



Ocean Watch Action Committee

Meeting Notes

Friday March 25th 2022 from 9:30-11:30 am via Zoom

The purpose of this committee is to advance the actions that were recommended in the 2020 Ocean Watch Howe Sound report.

Participants:

Bowen Island Municipality:

[Bonny Brokenshire](#), Manager of Environment and Parks Planning, [Sue-Ellen Fast](#), Councillor & Trustee, GILTC.

Gambier Island Local Trust Committee (GILTC):

[Kate-Louise Stamford](#), Trustee, Sue-Ellen Fast, Trustee and Chair

District of West Vancouver:

[Heather Keith](#), Sr. Environmental Protection Officer, [Mathew McKinnon](#), Parks Environmental and Ecosystems Manager [Sharon Thompson](#), Councillor

District of Squamish:

[Chris Pettingill](#), Councillor, [Meagan Leitch](#), Environmental Coordinator

Town of Gibsons:

[Annemarie De Andrade](#), Councillor

Metro Vancouver:

[Marcin Pachcinski](#), Division Manager

David Suzuki Foundation:

[Kilian Stehfest](#), Marine Conservation Specialist

Marine Stewardship Initiative – Make Way Charitable Society:

[Courtney Smaha](#), Project Director, [Bridget John](#), Program Manager

Marine Life Sanctuary Society:

[Adam Taylor](#), Board Member

Sea Change Marine Conservation

[Fiona Beaty](#), Regional Coordinator

Squamish River Watershed Society:

[Edith Tobe](#), Executive Director

Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society:

[Ruth Simons](#), Project Lead, [Ian Winn](#), Director

Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council:

[Clare Greenberg](#), Executive Director

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Marine Conservation Target Team and Fisheries Management

[Danielle Derrick](#), Regional FAM Officer

[Lindsay Galbraith](#), Senior Regional Manager, Marine Conservations Target Team

University of British Columbia

[Fiona Beaty](#), PhD candidate

Moderator: Ruth Simons, Executive Director, Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society (HSBRIS)

Note Taker: Bridget John, Program Manager, Marine Stewardship Initiative (MSI)

ACTIONS

1	Submit updates to the Ocean Watch Action Tracker
2	Email Courtney for extra copies of Ocean Watch 2020 report and summaries
3	Email Ruth ongoing stream flow monitoring and Run of the River projects in your area
4.	Arrange a workshop to discuss managing flood protection, development and environment. DOS and HSBRI
5.	Plans for monitoring at the entrance to the Sound needs to begin - Ruth and MSI will follow up on this topic. Funding required for ongoing Green Crab monitoring beyond 2022. Posters are available, but awareness campaign should begin as early detection is key.
6.	Review and provide comments on the Nchu'ú7mut /Unity Plan Discussion Paper
7.	Encourage use of ORR line to report fishing in closures.

NOTES:

AGENDA	DISCUSSION	ACTION ITEMS/ DECISIONS
1. All - News and community updates to the action tracker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Last meeting we learned Slhaw7', Squamish Nation word for herring. In this meeting, we have two words: Nchu'ú7mut - Unity, and, in recognition of the significant restoration/reconciliation project that has begun in Squamish, the word is Sts'úkwí7 for salmon. ● Overview of notes from the January OWAC ● Reminder that the purpose of this committee is to advance the actions that were recommended in the Átl'ka7tsem/Txwnéwu7ts/Howe Sound Edition 2020 report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Let Courtney or Ruth know if you know someone who would benefit from one of the reports or executive summaries ● If you have any upcoming events please let Ruth know ● Bowen Island updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dive Against Debris under the Union 	<p>Submit updates to the Ocean Watch Action Tracker</p> <p>Email Courtney/Ruth for an OW report if needed</p> <p>Let Ruth know about upcoming events</p>

