



**DRAYTON HARBOR SHELLFISH PROTECTION DISTRICT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**MEETING SUMMARY**

Date: March 17, 2004  
Time: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Marine Drive Harbormaster Meeting Room – Blaine

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**AGENDA**

1.	4:00	Public Comment Period
2.	4:05	Review Agenda and February Meeting Summary
3.	4:10	MRC Update in Blaine Harbor (Erika Stroebel – Whatcom County Water Resources)
4.	4:30	June Open House Update and Discussion
5.	4:45	Seagrass Cottage Update (Russell Nelson)
6.	5:00	Shellfish Protection District Dedicated Funding Options (Geoff Menzies)
7.	5:10	May 2000 Status Report Plan: Key elements that need to be implemented in order to achieve “Approved” status – Discussion
8.	5:50	New Business
9.	5:55	Next Meeting’s Agenda

**MEETING ATTENDANCE**

Committee Members

Geoff Menzies  
Bob Williams  
Kathy Cullen

Others

Steven Banham – City of Blaine Public Works  
Scarlet Tang – Whatcom County Water Resources  
Sara Kinney – Nooksack Natural Resources  
Ken Carrasco – WSU Extension  
Meg Olson – The Northern Light  
Kati Johnson – Whatcom County Water Resources

**DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED**

- 03/17/04 Agenda
- MRC Project Brief: Blaine Harbor Marina Stormwater Planters
- Drayton Harbor Water Quality table Nov. 99 to Feb 23, 2004
- Graphs of fecal coliform levels Jan. 96 to Jan. 04 (Stations 4, 6, and 8)

**MEETING CONTENTS**

1. Public Comment Period  
There was no public comment.
2. Review Agenda and Previous Meeting Summary



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The Agenda was approved as written. The 2/18/04 Meeting Summary was approved after a few small corrections:

- Add Kathy Cullen and Bonnie Onyon to list of Committee Members in attendance;
- Agenda item 6, page 7: change “Whatcom County Flood Fee” to “Whatcom County Flood Tax”.
- *Action:* Kati Johnson will distribute the 2/18/04 Meeting Summary as final after two corrections.

### 3. MRC Update in Blaine Harbor

Scarlet Tang provided an update on Marine Resources Committee (MRC) activities in the Blaine Harbor Marina. Erika Stroebel, MRC coordinator for Whatcom County, was unable to attend the meeting. The Port of Bellingham is a partner of and funding source for MRC activities in the Blaine Harbor Marina

The revised loading model is complete and indicates that birds are one of the bigger contributors to elevated fecal levels in Blaine Harbor. Efforts to discourage birds from congregating are focusing on the breakwater and web house. The MRC is working on two pilot projects in the commercial part of the marina to address this issue: bird harassment devices and stormwater planters. Wire bird harassment devices called spiders will be installed on the breakwater to discourage birds from landing. Only part of the breakwater will have spiders because there is concern the birds may instead congregate on nearby pilings that are near shellfish beds and adversely affect the water quality there. The spiders are expected to be installed by the end of April.

The second project involves stormwater planters to capture rainwater draining from the web house roof. These portable planters are designed to filter the water for fecal coliform and other pollutants before the runoff drains into the marina waters. Most birds are on the south side of the roof that has five downspouts, so there will be five planters. Scarlet distributed a draft project brief for the stormwater planters. The planters are expected to be installed in April.

Deleted:

There is funding available for continued water quality monitoring before and after these two projects are implemented. Steve Banham noted that he would be interested in being involved with the stormwater planters but wants to see evidence that they work as claimed.

### 4. June Open House Update and Discussion

As identified at the last meeting, Sara Kinney, Janet Hansen, Scarlet Tang, and Geoff Menzies met to discuss the planning of the Open House. Bob Williams was unable to attend. The group agreed on three elements for the Open House:

1. The Open House is scheduled for Saturday, June 5 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The reservation for the use of the conference room needs to be confirmed with

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the Port. It was noted that ReSources is holding their Environmental Heroes banquet on the evening of June 5.

