



Hood Canal Coordinating Council

Jefferson, Kitsap & Mason Counties; Port Gamble S'Klallam & Skokomish Tribes

Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative Workgroup Meeting #1

Date: December 10, 2019; 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Location: HCCC office, 17791 Fjord Drive NE, Suite 124, Poulsbo, WA 98370

Link to [agenda](#)

Link to [presentation](#)

Attendees by phone:

- Alex Paysse, Mason County Health Department
- Kevin Shutty, Mason County Commissioner, HCCC Board
- Kate Dean, Jefferson County Commissioner, HCCC Board Chair
- Teri King, WA Sea Grant Program
- Daniel Hanson, Hood Canal Snail

Attendees in person:

- David Trimbach, Oregon State University
- Mendy Harlow, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group
- Bill Dewey, Taylor Shellfish Farms
- Laura Butler, WA State Dept of Agriculture
- Jackie Gardner, Jefferson County
- Joth Davis, Baywater Hood Canal
- Sarah Fiske, Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee
- Paul McCollum, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
- Chris Eardley, WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- Phil Best, Hood Canal Environmental Council
- Kelly Toy, Jamestown S'Klallam tribe
- Jodie Toft, Puget Sound Restoration Fund
- Scott Brewer, HCCC
- Nate White, HCCC
- Heidi Huber, HCCC

Welcome and Introductions

- Meeting called to order by Kate Dean (HCCC Board Chair)
- Review/Approve agenda and Meeting objectives
- Motion to approve agenda by Paul McCollum (HCCC Board)
- Motion seconded by Kevin Shutty (HCCC Board)
- Motion approved

HCCC Board members Kate Dean, Kevin Shutty, Paul McCollum thanked everyone for coming and provided an introduction on why HCCC has made shellfish a priority and supports the work of a Hood Canal Regional Shellfish Initiative.

The group took turns answering the following questions:

Why are you here?

- Have been engaged in national and state level initiatives and seen the success there, hoping we can have that same success planning at the local level
- Curiosity about this process both personally and for my agency
- Relevant to my work with Puget Sound Restoration Fund to restore native Olympia Oysters
- Relevant to my work at Oregon State University with human wellbeing and the development of the structured decision making tool (DASEES) that we hope to use to support this process
- Advocate for shellfish
- Protect shellfish for tribe and future generations
- Relation to salmon habitat restoration work taking place in Hood Canal
- Shellfish harvest is becoming an increasingly important resource for tribes
- Have seen WA state shellfish initiative as a success, want to see that at the local level. Shellfish provide ecological and economic value.
- To learn about potential projects the Marine Resources Committee can tap into. Currently the MRC holds shellfish educational forums throughout our area, and are also involved in Olympia oyster restoration in Quilcene (proposed project?). Much of the land we cover is in Hood Canal.
- Shellfish relate to water quality and public health. Relationship/partnership with the Hood Canal Pollution Identification and Prevention (PIC) program
- My family has lived on Hood Canal since the 1930's, my grandfather managed oysters
- Have been engaged in past efforts to develop HCCC's Integrated Watershed Plan shellfish indicator and been involved with HCCC as the Ecosystem Coordination Board representative, outreach is my focus

What do shellfish mean to you?

- Eat, sleep, breathe shellfish for 38 plus years
- Everything
- Food and function, bridge both urban and rural communities
- Part of my life, my history
- Ecosystem values
- Important to folks who don't have access to boats for harvesting finfish and are limited to harvesting from the shore.
- My livelihood- Worked in Hood Canal 30 plus years farming shellfish and seaweed
- I am from this area and have a long (7 generations) family history here
- I am a shoreline homeowner on Hood Canal
- Tarboo Bay shoreline land owner

What do you hope to get out of this?

