ASAP. The bottom-line information needed is what is important and who will take the lead. Perhaps the NRC has something to add? Is there a file on the history of it?

Emeritus Board – *Karelina; All CAC Members*

There was no time for this.

CAC Member Contact List – *Fred/Morgan*

Morgan is working to put this together. What information is the CAC willing to have shared? Fred would like name, phone number and email. Karelina also suggests city or town. Morgan will send out an email requesting this information; anybody is free to opt out of it. Bob's new email address is bobsmith@fairpoint.net.

Staff & Member Reports – *All*

Nothing at this time.

For the Good of the Order –

The Feast at the Reach is September 13th. It's the Annual NRNC fundraiser! Thursday is the Mashel River weed pull (September 11).

- Next CAC Meeting: Tuesday, October 13th, at NNRB #2, from 6:00-8:00 pm.
- Important Dates:
 - NRC Meeting, Friday September 19th, 9:00-12:00 at the Nisqually Weir. Meet at NNRB #1 for carpool.
 - The Nisqually Watershed Festival is on September 27th! Eatonville Salmon Fest is on October 18th!

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.