



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative



Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee

Marine Resources Summit Summary Report

Boathouse Center
Bellingham, Washington
May 22, 2001

Prepared by





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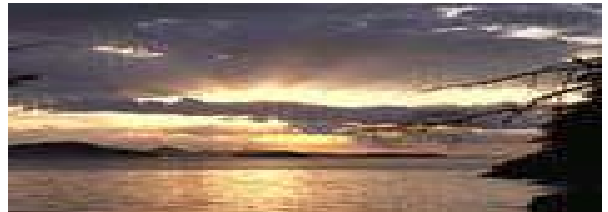
NORTHWEST STRAITS
NORTH OCEANIC CENTER

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Whatcom County Marine Resource Committee (WCMRC) is one of seven county-level organizations established under the congressionally authorized Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative. Each MRC is charged with encouraging strong local involvement in addressing local marine issues. The WCMRC is comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds and interests representing a wide range of perspectives, including city and county government, tribal, conservation, business, scientific and recreation.

The purpose of the WCMRC Summit was to identify and describe the various organizations that are working on marine resource protection in Whatcom County, as well as to explore opportunities for partnering and collaboration. Additional goals were to identify priority issues and specific action items to guide the WCMRC in developing its future direction and role in marine resource protection.



Whatcom sunset over Lummi Island

The WCMRC organized the summit to maximize participants' opportunities to learn about the breadth of marine resource protection activities and the organizations involved. At the same time, the sessions were organized to allow participants the opportunity to feedback on the ways in which the committee can most effectively implement future activities. The one-day summit began with a keynote address summarizing the state of the Northwest Straits and the reasons for environmental decline, followed by two discussion panels to identify and explore the major issues confronting marine resource protection. The afternoon session included three breakout groups where participants engaged in facilitated discussions to detail and prioritize action items in response to issues raised by the morning panels. The summit concluded with a group discussion of the summary points from each breakout group.

Major Outcomes

From those most involved in marine resource protection, the summit produced a sense of direction for the WCMRC, under the broad issue categories of Habitat Restoration and Protection, Outreach and Education, and Research and Monitoring, under which several specific action items and priority next steps were identified.

Direction for WMRC

The Summit demonstrated that marine resource protection activities in Whatcom County are dynamic and diverse. Restoration, enhancement, protection, and conservation projects are already happening from the upper watershed, to the estuary, to the deep marine environment. Overwhelmingly, summit participants voiced a need for an overall organizing force that will focus

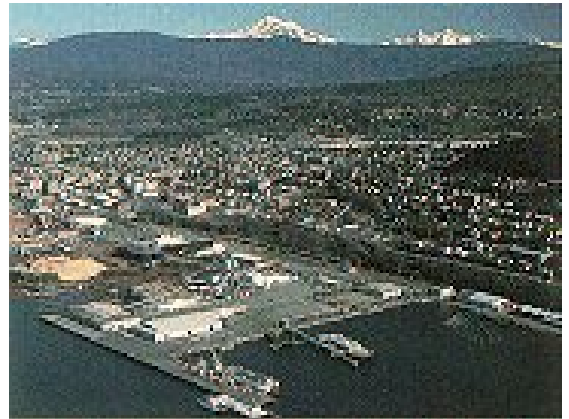


on the bigger picture of funding, research needs, outreach, education, and the balance between the environmental needs and the projects that address them. Participants encouraged the WCMRC to develop a role that brings the right mix of projects, participants and funding together in partnerships. Participants consistently used were terms such as “clearinghouse”, “coordinator”, “neutral”, “partner,” and “data broker” to describe the gap they believe exists in marine resource protection and restoration.