2. Geoff has received a tentative agreement from the Resort Semiahmoo to host a celebration lunch for those involved in the Community Oyster Project from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It is anticipated that the lunch would include 100 to 150 people.
3. The group selected several entities, based on past participation, and several possible participants, to provide displays for the Open House. The specifics of the displays would be determined as work continues but would showcase an entity's most recent accomplishments in the Drayton Harbor watershed. The list includes:
  - Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District Advisory Committee
  - Marine Resources Committee
  - Puget Sound Restoration Fund Community Oyster Farm
  - Port of Bellingham
  - Whatcom County Health and Human Services
  - Whatcom Land Trust
  - Whatcom County Water Resources
  - State Department of Health Shellfish Division
  - Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association
  - City of Blaine
  - Lummi Nation Shellfish Hatchery
  - Whatcom Conservation District

Possible participants include:

- Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team
  - Nooksack Tribe
  - WSU/UW Sea Grant
  - Shared Waters Roundtable
  - Whatcom County Planning and Development Services
  - 20/20 Engineering (or other low-impact development agency)
  - Farm Friends
- *Action:* Geoff Menzies will be in contact with organizations to confirm their participation in the Open House.

Bob Williams was selected by the group to be in charge of purchasing food for the Open House. It was noted that the City of Blaine Chamber of Commerce and Puget Sound Restoration Fund would be providing funds for this portion of the event.

Some members noted that people throughout the watershed should be informed of the upcoming Open House and encouraged to participate. In the past, attendance has been from the area immediately surrounding Drayton Harbor. Members suggested reaching small hobby farmers through the Whatcom Conservation District newsletter.

The next steps in planning the Open House include updating displays, creating and distributing a poster and putting information in The Northern Light newspaper.



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It was noted that there would not be a "Shuckin' on the Spit" this year.

### 5. Seagrass Cottage Update

Russell Nelson was not at the meeting to provide an update on the Seagrass Cottage project, but Geoff spoke with him over the phone before the meeting. The City of Blaine is going back and forth with the developer and consultant to identify where there are gaps and weaknesses in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The consultant is looking at the old EIS and public comment. It was noted that the gap analysis could be a drawn-out affair.

Once the EIS is completed, the consultant would present it to the City, who would make a SEPA determination. The Public Comment period would follow the City's SEPA determination. The main points of concern, as presented by the DHAC include: stormwater quality and management, wildlife habitat, traffic, and shoreline access.

One member wondered how the EPA and other state and federal agencies are involved in this process. These agencies can comment on the EIS during the public comment period. The City looks at permits related to EPA and other regulations.

- *Action:* Geoff Menzies will ask Russell Nelson to come to a DHSPDAC meeting and provide more information on the Seagrass Cottage project.

### 6. Shellfish Protection District Dedicated Funding Options

At the February meeting, Geoff distributed a handout summarizing dedicated funding the Stillaguamish Clean Water District uses under RCW 90.72 (shellfish protection districts) and RCW 36.89 (stormwater district). The shellfish protection district legislation allows communities to generate revenue to provide services for people in the watershed to clean up the creeks and harbor. Geoff talked with Max Albert, Stillaguamish Clean Water District, to obtain more information about dedicated funding.

Geoff noted that there had been a funding source in Snohomish County prior to the establishment of the clean water district, but results on the ground were not seen. Recently, funds have been reallocated to see results on the ground. By ordinance, 33% of the funds generated go to the Snohomish Conservation District; 60% of funds go to the Snohomish County Public Works Department; and 7% of funds (about \$75,000 a year) are administered by the County for on-the-ground projects. These projects come before the SPD Advisory Committee for approval. Citizens provide ideas for projects since it is the citizens who pay the taxes to fund the projects. Snohomish County has also hired a watershed steward to act as a liaison between the County and the Advisory Committee.

Geoff noted that Max's advice to the Drayton Harbor AC is to limit the taxing authority to the shellfish protection district legislation to keep things simple. He also noted that there were numerous public meetings initially to build community support for creating a special tax to finance the Clean Water District. Max was not in his current position when the taxing structure was established.

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At the February meeting, it was suggested to use County Flood Tax funds to fund projects in the Drayton Harbor watershed. Geoff has been unable to get in contact with Bruce Roll, Whatcom County Water Resources Division Manager to discuss the prospect. One member noted that it would be difficult to secure funds from the Flood Tax for projects in the DH watershed because the funds are going almost entirely to flood projects. The WRIA 1 project is operated on funds remaining from previous years' budgets. One could argue that funds collected in the Drayton Harbor watershed could go to projects here because they are water-related.

- *Action:* Geoff Menzies will attempt to reach Bruce Roll to discuss using the Whatcom County Flood Tax funds for projects in the Drayton Harbor watershed.

Geoff noted the next steps for the AC to take toward establishing a dedicated funding source:

1. Become familiar with the May 2000 Plan (adopted by the County) for elements not yet implemented and prioritize those elements;
2. Attach dollar amounts where possible;
3. Update the May 2000 Plan with funding information and reports from government agencies;
4. Write a draft ordinance (with help from County Council);
5. Present the draft ordinance to County Council and build support with County Council's Natural Resources Committee.