	<p>Steamship Marina in Snug Cove happening 2022/03/25. Lots of volunteers!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborating with West Vancouver with the barge (focusing on tires and styrofoam) ○ Installed final voluntary mooring buoys to protect eelgrass in Mannion Bay. There are now 8 mooring buoys in the Bay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gambier Island Local Trust Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Species at Risk workshop last week was successful. Overview of activities that organizations are doing to support species at risk. ○ Gambier Island Office Community Plan process: working on developing an engagement program focusing on foreshore protection and development, forestry, and how docks fit into the community and impact the environment ○ Islands Trust working on a policy statement update focusing on reconciliation. Engagement process next week. ● Town of Gibsons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connecting the watershed with the coast studies reports - more on this in 3 months ○ On going partnership with the Nicholas Sonntag Education Centre ● District of West Vancouver <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eelgrass mapping in West Vancouver complete. Exciting project! ○ Council adopted a Coastal Marine Management Plan to help manage the coastline. High level policy resource for staff and council (help with sea level rise, etc) ○ First reading for foreshore management ○ In the process of developing the Urban Forest Management Plan. Going to council in a few weeks with this and public engagement in May. Great collaboration. ● Village of Lions Bay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stream flow monitoring with UBC. The more information we can share could lead to more collaboration. Run of the River projects to be added to the Marine Reference Guide interactive map. ○ Email Ruth if you have information on this so it can get added to the map 	<p>Email Ruth and Bridget with any streamflow monitoring and Run of the River projects</p>
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- District of Squamish
 - Ocean Front. Signed an agreement to set the details of the park.
 - A Marine Access Review survey went out to the community to create a unified map. Engagement has been completed.
 - Adopted amendments to single use items bylaw. Will start enforcing that in the next few months.
 - Woodwaste Biomass Tour to determine what to do with all the wood waste in Squamish. At the investigation stage right now.
 - Climate Change aspect. Two multi family developments approved with no gas covenants (no fossil fuels into the buildings)
 - Balancing flood protection and foreshore protection is a challenge.
- Squamish River Watershed Society
 - Secured all the permits for the phase 2 Spit modifications. Opened 300 meters. Will be monitoring any changes over the next few months. Will then resume opening the next ~600 metres. Halted the project due to seeing herring eggs, which have hatched now. Hoping to wrap up the project in the middle of May. Long time in the making.
 - Lots of simulations. Worked closely with the Squamish Nation, Squamish Terminals, and District of Squamish.
 - Tenderfoot Hatchery: ~40,000 fish fry released last weekend. Hundreds of students and community members attended! Also released a 650,000 pinks into the Upper Elaho.
- David Suzuki Foundation
 - Province has the Coastal Marine Strategy consultation next week
- Marine Life Sanctuaries
 - Chats with DFO staff for upcoming research projects and education. Interpretative signage. DFO does have a signage program revolving around glass sponge reef closures
- Marine Stewardship Initiative
 - MRG guide is now in phase 2 of the project
 - MRG is now called the [Marine Stewardship Initiative](#) (check out the new logo)
 - Slhawt/Herring research happening this year

Ruth to follow up with OWAC to organize a workshop on striking the balance on flood protection and development

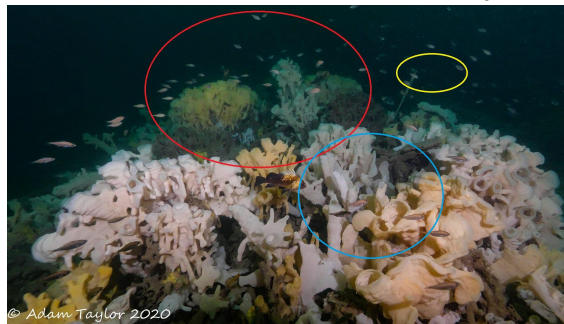
	<p>(shoreline and boat based surveys this year). This data will be shared in the Marine Reference Guide. New page on herring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compiled a group application for funding for forage fish (surf smelt and sand lance). Hope to pilot on Bowen, Keats and Anvil. ○ Successful in application for Marine Debris Coordinator with Ocean Bridge program. Coordinator will help to remove large scale marine debris in the sound. ○ New email marinestewardshipinitiative@gmail.com ○ Courtney and Bridget went to Sewells marina yesterday to launch a light trap to monitor larval Dungeness Crab in the Sound. Collaborating with the Hakai Institute, Sewell's Marina and Ocean Bridge ○ MSI secured funding from the Sitka foundation (\$80,000 each year for the next three years) ○ If you are aware about funding for forage fish please let us know ○ Thank you all for your contributions! 	<p>MSI is looking for funding on forage fish if you have any ideas</p>
<p>2. Clare Greenberg from the Invasive Species Council on the Green Crab invasion and the need for monitoring in Howe Sound</p>	<p>Monitoring program for European Green Crab (EGC) with community scientists in Howe Sound/Átl'ka7tsem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SSISC is coming out of a pilot year from last year ● SSISC is one of 13 independent invasive species organizations in BC ● SSISC does a lot of work work (e.g. invasive plant control and monitoring). Moving into invasive mammals and marine work. Education projects as well. ● EGC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ small crab up to 10cm wide ○ Can vary in colour despite the name. Best identifying feature is five points on each side and 3 in between the eyes ○ Disrupts eelgrass beds, destroy shellfish habitat, eats native crabs ○ No reports of EGC in the Sound yet, but have been seen in the northern part of the Sunshine Coast. ○ Volunteers monitoring for EGC in the Salish Sea ● Monitoring in the Sound 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 sites last year (Spit Road, Cattermole Slough, and Furry Creek) ○ 9 local volunteers last year ○ Online training from Fisheries and Oceans Canada ○ Used Fukui and Minnow Traps last year, traps baited with herring, and volunteers returned after 24 hours to check the traps ○ No EGC crabs found in the upper Sound last year ○ Enough funds until June, but looking for more long term funding. Costs funding for storage, equipment, etc ○ Would be great to have additional sampling sites in the Sound for the future (e.g the islands) ○ Links: www.ssisc.ca/crabteam ○ Clare welcomes input on the strategic plan. Get in contact with Clare. ● Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitoring the rest of the Sound, SSISC would be a partner. SSISC's boundary goes as far South as Lions Bay. ○ Program we worked really closefully with DFO to ensure the same monitoring processes in the Salish Sea ○ Trapping is very specific for EGC. Anything else that is caught in the trap is recorded. ○ Potential to coordinate with Heather from the Hakai Institute about EDNA for EGC ○ What can the public do about stopping the spread? Trapping to remove as much EGC biomass as possible early ○ Clare has posters for outreach materials. Please reach out. ○ Unsure of any marine predators for the EGC 	<p>SSISC looking for funds for European Green Crab Project if you have any ideas</p> <p>Clare welcomes input by email on strategic plan</p> <p>Reach out to Clare by email for EGC posters</p>
<p>3. Lindsay Galbraith from Fisheries and Oceans Canada on the Glass Sponge Reef closures and next steps</p>	<p>Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound Glass Sponge Reef Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presented by Danielle Derrick and Lindsay Galbraith ● DFO's details to report Aquatic Invasive Species ● GSR were thought to have gone extinct 40 million years ago until their discovery in 1987. Unique to the Northeast Pacific ● Supports 84+ species, species richness is 3x within reef footprints, can filter 17+ billion liters of water every 	

