



## Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve

### Implementation Committee Meeting Summary

Prepared by Birdie Davenport

**June 13, 2019, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Civic Center Building, 322 N Commercial Street, Bellingham

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**Participants:** Elizabeth Kilanowski, (*Whatcom County MRC*); Bert Rubash (*Citizen*); Michael Kyte, (*Cherry Point Lead naturalist*); Marie Hitchman, Kim Clarkin, Lyle Anderson, Rick Hann, John Bremer, Deborah Kaye, Robert Kaye (*Cherry Point Citizen Stewardship Committee*); Lilya Jaeren (*ReSources*); Andrew Gamble, Travis Linds (*Petrogas*); Nate Green, Kent Hartwig, Steve Drennan (*Renewable Energy Group*); Tim Johnson, Amie Blystone, (*Phillips 66*); Chad Yunge, (*Ecology*); Sandi McMillan, (*Birch Bay WSD*); Fred Felleman, (*Commissioner, Port of Seattle/Friends of the Earth*); Verner Wilson, (*Friends of the Earth*); Birdie Davenport, Betty Bookheim, Dennis Clark, Ross Zimmerman, Erica Bleke (*Department of Natural Resources*)

**1:00 p.m.**

#### Welcome & Introductions, Meeting Agenda & Outcomes

- Focus of the meeting is a presentation and questions about the renewable diesel project proposed at the Phillips 66 facility, and the new Cherry Point Pacific herring report and discussion.

**1:15 p.m.**

#### Renewable Energy Group, Proposed Renewable Diesel Project

Tim Johnson, Phillips 66; Nate Green, Steve Drennan, and Kent Hartwig, Renewable Energy Group

- Tim introduced the Renewable Energy group, followed by their presentation about the proposed project by Green Apple Renewable Fuels LLC
- The project involves development of a renewable diesel facility adjacent to the existing Phillips facility, with some new construction and utilizing existing available infrastructure
- The unprocessed fuel for the facility comes primarily from waste food oil and other biologic oil sources (25% fresh vegetable oil and 75% waste) and will mean an increase of 18,000 bbl/day of “renewable diesel”
- The raw material and finished product will be moved in and out by train (eventually 25-30 more cars added to each train per day), truck, and tug and barge
- The renewable diesel produced at the facility is expected to create a 60- 70% reduction in greenhouse gases compared to diesel production when all life cycle inputs are accounted for.
- The primary market for renewable diesel is in states, such as California and Oregon, with laws requiring use of renewable diesel

Questions included: How much will this increase vessel traffic? Eventually, when up to maximum production, 6-10 more trips per month. They will use the largest vessels possible and share space

with current Phillips 66 before adding more vessels. Will palm oil be used? (No). Changes in emissions are still being studied and quantified, including waste water.

**2:15 p.m.**

### Cherry Point Pacific Herring Report; Age Composition and Genetics on 2016-17 research work done by WDFW

Birdie Davenport, *Aquatic Reserves Program Manager*

- Discussed draft herring research report, that confirms fish spawning in Cherry Point spawning grounds from late April – June in the 2016 and 2017 years sampled are 88% and 83% Cherry point stock, respectively, and some samples the DNA sequencing quality did not meet the threshold value to be used for analysis
- 30 years of data showed younger, 2-3 year old fish being the primary spawners with a total lack of older fish in the mix. Combined 2016/2017 fish data showed 4-5 year old fish being the primary spawners, restoring a normal age class distribution of spawners up to 8 year old (larger) fish About 80% are thought to be of Cherry Point origin with some from the Elliott Bay stock.
- Birdie shared slides from Todd Sandell that show the continuing decline of spawning biomass of CP herring. Also an unexpected geographical expansion to former spawning areas including large amounts of spawning at Point Whitehorn and Sandy Point this spring - easily visible and photographed from an aerial flight. At Sandy Point spawn was even found on a grass lawn.
- Preliminary encouraging news that some of the “unusual” spring spawners may be early Cherry Point stock, samples were taken for genetic analysis
- Todd recommends that the gillnet age class and sex ratio survey be repeated every 5 years
- Next year, try to sample herring out of Fraser River during expected “big Pink Salmon outmigration” to see if CP herring are feeding there
- Of interest: Todd found scads of nudibranchs (hooded nudibranchs) apparently feasting on the herring spawn in Birch Bay. They occurred only where eggs were laid on eelgrass.
- Bull Kelp (*Nereocystis*) beds around Pt Whitehorn, Birch Head and Semiahmoo have increased dramatically in size in last three years
- Todd will be able to present a more thorough report, potentially more genetic results, at the fall meeting

Committee discussion: Potential project for next season; Investigate use of light traps to look for larval crab, forage fish and herring. Todd suspects that Birch Bay may be getting too warm for larval herring to survive. Light traps are designed to exclude larger fish; Fred expressed concern about impacts to the fragile population of CP herring from this sampling (impacts need to be assessed).

**3:00 PM**

### Land Management report

*Ross Zimmerman, Aquatic Land Manager for Whatcom and West Skagit Counties, DNR Orca-Straits District*

Ross summarized the following DNR land management activities in and adjacent to the Reserve:

- Proposal from Northwest Indian College (NWIC) and Lummi Nation to install reef nets near the old cutout for educational/cultural purposes at Cherry Point AR north of Gulf Road. DNR staff are working closely with Lummi and NWIC staff to help the project move forward with permitting.
- Phillips 66 will be removing 386 creosote pilings and replacing the timber/asphalt surface of the causeway with a fire-resistant concrete surface
- The Petrogas lease restricts vessel calls to 48 per lease year; Petrogas documented compliance, with 27 vessels calling in the most recent lease year ending January 31
- There was a good response from DOE and BP to a BP incident involving a sunken booming vessel in March, with no harm to people or the environment. BP properly notified DNR as well as ECY.
- Orca Unit staff will be conducting site visits at all three industrial facilities in late-summer 2019

### Aquatic Reserves Program report

*Birdie Davenport, Aquatic Reserves Manager, DNR*

- The Fidalgo Bay AR management plan final draft is complete. Including two stakeholder meetings in fall and spring, draft plan on DNR aquatic reserves webpage
- Cherry Point plan update next; we will begin getting your input at the fall meeting

**3:20 p.m.**

Partner Updates

### Next steps

- Next meeting in November 2019; please review Fidalgo Bay plan update and other materials prior to meeting (links will be sent)

**3:30 p.m.** Adjourn