The summit discussions identified three main issue areas that are priority concerns:

- Research and Monitoring
- Outreach and Education
- Habitat Restoration and Protection

Again, major themes for each of these issue areas were consistent for summit participants; the WCMRC should be in the position of defining the need and creating the environment in which specific actions, in each of the three issue areas, can be initiated by individual organizations or with the MCMRC as a participating partner where possible and appropriate. A notable exception is in the area of outreach and education. Participants suggested that this area was ripe with opportunity, that the WCMRC may be well suited to undertake some outreach and education projects depending on the committee’s the abilities and resources, and that the WCMRC consider its potential to fill this need. The WCMRC’s ability to implement any programs in the areas emphasized in the Summit will be dependent on levels of staffing and funding available.



Whatcom County’s shoreline is important to both marine and human habitat

Specific Action Items

The breakout groups identified specific actions that could be of benefit to the overall goals of marine protection and to individual programs and projects. These action items are recommendations from summit participants that believed could focus WCMRC activities, but are likely to require a longer-range plan. They are by issue area:

Research and Monitoring

- Develop and facilitate strategic partnerships around specific problem areas such as:
- Monitoring
- Funding
- Trans-border cooperation
- Reporting
- Develop and promote a citizen monitoring program
- Develop an annual report of the state of the resource



Outreach and Education

- Identify and research alternative funding sources for “non-habitat” projects such as outreach, education, research, and monitoring
- Create a “tool box” of education and outreach materials and ideas

Habitat Restoration and Protection

- Create opportunities to expand thinking about types of projects(i.e. joint venture, public-private partnerships, etc)
- Develop a systematic project screening/evaluation for use by the WCMRC and others
- Develop an inventory of resource enhancement, restoration, protection, and conservation needs and correlated projects

Priority Next Steps

There are several areas where the WCMRC could have the most impact immediately. Summit participants identified the following as priorities to begin now:

Research and Monitoring

- Initiate a Limiting Factors Study grant request from SRF Board
- Develop a web-based database for research—become the data clearinghouse

Outreach and Education

- Create a clear mission and goals for the MRC that are widely distributed and understood by the public and by those groups and individuals deeply involved in marine resource protection

Habitat Restoration and Protection

- Undertake pilot or demonstration projects to show how small-scale restoration actions can be done or to demonstrate feasibility or effectiveness of actions
- Plan and implement a regular forum for fostering and coordinating partnerships



Boats...central to our use and understanding of the marine environment



Summit Report

Introduction

The Whatcom County Marine Resource Committee (WCMRC) is one of seven county-level organizations established under the congressionally authorized Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative. Each MRC is charged with encouraging strong local involvement in addressing local marine issues. The WCMRC is comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds and interests representing the city of Bellingham and Whatcom County, the Port of Bellingham, Lummi Nation and Nooksack tribe, citizen-based conservation such as RE Sources, businesses and economic interests such as BP Oil and the Aluminum Smelter, and the general public.



MRC members Scott McCreery and Amy Kraham present the purpose and role of the Whatcom MRC

The purpose of the WCMRC Summit was to identify and describe the various organizations that are working on marine resource protection in Whatcom County and to explore opportunities for partnering and collaboration. Additional goals were to identify priority issues and specific action items to guide the WCMRC in developing its direction and role in marine resource protection.

The WCMRC organized the summit to maximize participants' opportunity to learn about the breadth of marine resource protection activities and the organizations involved. At the same time, the sessions were organized to allow participants the opportunity to provide the MRC with feedback on the ways in which it can most effectively implement future activities. The one-day summit began with a keynote address by Andrea Copping, Chair of the Northwest Straits Commission, which summarized the state of the Northwest Straits and reasons for their environmental decline. Her address provided a unifying theme and understanding of the issues and problems confronting the marine resource and the broad responses that she is an advocate for initiating.

Two discussion panels with representatives of various groups and interests active in marine resource work in Whatcom County provided a brief overview of their activities, as well as an engaging and interactive moderated question and answer session. To focus the discussion, panels were grouped by resource system: upland to nearshore, and nearshore to marine environment. Each panelist provided a summary of their organization's current activities and primary focus, while a moderator posed questions to the panel to expose issues and points of interest for the summit as a whole. Each panel also took audience questions.

