



**DRAYTON HARBOR SHELLFISH PROTECTION DISTRICT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**MEETING SUMMARY**

Date: April 16, 2003  
Time: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Blaine Harbor Meeting Room, Marine Drive

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**AGENDA**

1.	4:00	Public Comment Period
2.	4:05	Review Agenda and March Meeting Summary
3.	4:10	Presentation and Discussion on Blaine Harbor Water Quality by Julie Hirsch
4.	5:10	Committee Chairmanship
5.	5:25	Special Projects Updates- Geoff Menzies and Ami Stillings <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Peace Portal Dye Test</li><li>- Blaine Harbor Circulation Studies</li><li>- DOH Monitoring</li><li>- Grants</li><li>- CD Stream Team- Dakota Creek</li><li>- Fate and Transport Work</li><li>- MRC Shellfish Project</li></ul>
6.	5:55	New Business / Next Meeting's Agenda

**MEETING ATTENDANCE**

Committee Members

Janet Hansen  
Geoff Menzies  
Bjorn Hrutfiord  
Charlie Hawkins  
Bob Williams  
Alan Birdsall – Port of Bellingham

Public

Hilary Culverwell – Puget Sound Action Team (PSAT)  
Ami Stillings – Water Resources  
Courtney Sterkel – Anvil Corporation  
Sandy Peterson – City of Blaine (COB)  
Sharon Roy – Whatcom County Council  
Julie Hirsch – Hirsch Consulting

**DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED**

- 4/16/03 Drayton Harbor (DH) Shellfish Protection District Advisory Committee (AC) Meeting Agenda
- 3/19/03 IFA DH Shellfish Protection District AC Meeting Summary
- Summary of Marine Water Data through January 2003
- 2004 Centennial Grant Application – Part 2
- Port of Bellingham (POB); DH Water Quality Monitoring Summary for 2002

**MEETING CONTENTS**

1. Public Comment Period

One AC member asked if the committee has discussed the proposed Seagrass cottage development and if they agreed on a committee position in relation to this issue. Geoff



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Menzies mentioned that there is a great deal of background information needed in order to develop recommendations on behalf of the committee.

One AC member suggested that this item be added to the agenda.

- *Action:* Add time in the New Business agenda item to discuss the proposed Seagrass cottage development.

### 2. Review Agenda and Previous Meeting Summary

#### Review Agenda

The AC reviewed the agenda and one member suggested adding an update on Geoff's presentation to the Stillaguamish Water District.

- *Action:* Add Stillaguamish Water District Presentation update to agenda item 5, Special Projects Updates.

#### Review Meeting Summary

AC members reviewed the 3/19/03 IFA summary but did not suggest revisions.

- *Action:* Distribute the 3/19/03 AC summary as Final.

### 3. Blaine Harbor Water Quality

Julie Hirsch has been contracted by POB to monitor the water quality in the Blaine Marina area to help identify the source of fecal coliform (FC) contamination and track any changes in FC levels because of water quality improvement efforts. Julie collected the standard FC samples and conducted bird, seal, and boat counts in the marina. A summary of the water quality results for 2002 was presented to AC members.

Julie conducted an in-depth analysis of sites within the commercial portion of the marina and found all stations exceeding the FC limits, concluding that the 2001 repairs to Blaine's sewage system have not improved water quality in the marina. She also concluded from the geometric means that the source of contamination is not coming from the recreational moorage. Low FC levels in Semiahmoo Bay indicate this is also an unlikely source.

Most of the high FC counts occurred during the late and dry summer months and late fall and winter months, with the peak FC count recorded in January 2002. Julie conducted a statistical analysis to test the relationship between high FC counts and rainy days that indicated a correlation between high FC levels and 24-hour rain events in four sampling stations in the commercial portion of the marina.

One AC member wondered if the increased boating activity during the summer was considered. There are a greater number of visitor boaters and possibly changes in the fish processing in the marina but the number of live-boards remains the same throughout the year.



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Another AC member asked if there is any data on pump-out station usage during the summer compared to the rest of the year. Geoff reported that there is data for both marinas and for 2001 it shows:

- Higher usage per live-aboard vessel in the Blaine Marina compared to the Semiahmoo Marina
- Seasonal trend in the Semiahmoo Marina, which more accurately reflects, expected increased usage by visiting boaters during the summer months. Given the easy access of the Semiahmoo Marina pump out station to visiting boaters, it is not surprising that this marina experiences significant increases during the summer months.

Julie noted that samples indicated no clear relationship between the bird population and FC levels and added that more data will be required to determine if birds may be significantly contributing to the high FC levels.

Julie recommended the following action items to improve the water quality in the Blaine Marina and focus on eliminating the most significant sources of FC:

- Continue regular monthly sampling
- Discontinue sampling Semiahmoo Bay stations
- Sample discharges from drainage pipes and runoff from fish processors docks during scheduled sampling events (i.e, rain events, late dry summer months)
- Monitor effect of new breakwater
- Install bird deterring devices in areas where large numbers of birds habitat
- Continue working with live-aboards regarding proper pump out procedures

One AC member asked if these were random samples. Julie reported they were random samples, which were collected on the same days DOH collected samples so that the two readings are comparable.