- Industry representation, preservation of water quality, investment in growth
- Learn how WDFW can be involved and help this effort while supporting the agency's mission
- Process that is supportive of commercial shellfish
- Human wellbeing represented well in this initiative
- Use this initiative as a tool for sustainable shellfish populations
- A sustainable shellfish program, healthy ecosystem
- Learn more about status of shellfish as it relates to overall ecosystem health
- Mirror successes of the statewide initiative
- Balance of environmental and commercial interests
- Stay up to date on shellfish concerns and help in whatever way we can
- Look at this through the land use planning perspective. This issue is a challenge for Jefferson County. Need to find the right balance. Hope this group can help guide the county moving forward on land use as it relates to shellfish.

Anyone missing from this conversation?

- Tribal representatives are extremely important
- Researchers
- State Dept. of Health
- Expertise on climate change impacts will be important
- (New?) NOAA Regional Aquaculture Coordinator position
- Large property owners (ex: timber companies, Navy, WA State Parks, WA Dept of Natural Resources)
- Land Trusts
- Homeowners Associations
- Alderbrook Resort

Overview of HCCC, and Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative

- HCCC Structure
 - A council of governments formed in 1985 in response to concerns about water quality problems & related natural resource issues in Hood Canal
 - Member governments: Port Gamble S'Klallam and Skokomish Tribes; Jefferson, Kitsap, and Mason Counties
 - HCCC Vision: A healthy ecosystem is essential for thriving Hood Canal communities.
 - HCCC Mission: The Hood Canal Coordinating Council works with partners and communities to advance a shared regional vision to protect and recover Hood Canal's environmental, economic, and cultural wellbeing



- What do we mean by a Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative?
 - HCCC Board-led project
 - Oversight by HCCC Board of Directors
 - Purpose
 - Ensure that shellfish remain a viable part of the region's cultural identity, economy, and ecosystem

- Supplement and regionalize the statewide Shellfish Initiative to address local Hood Canal shellfish issues
 - Funding
 - Laird Norton Family Foundation (funding has no expiration date)
 - EPA National Estuary Program (funding ends Dec 2021)
 - Structure
 - Structured decision-making (DASEES)
 - Components
 - Convene Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative Workgroup
 - Develop Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative Action Plan
 - Hold Hood Canal Shellfish Summit
 - Implement shellfish protection action(s)
 - What will the Action Plan do?
 - Assess needs
 - Establish goals
 - Set policy areas of focus
 - Prioritize actions
- Structured Decision Making (SDM)
 - SDM is a group decision-making process
 - Aims to Develop a common understanding of an issue, then
 - Create, evaluate, select, and implement innovative solutions
 - Values-Focused Thinking (VFT) > Alternative Focused Thinking (AFT)
 - Combination of
 - Qualitative issue framing by stakeholder engagement & value elicitation
 - Quantitative alternative consequence analysis for decision-making
 - DASEES = Structured Decision Making support tool
 - The Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative will be working with Oregon State University (OSU) to pilot DASEES to assist with SDM for the shellfish initiative

Comments:

- From OSU: DASEES is a web hosted, publicly accessible tool that is currently in beta test form. Oregon State University is the beta tester. In 2020 tools will be available to help with decision making. Currently working with 4 watershed groups including Hood Canal to integrate DASEES into their work. Hood Canal will be using DASEES to assist with the shellfish initiative. The tool is all about prioritization and trying to make hard objective decisions with the data that is available to you.
- There is value in showing that until a “final” document is achieved, this process/this group is the initiative.
- Who is the final decision making body?
 - This group will bring ideas to the HCCC Board who will ultimately make the decision.
 - Need to keep in mind that dependent on funding, etc., this work has the potential to exist/continue outside of the HCCC Board.
- Workgroup Timeline
 - Work to date
 - Convened a Steering Group
 - Reviewed the Washington Shellfish Initiative
 - Interviewed potential Workgroup participants
 - Next steps
 - Hold Workgroup meetings
 - Next meeting January/February? HCCC will send out doodle poll.
 - Write DRAFT Action Plan
 - Public Shellfish Summit

- Write FINAL Action Plan
- Implement project(s)