The purpose of the afternoon session was to engage all summit participants in a discussion using the issues and projects raised by the morning panelists. During the lunch break, the summit



facilitators reviewed the issues discussed in the morning panels to identify priority issues. The facilitators chose priority discussion issues, with input from WCMRC members, based on where the bulk of the discussion centered. Research and Monitoring, Outreach and Education, and Habitat Restoration and Protection emerged as the main topics, with one assigned to each of three breakout groups. After lunch, participants self-selected which group they would participate in based on their interests. The breakout group process included facilitated discussions to detail and prioritize action items in response to issue topic. Each group identified a role for the WCMRC, action items, and priority next steps for their topic. The summit concluded with a full group discussion of the summary points from each breakout session.

Keynote Major Points And Questions

Dr. Andrea Copping's presentation addressed the overall status of the oceans, in particular the Northwest Straits. Central to her view is that as a system, the marine resource is not heavily affected; but human benefits are seriously affected by how our activities are degrading specific marine resources. Her analysis is that impacts are most evident in the areas of coastal and estuary systems, open ocean harvesting and shipping, and global climate change and pollution. Dr. Copping identified habitat loss and degradation, a disrupted food chain, exotic species, use of fresh water, contamination of water and marine debris, and harvesting as the primary indicators of marine resource health or decline.

Prioritizing these indicators is important in developing responses to improve marine resources, according to Dr. Copping. She identified recovery time, widespread effects on ecosystems, technical feasibility, cost to restore or mitigate, and political will as the factors that should guide prioritization. Before concluding, Dr. Copping highlighted four possible paths to developing solutions:

Research and Monitoring: better responses and technically feasible, with progress assessment and evaluation.

Education: create or increase political will through greater public understanding and ownership of the challenge

Natural Capitalism: More measured decisions because they reflect the true costs, which leads to more and better alternatives

Alternative Management: greater reliance on collaborative process and citizen based decision-making



Dr. Andrea Copping, Chair of the Northwest Straits Commission, provides an overview of Marine Resource Decline

A handout of Dr. Copping's presentation is included in the appendix to this report.



Panel Description And Process

In early April, the WCMRC issued a call for presenters to identify potential presenters for the Marine Resources Summit. The MRC selected twelve, based on the range of projects and activities each were involved in. Prior to the summit each of the presenters were contacted by the facilitation team for a brief interview to identify priority issues and concerns and what they considered to be valuable outcomes for the summit from their perspective. The summit facilitation team compiled the interview results into a summary (found in the appendix to this report) and used the summary to guide both development of the moderator's questions and to create a preliminary list of issues for the breakout group discussions.

Panel I

Panelists Background And Issues

Wendy Scherrer—Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA)

The NSEA is primarily involved in implementing field projects that support salmon recovery in on the Nooksack River. NSEA is also involved in some education programs and hatchery issues. Their primary interest is in finding partners and opportunities to use their field teams in more marine environments

Robyn du Pre'—RESources

RESources began as a waste reduction and recycling organization 17 years ago. In recent years, toxics and pollution advocacy have been a focus as well. RESources operates the North Sound Bay Keeper program. RESources' is interested in developing new beach and nearshore restoration activities. A priority issue for them is to see new methods of toxics monitoring that bridge the fresh and marine environment.

John Thompson—Whatcom County ESA Coordinator

Whatcom County has taken a lead in coordinating ESA actions. Among the County's responsibilities is assessing nearshore habitat for salmonids and their prey species. A priority for the County is a stronger connection between the actions of the WRIA that affect salmon and marine factors affecting salmon recovery.

Carol Piening—Cherry Point Technical Work Group

The workgroup is charged with understanding and developing responses to the decline in the Cherry Point Herring fishery. A major factor in their effectiveness as a group is their diversity, since they are comprised of government, business, and science representatives. Their primary issue is information and data gathering.