#### 4. Committee Chairmanship

Geoff informed AC members that the by-laws restrict the committee chair to no more than three consecutive terms. Geoff also mentioned that the by-laws state that the AC can move to change this restriction if necessary.

Geoff has served as the committee's chair since January 2000 and his term is up. However, he agreed to continue acting as the chair if AC members would like him to.

- *Action:* AC members moved and seconded the motion to remove the 3-year term limitation from the committee's by-laws and instead hold yearly elections every January.

Several AC members felt that Geoff should continue as the committee chair because his contacts and background knowledge related to DH water issues are beneficial to the AC. Geoff abstained from the vote for committee chair.



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- *Action:* AC members re-elected Geoff Menzies as committee chair and Charlie Hawkins as vice-chair.

5. Special Projects Updates

*Peace Portal Dye Test*

Geoff reported that he recently received the final lab results of the dye tests that were conducted on storm drains along Peace Portal Drive.

Tracer dye was placed in ten manholes in central Blaine in the area drained by two storm drains (site 2 and 3 Community Shoreline sampling program). Charcoal packets were placed in 3 storm drains and in marine waters near POB station E. They were collected and replaced seven times during the study from 2 weeks prior to and 2 weeks after dye was put in sewer manholes. The samples were sent to DOH for visual analysis and to Ozark Underground laboratory for quantitative analysis.

DOH did not see any fluorescence in the visual analysis performed on the charcoal packet samples. Ozark detected traces of fluorescent material at storm drains 2 and 3 but not at levels that were significantly higher than background levels. Based on these results, none of the tracer dye that was placed in the sanitary sewer manholes was recovered in any of the sites.

These results confirmed there is no cross-contamination between the sanitary sewer system along Peace Portal and the two storm drains with the greatest FC loading to marine waters. Geoff mentioned that this is the first formal documentation that FC levels in storm water discharging to Drayton Harbor are not of human origin, which is significant to the shellfish beds. He also expressed an interest in duplicating this study in the future in other areas of Blaine, where there may be suspicion of leaks in the Sanitary Sewer system.

Sharon Roy asked if these results would be presented to either the COB or the Whatcom County Council and Geoff agreed to present this information to the council after the final report has been completed; the report is scheduled for completion by the beginning of May 2003.

One AC member wondered if sewer lines have been pressure tested to identify any leakages. The City of Blaine pressure tests the underwater force main on an annual basis. The pressure test for 2003 has been performed and the line passed.

*DOH Monitoring*

With funding from the Puget Sound Restoration Fund, sampling at DOH sites in Drayton Harbor will be able to be conducted on a monthly basis until December 2003. If FC levels are below the state regulations, the shellfish beds may be reopened. Ami reminded AC members that one peak sample could negate these chances.



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### *Conservation District Stream Team*

Geoff reported that George Boggs of the Whatcom Conservation District has agreed to incorporate the DH area into the water quality improvement efforts of the Stream Team. Funding for this effort would come from a Centennial Grant.

### *MRC Shellfish Project*

Ami informed the committee that the Whatcom MRC has received funding from the Northwest Straits Commission to conduct a shellfish project within the Blaine Marina. The project will focus on nuisance species in the marina area, develop strategies for dealing with the problem(s), and conduct a pilot study of the selected best management practice(s) to determine its effectiveness in improving water quality within the marina.

### *Drayton Harbor 319 Grant Application*

Ami distributed the project summary portion of the 2004 Water Quality Financial Assistance Application for the DH area submitted by Whatcom County Water Resources and WSU. The project will study fate and transport of fecal coliform bacteria in DH and will involve additional freshwater and marine sampling, study of FC survivability in marine waters, as well as circulation and fate and transport work.

The application is going through the final stages of the application process. Whether the project will be funded or not should be known by early summer.

### *Stillaguamish Water District Presentation*

Hilary Culverwell reported that Geoff's presentation to the Stillaguamish Watershed members was successful and may have given them ideas for improving their water quality. The group is similar to the AC and the group mentioned to Hilary that they were interested in possibly coordinating with the AC.

## 6. New Business / Next Meeting's Agenda

Ami mentioned volunteers are needed to help with the displays for Shuckin on the Spit, scheduled for 5/3/03. Tickets can be purchased for \$20. Geoff mentioned that this could be the last year for the event, depending on how many people attend.

### *Seagrass Cottage Development*

One AC member suggested that the AC develop a position regarding the proposed Seagrass development and present it to the County and City Council.

One AC member suggested someone from Department of Ecology (DOE) talk to the City and County Councils about the impact to roads, shoreline, and the water quality that would result from the development. One AC member reminded the committee that the presentation should show the councils that the AC is most concerned with the welfare of the shellfish beds since that is the goal of this group.

- *Action:* Hilary will follow up with and obtain a comment from DOE about the proposed cottage development.



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Several AC members expressed the need to be educated on all related issues of the proposal before making any recommendations.

- *Action:* Hilary and Geoff will compile a list of key people to possibly give a presentation to the AC regarding the Seagrass cottage development.

Next Meeting's Agenda

- Seagrass Cottage Development Presentation

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