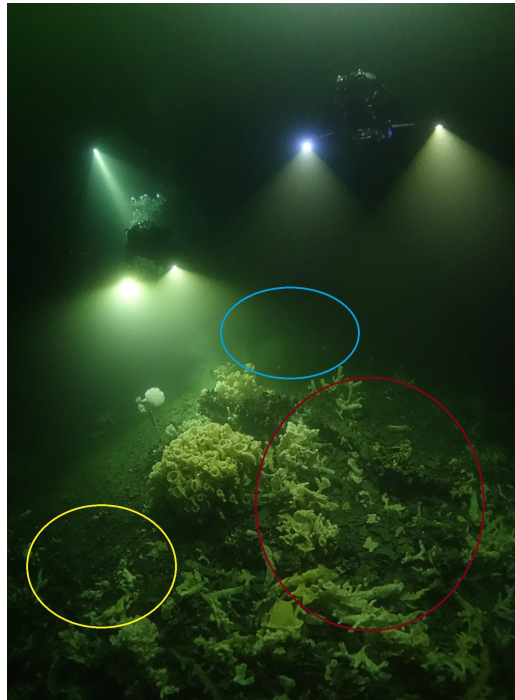
day, GSR can remove 436kg of organic carbon per day

- Overview of protection measures to date from 2015-2022
 - April 1st 2022 downrigger restrictions via conditionals of license at 5 new sites and QCC site
 - Summer 2022: decision expected on establishing sites as marine refuges
- Phase 3 consultation process
 - DFO not currently restricting fishing at Passage Island dead reeds
 - Closures affect a significant of local prawn harvester's annual landings
- Grants and Contribution Program: Fisheries Management - Marine Conservation Targets
 - overview of the objectives
- DFO's Observe, Record, Report line: 1-800-465-4336
- Next steps
 - Communications and outreach plan
 - Address data gaps, develop long term comprehensive management plan
 - Engagement on RCAs and GRSs
- Presentation will be shared after the meeting
- Questions/Comments
 - Adam Taylor mentions that it's very important to help get the word out there. We need to support DFO with this as a community.

Reminder to use the ORR line to report



Halkett damage looking south (MLSS photo)



Halkett sponge reef damage (MLSS - Joy Kaay photographer)

- GSR is very large and therefore can pull more carbon out of the water column compared to smaller reefs. From DFO study - 1m² of Intact GSR in Howe Sound estimated to sequester carbon at a rate equal to 1m² of old growth forest
- OECM guidance still being worked on (in the graphic design stages)
- Passage Island dead reef. What is the impact? Currently work planning and seeing what projects DFO can do in 2022-2023.
- What if all the reefs were restored? What would the impact be? Is it possible to restore these reefs?

4. Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region on the Nchu'ú7mut/Unity Plan and tie in

- Howe Sound is on the cover of the British Columbia Magazine. Will be sharing this widely. Have to be careful about bringing attention to the area. Destination BC is working to raise awareness about the area ("Don't Love it to Death")
- **Nchu'ú7mut/Unity Plan**
 - First meeting about sharing the discussion

<p>with UN SDG 14 Life Below Water</p>	<p>paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As a UNESCO designation site we have a commitment to create a guiding plan to work towards the Biosphere's four objectives ○ Content coming out of nomination document with some updates ○ In 10 years the Biosphere will go through a periodic review ○ At this stage it will not be shared with the general public but with sector groups ○ Exciting to think about the future and support good initiatives. A way to bring focus. ○ Will be referencing any relevant reports that have indicators of how the region is doing ○ Next few months there will be invitations to start forming the round table ○ Q1: What are our common values? What do we need to do to get there? ○ Aiming for fall 2022 to have management plan complete. Will be a living document. ○ Email with any feedback or questions ○ Doing this through the lens of the UN SDGs ○ Asking for any feedback on the vision statement ○ Would be great to have a workshop to have more brainstorming ○ Questions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Biosphere as a think tank to increase all of our capacity and commitment is a great idea. ■ Great idea to put the Biosphere in an email signature 	<p>Email Ruth with any feedback or questions about the Nchu'ú7mut/Unity Plan</p> <p>Ruth will provide examples for email signature</p>
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