Chris Woodward—Shellfish Protection District

The District's challenge is to develop and implement actions that lead to lifting of restrictions on shellfish beds in Bellingham Bay and Drayton Harbor. Their primary tool is developing strategies that encourage voluntary cooperation. As a priority action, the District would support a strategy



County Executive Pete Kremen welcomes the summit participants



that improves the correlation between monitoring, events that affect water quality, and methodologies that lead to a restricted designation for marine shellfish beds.

Gordon Scott— Whatcom Land Trust

The Land Trust is primarily involved in acquisition and other transactions that result in both land protection and improved public access. In terms of desired project opportunities, the Trust is interested in joint projects that enhance the Drayton Harbor shoreline and improve conservation of and public access to Clarks Point and Chuckanut Bay.

Summary Of Key Points And Major Questions

The summary of the panel's dialogue is:

Enhancement: Coming to agreement on what enhancement is and where it needs to be focused is a challenge to moving forward.

- We don't have a consistent definition of what enhancement means
- Our lack of knowledge impedes identifying and prioritizing projects
- Communication gap of "what, how and the benefit" needs to be closed for public support
- Setting priorities based on protection, restoration, and enhancement

Key Point: Improving our understanding of the extent and nature of the problems is central to defining it, describing it, and resolving it.

Fresh vs. Marine: Resources are available to address identified freshwater projects, but marine needs have significantly less emphasis.

- While knowledge of freshwater problems and what to do about them is good, implementation often requires landowner cooperation
- Marine systems are more difficult to restore—more factors involved
- Practically, ownership affects what can be done and cost of acquisition of shoreline is a limiting factor
- Lack of existing good habitat makes leveraging it for more and better habitat difficult

Key Point: The emphasis on freshwater systems is in large part related to our knowledge and that has given it a practical advantage in securing additional resources.

Shoreline Protection: Shoreline areas are receiving more attention yet still do not show nearly the kind of success that freshwater systems do.

- Shoreline Management Act is available, but enforcement at the levels that it needs to be effective are difficult and has not been very strong
- Shorelines are very susceptible to activities elsewhere—a non-point source type of problem
- Public education and values are absolutely key to shoreline protection, enhancement, and restoration

Key Point: The best hope for shoreline protection currently is to improve public understanding, so that what we have now can be preserved and allowed to work.



- Data:** A key driver in everything we can and should do; yet it remains the most “out of reach.”
- Data is being collected in a piecemeal fashion without much coordination in larger, regional context
 - Sharing and organizing of data is an impediment
 - We have so little information, we do not know when timing is critical

Key Point: Part of the challenge is knowing what we don’t know, so we can target gaps. We need to have a tool for cataloging the knowledge base and for directing new studies.

Education: What is the appropriate role of education, what can we expect it to accomplish, and how should education programs be developed and implemented?

- Public awareness is key but it has to be quality information
- Internal education is part of improving the external communication
- We need to recognize that “our” problem is not a “they” problem
- SRF Board should include education and outreach as part of the programs it will fund
- Education has to go hand in hand with tangible measures like access—if people can touch it, see it, smell it, they can value it and education will have fertile ground

Key Point: Education is a potent tool in making real changes in people’s behavior, which in effect is a form of enhancement, restoration, conservation and protection.

Audience Question And Answer Summary:

- So much is going on, we need a local tool to track projects, their results and what we learn
- Focus on projects should not detract from the need to share information better
- A “state of the resource” type report would be very valuable, and should include some qualitative and quantitative factors
- There is strong interest in new data, but little effort to make better use of the data that already exists, or planning studies to accomplish multiple research goals
- Does the County have recovery goals? That should precede a strategy for recovery
- Stop talking, start doing!!



Summit participants enjoyed the Port of Bellingham’s Boathouse Center



Panel II

Panelists Background And Issues

Mike Stoner—Bellingham Bay Pilot Project

The pilot project is a multi-agency effort, spearheaded by the Port of Bellingham and the Department of Ecology. It is directed at cleaning up contaminated marine sites and restoring habitat through cooperative partnerships among public and private stakeholders. The pilot work group has completed a comprehensive strategy for the Bay and is now in the project implementation phase.

