



**DRAYTON HARBOR SHELLFISH PROTECTION DISTRICT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MEETING SUMMARY

Date: July 21, 2004
Time: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Place: Marine Drive Harbormaster Meeting Room – Blaine

AGENDA

1.	4:00	Public Comment Period
2.	4:05	Review Agenda and June Meeting Summary
3.	4:10	Blaine Harbor Stormwater Monitoring Results – Hirsch Consulting Services
4.	4:40	Sea Grass Cottages Update – Russell Nelson
5.	5:00	Community Oyster Farm Update – Geoff Menzies
6.	5:15	Open House Debriefing – Discussion
7.	5:30	New Business
8.	5:55	Next Meeting Agenda

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Charlie Hawkins
Bob Williams
Bjorn Hrutfiord
Alan Birdsall
Jan Hansen
Bonnie Onyon

Others

Julie Hirsch – Hirsch Consulting Services
Sara Kinney – Nooksack Natural Resources
Scarlet Tang – Whatcom County Water Resources
Russell Nelson – City of Blaine
Mark Henderson – Ecology
Steve Banham – City of Blaine
Kati Johnson – Whatcom County Water Resources

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

- 7/21/04 Agenda
- 6/16/04 Issue For Approval meeting summary
- Stormwater Fecal Coliform Bacteria Sampling at Blaine Harbor June 2004 – Hirsch Consulting
- Community Oyster Farm Update 7/21/04 – Geoff Menzies

MEETING CONTENTS

Geoff Menzies was unable to attend the meeting. Charlie Hawkins led the meeting in his absence.



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1. Public Comment Period

Water Quality at Fairgrounds

Scarlet Tang provided an update from Beth Chisholm regarding the water quality at the fairgrounds in Lynden. The new fairgrounds manager has agreed to educate the 4-H participants and other community members about ways to improve the quality of runoff from the fairgrounds. All storm drains at the fairgrounds now have circular plaques that say the storm drain drains directly to a stream.

County Council Recognition

All advisory committee members were invited to attend the 7/27/04 County Council meeting to be recognized for their hard work to reopen the shellfish beds. One committee member noted that it would be a good opportunity for the advisory committee to thank the Council and other agencies for their support and would also be important for the advisory committee to be publicly recognized for their efforts. The meeting is at 7:00 p.m. at the County Courthouse in Bellingham.

Website Updates

Scarlet Tang noted that one of the projects Ami Stillings was working on before she left was to get quotes from advisory committee members about why they are involved in the DHSPD. These quotes would be put on the "Who Is the AC" page of the DHSPD website. Comments can be sent to Scarlet at stang@co.whatcom.wa.us or 322 N. Commercial St. Suite 110, Bellingham, WA 98225.

2. Review Agenda and Previous Meeting Summary

Members made no changes to the agenda. Members approved the 6/16/04 IFA meeting summary as final.

- *Action:* Kati Johnson will distribute the 6/16/04 Meeting Summary as final.

3. Blaine Harbor Stormwater Monitoring – Hirsch Consulting Services

Julie Hirsch gave a presentation of Blaine Harbor stormwater monitoring results. She distributed a handout of her PowerPoint presentation. The study was funded by Whatcom County shellfish funds and assisted by Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF).

Beginning in December 2003, the County and PSRF conducted stormwater monitoring in Blaine Harbor. The objective of the study was to determine whether there is a correlation between fecal coliform (FC) bacteria densities in stormwater runoff and FC densities at Port of Bellingham marine sampling stations by concurrent sampling during storm events. There were 13 roof and storm drains tested in the commercial portion of Blaine Harbor marina. The roof and storm drains were sampled during five storm events. Five marine sampling stations located around the commercial portion of the marina were tested. The marine



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stations were sampled during three of the five storm events. Bird counts were also conducted during sampling.

Fecal coliform counts ranged from 100 cfu/100 mL at the Harbor Café roof drain (station 30) to 6,200,000 cfu/100 mL at station 10, which drains the webhouse roof. Julie noted that cfu/day and cfu/minute were both used in the study. Cf/minute provides a more accurate representation of changes in flow before, during, and after a storm event than cfu/day.