Overview of Workgroup process

- Decide: Ground rules
 - **Group reviewed and agreed with the proposed ground rules:**
 - Attack the problem, critique ideas not the person
 - Stay on point and on time
 - Let everyone participate
 - Listen with an open mind
 - Success depends on participation
 - Use “Yes, and”
 - Disagree without being disagreeable
 - No side conversations
 - Let differing opinions motivate you to find common ground
- Decide: Decision-making process
 - The group discussed consensus vs voting decision making
 - Staff:
 - Consensus means that even if parties disagree, there is still overall consent to move forward
 - A consensual decision is the best solution that the group can achieve at a given time
 - Consensus means that everyone’s opinions are heard and understood, and a solution is created that respects those opinions
 - Consensus accounts for dissent and addresses it, although doesn’t always accommodate it
 - Have to keep in mind that this group could continue outside of HCCC and HCCC Board
 - Would love to move forward with a consensus process but it’s good to have a backup plan for voting. Also if we are voting it is critical that we have good representation at the table.
 - Ex: how do groups like homeowners associations, Alderbrook Resort fit into this process?
 - If we go with consensus we still need to present the dissenting perspectives. The Board will want to see the full spectrum of ideas not just consensus so they can make their decision.
 - It can be helpful to vote first then try to achieve consensus by discussing how you voted and have opportunity to explain.
 - Yes, it is helpful to have an unofficial vote to see generally what people are thinking and start the discussion leading to consensus.
 - Is what is decided here by this group go to the full board of HCCC for final decision?
 - Yes, this group determines recommendations as an advisory committee then brings to full HCCC Board for their final decision
 - Need to determine at what level is consensus, 60% of available votes?
 - If HCCC is hosting a regional shellfish initiative, who holds the power, the Board or this group?
 - I recommend consensus with some rules around handling dissent so everyone has a voice.
 - I agree, if there is dissent the HCCC Board needs to hear those dissenting viewpoints.
 - Sometimes a thumbs up, thumbs sideways, thumbs down can be a good way to gauge people’s support of something as you are discussing it, without having to have an official vote.

- **Group seemed in favor of consensus, making sure that all consent and dissent is captured and expressed to the HCCC Board for their review.**
- If this was a true HCCC Board subcommittee a process would be outlined. Depending how this moves forward this group could eventually have its own bylaws and structure outside of HCCC Board process allowing greater flexibility over the long term.
- The Statewide Initiative started with Ecology calling a meeting with a handful of participants. Every meeting new people attended and it grew organically into a large effort. Everyone brought something to the table and made it more successful. This could grow beyond HCCC's capacity.

Set HCSI Issue Statement

- DRAFT HCSI Issue Statement
 - *The cultural, subsistence, environmental, and economic aspects of shellfish in Hood Canal are affected by environmental, human, and political pressures that impact the long-term ability of shellfish to provide sustainable benefits to Hood Canal's community and ecosystem.*

Comments:

- What is meant by political pressures?
 - Land use, governmental decision making
- Are ecosystem benefits included in "environmental"
 - Yes
- This statement sounds kind of negative. Can we have more of a positive spin? Talk about how opportunity exists then state the issue. There is opportunity to solve the problem.
 - Staff: this was originally framed as a "problem" statement, hence why it may seem negative
- Could make it a vision statement stating the value of shellfish?
- More positive issue statement.
- Is it all a one way street? In the statement it's focused on impacts to shellfish, not shellfish's impact on the whole system. What about impacts of shellfish farming on Hood Canal?
- Need to define what we mean by shellfish.
 - Should be broad enough to include intertidal and subtidal species.
 - In HCCC's Integrate Watershed Plan, crustaceans are not included
 - Statewide effort focuses on Bivalves
 - Technical sub-workgroups could help weigh in on definition.
 - Statewide initiative continues to struggle with this, we continue to get requests to expand to kelp, seaweed, etc.
 - Are bivalves the end point? Could focus on how end point for bivalves create benefits for other species (helping bivalves has multispecies benefits)
 - Crustaceans are so important to this area and community. Recreational crab and shrimp are so important to Hood Canal.
 - Many meeting participants automatically assumed the definition included crab and shrimp.
 - The further south you go around the Hood Canal bend, you might get more support from crab folks than folks that are just shellfish (bivalves). Shrimp, crab and other recreational resources will capture more interest and support. Climate change and harvest are impacting these resources.
 - Decided on a preliminary definition that includes **crustaceans and mollusks (gastropods, crab, shrimp, echinoderms)**
 - Makes sense to **continue using term "shellfish", but have a more detailed definition to reference that includes mollusks, crustaceans, and echinoderms.**
- Process to determine FINAL HCSI Issue Statement