Mike McKay—Lummi Tribe Natural Resources

The Tribe's natural resources staff is focused on improving the opportunities for and qualities of harvests under their treaty agreements. Nearshore water quality and degradation of fishing grounds that affect opportunities to exercise the tribes' rights are a primary issue. Completing a comprehensive biological assessment to guide actions is a priority.

Clare Fogelsong—City of Bellingham

The City is participating in several state, regional and local processes on a variety of estuary and nearshore topics, such as water quality, aquatic nuisance species, habitat assessment and restoration projects, and public access to shoreline in Bellingham Bay. A priority for the City is to respond constructively to ESA issues in the marine environment..

Dan Pentilla—WDFW Forage Fish Staff

Forage Fish staff are involved in a number of long-term monitoring and mapping of salmon forage fish. The identification of critical habitat and mapping of population distribution is a primary objective.

Jim Hansen—Nooksack Recovery Team

The Nooksack Recovery Team is focused on salmon recovery on the river and its tributaries and has an extensive log of projects completed. On a broader scale the Nooksack and Lummi interest are focused on the need to take actions on an ecological enhancement level that enable them to take full advantage of their historic use and treaty rights.

John Dohrmann—Puget Sound/Georgia Basin International Task Force

Water quality issues are a primary focus and providing the monitoring and assessment capability is an ongoing responsibility.

Summary Of Key Points And Major Questions

Research and Assessment: Information gaps are limiting what we can do or evaluating the effectiveness of what we do.

- If we are grounded in the biology of what is happening and what is missing, we will be open to more creative solutions
- Understanding the limiting factors would be useful in linking habitat and know what habitat issues are highest priority
- Long term monitoring helps separate good from bad



Key Point: The real risk in not making research and assessment a priority are the lost opportunities—awareness that a real need exists could be driving decision to lower priority actions.

Habitat Quality: Projects are restoring, improving and mitigating habitat, but we do not know if it is effective

- Assign values to different kinds of habitat, based on its benefits to species and its location, i.e. deep or shallow water
- Develop goals for various kinds of habitat
- Take chances and move ahead with low risk projects where the potential for benefit is strong
- There are projects that have no strong reasons for not doing (technically feasible), but offer no other compelling reasons to do (no real benefit)



Summit participants enjoy a beautiful outside lunch to talk

Key Point: Habitat quantity and quality should be driven by a biologically based need and be rooted in the best science to minimize lost resources/opportunities.

Marine Protection and Restoration Framework: The marine environment is playing “second string” to fresh water efforts

- Marine systems are more difficult to “fix”
- Talent and resources needed are different for fresh and marine environments
- A need to coordinate the two efforts exists
- Long-term monitoring is needed to understand the extent of the problems and possible solutions
- A WRIA type planning process is one option for coordination, but may not be appropriate for marine resource planning

Key Point: We need to recognize the lack of a framework for, comprehensively, identifying and addressing marine issues in a organized way—both in the context of salmon recovery and other species

Stakeholders and partnering: The right stakeholders need to be at the table

- Railroads are an example of a major stakeholder not adequately involved, more should be done to identify major players and actively involve them
- Partnering process can work, they need to see the benefit and that there is a cooperative spirit
- There are real benefits to environmental progress—packaging and partnering are ways to demonstrate the creative ways to show the payoff



Key Point. Thinking about who the stakeholders and partners are is important because of their ability to allow or impede progress—actively or passively.

Audience Question And Answer Summary

- WCMRC could be a strong voice for salmon recovery.
- What is good for salmon is good for other species.
- Science and research need to be funded—that will not happen with out the right packaging and partnering.
- There needs to be a greater focus on status and recovery of bottom fish—they are indicators too.

Workgroups

Process and Issues for Discussion

The workgroup sessions were designed to focus the recommendations and give direction to the WCMRC by identifying specific action items and priority next steps. Each of the three discussion topics was augmented with several key questions taken by the facilitators from the panel discussions. As a starting point, each group had a primary topic with several key questions to initiate and focus the dialogue.