The highest loading was found at stations 10 and 10a, which drain the webhouse roof, and is consistent with higher bird counts. Densities ranged from 27 cfu/100 mL at station D to 1200 cfu/100 mL at station E.

No correlation was found between FC stormwater loads and FC marine loads. The data were not sufficient to show a correlation.

Julie noted that rough calculations of combined loading estimates diluted to the estimated volume of the commercial marina and the entire marina at full depth and at the surface one-foot depth indicate that runoff from the drains sampled could account for more than half of the observed FC concentrations at marine stations during ebb tide storm events. These estimations assume that no FC die-off occurred and do not take into account circulation patterns or tidal fluctuations.

Bird counts were taken on days with a storm flow. Total bird counts ranged from 99 in December 2003 to 657 in April 2004. The bird counts were about one-third the numbers usually seen in the summer months. In addition, there are fewer cormorants and more Canadian geese in the winter and early spring than in the summer.

The highest bird counts were on the breakwater, where 78% of the total numbers of birds in the commercial area were noted. Thirty-five percent of the birds were in the southwest corner of the commercial marina. The buildings with the highest bird counts included the webhouse and the TM Protein warehouse.

Julie noted several recommendations:

- o Monitor efficacy of Port of Bellingham and Marine Resources Committee stormwater treatment pilot project. (For an update on the pilot project, see New Business).
- o Evaluate rooftop drains in commercial marina for stormwater treatment installation.
- o The Boundary Fish icemaker should be inspected to ensure the exclusion of birds and bird feces. The icemaker discharge should be modified to a closed system that discharges directly to marine waters.
- o Conduct further sampling around the breakwater where most of the birds are found.
- o Breakwater studies should delineate zone outside of the breakwater that is influenced by bird feces from it.
- o Characterize the seasonal distribution of birds in Blaine Harbor.
- o Because there are high FC levels during dry weather, future work should also include fecal coliform incubation, tidal washing, and sewage discharge from boaters.
- o Include Blaine Harbor in watershed-wide bacterial source tracking study.



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Several members had questions for Julie after her presentation. One member wondered who designed the study and why it included so few storm events. Julie noted that most studies are driven by economics. The plan for a study was submitted to the County, as the funding agency, to review the monitoring plans. The goal of the study was to get a range of storms. This is difficult due to tides, daylight hours, and the unpredictability of storms.

In response to the recommendation to characterize the seasonal distribution of birds in Blaine Harbor, one member noted that John Ballard at Fairhaven College has done some year-round counts and would possibly have information for Blaine Harbor.

Another member noted that that because the high FC levels are found in the commercial portion of the marina, recreational boaters are likely not disposing of their sewage into the water while at the marina. This member also noted since commercial boaters are under strict Coast Guard regulations, they are not likely the source of dry weather FC spikes, as suggested in the recommendations.

4. Sea Grass Cottages Update – Russell Nelson

Russell Nelson, Community Planner for the City of Blaine, provided an update on the sea grass cottage project for the Semiahmoo Spit. Russell provided some background information. In September 2003, Trillium Corporation submitted a permit to the City of Blaine for a 36-lot duplex subdivision on the Spit. Recently, Trillium changed its plans. The concept and proposal are the same as before, but the scope of the project is smaller and does not include marine property.

Russell noted that by the end of July 2004, there would be a new determination of the application and a new 30-day public review period would follow. The City of Blaine is rolling over previous public comments on earlier applications. The public comment period will close at the end of August and the City will make a SEPA determination. There will likely be public hearings this fall following the SEPA determination. The City will continue to receive public comments until the close of the public hearing, even after the SEPA determination. Russell noted that Trillium could hold as many community meetings and get their message out about the project as much as they want to.

The City has requested additional information from Trillium on subjects including stormwater management, birds, public access, views and future building. A lot of the requested information focuses on water quality—including shellfish—even though the plan does not include development in the water.

The Trillium property is currently zoned as MPR—marine planned recreation. Russell noted that the spit has a lower impervious surface maximum (40%) than the tip does and is reflective of the type of landmass. Russell noted that the City looks for the impervious surface of each project to be lower than 40%, even if other properties on the spit exceed this maximum level.