One member noted that it would be helpful to have a summary of the next steps the committee could take and why funding is needed for certain elements. Another member noted that it would also be motivating to know the consequences of not obtaining funding.

Geoff noted three areas of the May 2000 Plan where funding is needed: water quality monitoring, hobby farms, and on-site-sewage systems. Obtaining a dedicated funding source may take six months or longer. The goal of the AC is for all stations to meet the standards in wet and dry weather and achieve an "Approved" status.

### Water Quality in Drayton Harbor

On March 17, Geoff spoke with Don Lennartson, DOH, about the water quality in Drayton Harbor. If there were no spikes in fecal coliform levels during dry weather for the next month or so, we would see a "Conditionally Approved" classification in Drayton Harbor. Without the wet weather data, stations 3, 4, 5, 6, and 12 currently meet the standards. Stations 8 and 15 are still having problems.

Geoff distributed water quality data through February 23 and graphs of stations 4, 6, and 8 showing fecal coliform levels from January 1996 to the end of January 2004. New columns were added to the water quality chart. One column notes the tidal condition at the time of the sampling. The other new column notes if there was a sewage treatment plant upset during sampling.



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Geoff noted that there were high numbers for Stations 8 and 15 on February 3, 2004, when there was some rain in the days before the sampling. Stations 4, 8, and 15 had high numbers on February 23, 2004, when there was no rain in the days before the sampling. Station 8 is still not in good shape. According to dye studies and circulation studies, Station 8 has no major influence in the overall water quality of Drayton Harbor. It is, however, still a concern.

Geoff also noted that Station 8 has moved over time, which could explain the higher numbers seen more recently. There also has been a lot of work in the past year at the entrance of the harbor, near Station 8.

Upon reclassification, a sanitary line would be drawn in DH to identify the "Conditionally Approved" areas. The line must be near DOH monitoring stations. Areas outside this line would be designated "Unclassified". It is likely that Stations 3, 4, 5, 6, and 12 will be within the upgraded area.

Outside of the spit, there are overlapping closure zones associated with the outfall proximity to both marinas and the wastewater treatment plant outfall. No changes in classification in this area are expected until changes are made to plant operations or to the outfall on the outside of the spit.

Geoff noted that DOH will not be conducting another shoreline inventory but will update the last survey and information from the Advisory Committee. It was noted that Whatcom County Water Resources has gone through all the improvements and projects since 1995 and compiled them into a 40-page document. This document was submitted to DOH and will be on the Water Resources website soon.

Geoff reminded the committee that though there may be an upgrade to "Conditionally Approved" status, problems still remain with wet weather events that compromise tribal and commercial shellfish harvesting. The AC will not have achieved its ultimate goal until Drayton Harbor is upgraded to "Approved".

### 7. May 2000 Status Report Plan

There were not enough committee members for a quorum so the discussion of identifying key elements to be implemented in order to achieve "Approved" status was postponed. This topic will be the focus of the next meeting.

- *Action:* Geoff Menzies will e-mail committee members that the next meeting will focus on the May 2000 Status Report Plan.

### 8. New Business

#### Sewage Treatment Plan Update

Steve Banham, City of Blaine Public Works, provided an update on the new sewage treatment plant. An ad will be placed in the 3/21/04 newspaper advertising for engineering



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services to do interim improvement plant studies at the existing treatment plant.

Steve noted that Public Works has 90 days to submit its General Sewer Plan once it receives the go-ahead from the Port. The Port feels the industrial area is a better place for the treatment plant (as opposed to the Milhollin Drive locations discussed at the 2/18/04 Drayton Harbor meeting). There are several options being considered in the area of the southwest end of Marine Drive that are planned for industrial development.

The Port's concerns with placement of the sewage treatment plant are that it not disturb the current industries and that it facilitate the area's future use. Steve noted that the area would probably be zoned for mixed use, eventually. He noted that there is a hotel planned for Milhollin Drive and that the treatment plant options do not impede on the hotel and community plans.

Steve noted that the outfall from a new sewage treatment plant would be of high enough quality to shrink the closure area to just around the outfall. Permitting for a new outfall would take a long time and might hold up construction. Repairs to the outfall are on track. Permits have been drafted and will go to agencies.

9. Next Meeting Agenda

The next meeting, on April 21, 2004 will focus on identifying key elements of the May 2000 Status Report Plan that need to be implemented in order to achieve "Approved" status in Drayton Harbor.