Based on the panel discussions, Research and Monitoring, Outreach and Education, and Habitat Restoration and Protection emerged as the main discussion topics for the breakout groups. One topic was assigned to each group and participants were permitted to self-select which group they would attend. Workgroup facilitators prepared a number of questions to help initiate and focus each workgroup's discussions.

Research and Monitoring

- Where are the data gaps and how do we begin to bridge them?
- Where/who is the natural “keeper” of information?
- How would we develop and forward a research agenda for the marine environment?
- Where are the opportunities for partnerships?
- Where are the current successes and how can we build on them?

Outreach and Education

- How can you affect change in human behavior (relating to a marine environment)?
- Where are the current successes and how can we build on them?
- What methods should be used to communicate to the public?
- How can the SRF Board be persuaded to fund education?
- How can education between groups be improved?
- Where are the opportunities for partnerships?
- How can we create public access?

Habitat Restoration and Protection

- How can we address segmented habitat (marine-freshwater)?
- What are the “easy” projects (technically, politically, and financially)?
- What is a bold action- where can we move ahead now?
- How do we determine “habitat for what”?



- Where are the opportunities for partnerships?
- Where are the current successes and how can we build on them?

Summary of Discussions

Research and Monitoring

Partnerships are high on the agenda for developing and promoting a research agenda. Specific research targets should have specific partnerships; i.e. shellfish research could have the Port and the NW Indian College joining together. Trans-boundary issues are significant with importance for funding and identifying data gaps. Partnerships with other MRC's should also be fostered to make research dollars go farther. These issues do not simply stop at the line between MRCs. Consideration should be given to developing partnerships with private property owners that provide ample incentives for owners to participate. Some issues such as marine mammals and birds may require new partnerships to effectively assess and address their decline.

Monitoring and research emphasis should be species specific with specific target species, especially forage fish. Species interaction is a big missing link. Habitat off shore, beyond the extreme low tide, is the next important area to understand fully. Changing land use is a particularly tough challenge to get a clear understanding of because it changes so quickly. WCMRC could serve a valuable role creating a partnership, with a monitoring emphasis, with the development community and planning agencies.

Developing new information is important, but equally useful are ongoing status reports. Both annual and periodic reports that provide an outside perspective on information and data that is developed could be very powerful. There are peripheral benefits such as community cohesiveness as well. There should be ease of availability such as web based distribution, a possible role for the WCMRC. In the group's opinion the reporting neutral data trends and extrapolating local importance from state and regional data is an important element that is missing. The WCMRC should move quickly to find the right footing here, because of its value—the WCMRC might be the only entity that can serve such a role.



The Research and Monitoring Workgroup did their work in the cool of the shade

Understanding the extent and depth of local knowledge is an important resource. Having access to many sources of data could help the WCMRC support efforts to define adaptive management with the MRC.



Outreach and Education Group

The difficult question of changing behavior is best addressed by creating a sense of value for the non-consumptive uses, and a personal connection to what is “out there.” Continuing to work through schools was a strong desire. Using more graphic tools to create emotional connections to the resource was a recommended approach.

Access can and should be a tool for education. There is a strong connection between being able to get physically close to something and a change in behavior toward protecting and appreciating it. To make the experience as rich and valuable as possible, there should be interpretive elements that help people become familiar what they are seeing and touching. Although access should be restricted in sensitive areas, access should be planned to allow for as much hands-on activity as possible. The group was concerned about message development, which could be a potential role for the WCMRC.



The Outreach and Education Workgroup brainstorming ideas

Continuing on the personal connection theme, the group saw ideal messages and audiences as those where self and peer learning opportunities were greatest. They felt that repetition was important not only for the learning process, but also because the environment changes. Guided field trips with knowledgeable leaders were a favored approach. Showing species as friends and neighbors was another key to the approach.