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One member wondered if there was anything citizens could do to keep Trillium from eventually developing the rest of the spit. Russell noted that there was little citizens could do because the City analyzes proposals on a project-by-project basis. He also noted that regulations could not be changed while a project is being presented. That is, a project is held to the regulations that were in place when the application was vested. The sea grass cottage project is one and a half years old.

Russell will update the advisory committee on the sea grass cottage project as necessary.

5. Community Oyster Farm Update – Geoff Menzies

Geoff was not able to attend the meeting. Scarlet Tang distributed a Community Oyster Farm Update from Geoff. As of 7/21/04, volunteers had harvested 620 dozen oysters from the one and one-half acre farm. Five hundred dozen oysters had been sold to a BC buyer for repackaging and shipment to China. Boundary Fish is processing and refrigerating the oysters before they are picked up and sent to market. They are being sold as single oysters in the shell and are not being shucked.

The harvest of oysters planted at this site in 2001 will likely continue through June 2005. The BC buyer and Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF) are entering into an agreement to provide exclusive rights to all the oysters that make the Jumbo grade through June 2005. About 60% of the harvest (9,000 dozen) should meet the Jumbo grade, with a gross value of over \$40,000. Additional sales valued at \$15,000 from medium and large oysters are expected. These smaller oysters will be split between direct sales to the local community starting this fall and sales to the BC buyer. The BC buyer will provide an upfront partial payment to PSRF this fall. Depending on actual profit margins, the revenue will be used to pay for harvest and processing costs and possible reseeding efforts next spring and on-the-ground projects in DH.

PSRF has longer term plans to continue its involvement with community oyster farming and pollution control projects in Drayton Harbor. In particular, PSRF would like to see oyster revenue go towards pollution control efforts and studies to help achieve an Approved classification. PSRF hopes to plant oyster seed on about three acres per year for the next three years, beginning in April 2005. One and one-half million oyster seeds would be planted with an expected 25% survival rate.

It was also noted that Geoff was looking for an oyster scow to assist with harvest and transport of oysters from the beds to the Blaine docks. Contact Geoff with any leads.

6. Open House Debriefing

Members discussed the 6/19/04 Open House. The weather was sunny and warm; there were a lot of oysters and a lot of people attended. One member noted that the Plover tours during harvesting were a great public education opportunity.

One member noted that more people came for lunch than expected and it would have been



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better to have more funding for more food. Members discussed spending more money on more food next year or providing cheaper food to accompany the oysters such as coleslaw. One member wondered if drinks should be sold next year, to provide revenue. Another member noted that the Health Department might have had a problem with how the food was handled indoors and suggested being in compliance with Health Department regulations next year. One member also suggested verifying that people handling the food have a current food handler's permit.

One member noted that some attendees wondered if the oysters were for sale and suggested having some for sale next year. One member noted that Cost Cutter has a successful lobster fest and could possibly have an oyster fest. Geoff will meet with people at Cost Cutter to discuss the possibility of an oyster fest.

Members discussed the time of year to hold the open house and agreed that summer was best, weather-wise, for a successful outdoor event. One member wondered if the open house could be timed to run concurrently with another citywide event. Another member noted that timing the open house with another event would depend on what kind of oysters would be wanted for the open house.

Members discussed ideas of having a larger open house, possibly sponsored by the Port. The AC would need to submit a proposal for sponsorship to the Port. There would still be time to submit a proposal for 2006. One member noted that more merchants would likely become involved in the open house if it were a larger event. Members also noted that a larger space for the event would be necessary, especially if the event is larger. There were some problems this year with the amount of garbage produced.

Members discussed the idea of forming an open house subcommittee to work exclusively on planning next year's open house. Charlie, Bob, and Jan volunteered for an open house subcommittee. This topic will be discussed further at the August AC meeting.

7. New Business

Port/MRC Planters

Water quality numbers from the stormwater treatment planters in Blaine Harbor had been submitted to Julie, but she had not analyzed them at the time of the meeting. Alan Birdsall noted that three of the five planters did not look healthy, possibly due to not being watered regularly. The other two planters looked OK.

8. Next Meeting Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2004. Members identified one topic for the August meeting:

- o Discussion of an open house subcommittee to plan next year's open house.