Suggestions for reaching out to those with less interest ranged from regulation and enforcement to incentives and cooperative agreements. Working through schools was still considered a viable option with lesson plans and other teacher’s aids being a preferred method. Programs should fit within local districts’ curriculum and should be objective and interdisciplinary to allow the subject to be included in non-science lesson plans. Programs should have a parent-planning component to encourage parent ownership and understanding.

Funding is a major issue and current obstacle for Outreach and Education. There was a clear consensus among the group that SRF Board funding is simply not realistic, as it provides funding for education or outreach only as a part of a specific salmon recovery program. Alternatives are Water Quality Action Team, EPA, Foundations, non-profits and private citizens.

Common goals should be to monitor the effectiveness of education programs. Though important, education draws resources away from hard projects and every effort should be made to ensure that education programs are successful. A generic message should be developed and used in some sort of promotion such as a festival. There is a real need to understand how people get their information about environmental issues and what influences them. There seems to be a clear role for the WCMRC in connecting different groups and supporting the educational effort



as the clearing house and message broker. The WCMRC could also play an active role in developing and promoting messages through visible surrogates.

In terms of outreach, the WCMRC could be creative in finding message vehicles with “captive audiences.” Some of those might be businesses, schools, boat clubs, charters, and neighborhood associations. Retail partnerships should be cultivated to both plan and implement Education and Outreach projects. Business owners should be recruited to fill appropriate open positions on the MRC, if possible. Similarly, community clean-ups could be co-sponsored by businesses, thereby providing visibility and publicity for the businesses and financial support for the MRC programs.

Habitat Restoration and Protection Group

Part of the discussion centered on building successes from smaller projects. The sense of the group was that quality was a clear choice over quantity. The group described their desire further saying that meaningful projects, ones that really resulted in quality habitat should be favored over those that were quick and easy. A suggestion the group favored was that the WCMRC should take on pilot projects since that could have dual benefits in habitat and education. Building on success clearly meant looking beyond the confines of the local area to identify potential projects with the WCMRC.

Discussion of partnering opportunities led to a rich discussion of the role of the WCMRC. In terms of habitat projects, there was little consensus for the MRC taking a leading role in managing projects and a strong consensus against the MRC prioritizing or favoring specific projects. The greatest partnering opportunities were in development of research and monitoring according to the group.

The group addressed problems such as linking restoration in marine and freshwater and determining what is priority habitat for restoration indirectly. There was enthusiasm for a set of criteria that drew on a broad set of goals and objectives for the ecosystem. The goals, objectives, and criteria could be developed under the auspices of the WCMRC with significant input from groups active in restoration locally. As groups identify and select projects, they would use the criteria as an internal screening process. The workgroup recognized that two other screens existed for projects: funding sources and permitting ability.



Discussion on Habitat Restoration and Protection were very active

Though the group was reluctant to endorse a role for the WCMRC that included undertaking projects alone or screening them to create a priority list, they did see value in the WCMRC defining or scoping and packaging projects in partnership with others as a method of prioritizing

Research and Monitoring or Education and Outreach programs and directing them into funding channels. They were:

- Community Clean-ups
- Estuary restoration
- Piling removal
- Substrate replenishment
- Salt marsh restoration
- Sediment clean up
- Removal of over-water structures
- Removal of in-water fill
- Alternative harvest management
- Removal of derelict gear
- Designate bottom and nearshore MPA's
- Secondary treatment of wastewater
- Oil spill prevention and discharge
- Rapid inventory assessments
- Forage fish habitat monitoring
- Shoreline, nearshore riparian revegetation
- Replace shallow subtitle
- Soft armoring demonstration
- Breaching dikes
- Tide gate repair
- Repair failing septic systems
- Address upstream water quality
- Removal of invasive species
- Fix fish passage barriers
- Restore beachwood
- Create artificial reefs

Recommendations

The breakout groups identified specific actions that could be of benefit to the overall goals of marine protection, as well as individual programs and projects. These action items are recommendations emphasized by summit participants as specific needs that could focus WCMRC activities, but are likely to require a longer-range plan. They are by issue area:

Research and Monitoring- Partnerships were a focus, perhaps because some of the most difficult research and monitoring problems are hampered by the cooperation needed to complete them. Issues of funding, burden or resource sharing and cross-jurisdictional complications are also major motivators for partnering. Partnerships can also return benefits in better interdisciplinary comparison and analysis on completed research. Likewise, Coordination and up front collaboration could pick up peripheral issues with little additional effort or cost. Compiling and reporting these findings is a major barrier that is at least perceived as a barrier to deciding where additional research dollars should go and using the existing research. Some specific action items emphasize:

- Develop and facilitate strategic partnerships around specific problem areas such as:
 - Monitoring
 - Funding
 - Trans-border cooperation
 - Reporting
- Develop and promote a citizen monitoring program
- Develop an annual report of the state of the resource



Robyn du Pre of ReSources summarizes the Research and Monitoring Workgroup Discussions



Outreach and Education- The workgroup clearly believed new thinking was needed in terms of strategies to create a broad base of community support if there was a real expectation of changed behavior and attitude. That new thinking extended to where and how education and outreach happens. School curriculums and added access are two examples of areas of emphasis to create greater public ownership in the resource. While education and outreach is identified as a major need overall, the delivery of specific programs was not a responsibility placed on the committee's shoulder. Rather, a more likely role is providing the leadership, identifying potential funding, and partnering where it is appropriate to the mission and resources of the WCMRC. Some of the focus areas suggested by the workgroup are:

- Identify and research alternative funding sources for “non-habitat” projects such as outreach and education and research and monitoring
- Create a “tool box” of education and outreach materials and ideas



Scott McCreary Reviews outcome of the Habitat Restoration and Protection Workgroup

Habitat Restoration and Protection- There was a definite concern that an additional player in the habitat restoration business at the field level would not be helpful. Nevertheless, there is a need to provide partnering for a range of needs from funding to strategies to fieldwork. This workgroup seemed most comfortable and supportive of the committee developing a better foundation for identifying and prioritizing projects, and creative strategies for getting them implemented. Some of the areas emphasized are:

- Create opportunities to expand thinking about types of projects(i.e. joint venture, public-private partnerships, etc)
- Develop a systematic project screening/evaluation for use by the WCMRC and others
- Develop an inventory of resource enhancement, restoration, protection, and conservation needs and correlated projects

Priority Next Steps

There are several areas where the WCMRC could have the most impact immediately. Summit participants identified the following as priorities to begin now:

Research and Monitoring- A common thread running through every element of the summit could be identified as the need for better knowledge. Despite the enormous amount of experience and knowledge, summit participants had a conviction that they needed to know more. That was accompanied by the belief that better access to existing research would eliminate a good deal of this “blind spot”. Two projects that could address this need immediately are:



- Initiate a Limiting Factors Study grant request from SRF Board
- Develop a web-based database for research—become the data clearing house

Outreach and Education- This area lends itself to long-term programs, with a sustained effort. The call from the Summit was to understand where the WCMRC fit in the existing roster of organizations. Spending time on words that define what the committee will do is probably less productive and less inspiring to both peer groups and the public, than having a program plan speak to the issue of mission and goals. Some combination of the two could be accomplished in the following priority:

- Create a clear mission and goals for the MRC that are widely distributed and understood by the public and by those groups and individuals deeply involved in marine resource protection

Habitat Restoration and Protection- There seems to be real interest in having the WCMRC assume a leadership role. Leadership not in the directorial role, but in seeing where gaps are in participation in projects, funding for projects, innovations and creativity, and myriad other areas and finding the means to fill those gaps. That may mean direct partnering, actual small-scale restoration or other actions mentioned in either of the two other issue areas. Two examples of habitat restoration and protection priorities with potential for the committee are:

- Undertake pilot or demonstration projects to show how small scale restoration actions can be done or to demonstrate feasibility or effectiveness of actions
- Plan and implement a regular forum for fostering and coordinating partnerships



Facilitator Margaret Norton Arnold summarizes the summit's outcomes and next steps