- The sub-groups that formed around the Issue Statement, Goal, and Objectives during the workgroup will edit their elements as they see fit before the next Workgroup, and send their revised versions back to HCCC staff. HCCC staff will then review these and potentially make additional edits based on the Workgroup's discussion, and bring them to the next meeting for the Workgroup to finalize.

Set HCSI Goal

- DRAFT HCSI Goal
 - *Support and expand Hood Canal's thriving shellfish culture with coordinated and multi-beneficial strategies and actions that balance ecosystem protection and restoration, honor tribal treaty rights, and support sustainable commercial shellfish activities and recreational harvest now and into the future.*

Comments:

- Need to include "support subsistence", that is huge for tribes.
- What does shellfish culture mean?
 - Human wellbeing, identity of hood canal residents, ability to go out and harvest
- Consider dropping the word "culture"
- The word "balance" suggests we have to choose between the different elements listed (i.e. ecosystem protection and tribal treaty rights).
 - Maybe a better word than balance is respect
- The term "sustainability" implies going into the future, so seems redundant to also say "into the future"
- Resilient is a good word to throw in.
- Jodie has offered to review and email proposed edits to HCCC

Set HCSI Objectives

- Group Activity: Use dot voting to rate level of agreement with each DRAFT HCSI objective
- Results of exercise

Objectives	Sticky dots	Comments
Support sustainable tribal and non-tribal shellfish industry practices	11 Green	Consider removing reference to "tribal and non-tribal" and just say "support sustainable shellfishing practices".
Achieve sustainably funded local water quality programs to protect shellfish resources	13 Green	
Support ecosystem protection and restoration to perpetuate the ecological function that shellfish provide	13 Green	
Improve the resiliency of Hood canal shellfish to the impacts of climate change, population growth, and other long-term pressures	14 Green	
Support tribal treaty rights and increase shellfish harvest opportunities for tribes	10 Green 1 Yellow	
Promote and expand Hood Canal shellfish culture and harvest opportunities for the local community and visitors	11 Green	Merge with "Increase the availability of harvestable Hood Canal shellfish beds"

Restore native Hood Canal shellfish populations	12 Green	The only one I hesitated and almost put yellow was on restoring native populations of shellfish. With Pacific oysters and Manila clams managed as established species by WDFW and then being the main commercial species in the Hood Canal we would have concerns if there was an effort to stop farming them or to eradicate them in an effort to restore native species (comment via email)
Increase the availability of harvestable Hood Canal shellfish beds	10 Green 1 Yellow	Merge with "Promote and expand Hood Canal shellfish culture and harvest opportunities for the local community and visitors" What does it mean to increase the availability? This could mean several things including adding more area or opening closed areas. Need to clarify.

Are there other objectives for the HCSI to pursue?

- Group suggested several additional and related objectives to consider:
 - Education, engagement, research

Discussion:

What is missing from the objectives?

- Promote and expand shellfish Culture (capital C) and culture (lower case c), culture isn't captured enough in these objectives. Not just about harvest. Also about community.
- Not seeing level of connectedness between watersheds, water quality, shellfish, community
- Some redundancy among objectives. They seem inward looking. If the goal is to have a thriving shellfish culture, that involves getting Hood Canal on the radar of Washingtonians, that's an outward facing objective.
- Suggest reference to education and/or outreach. Telling the story, people coming to harvest and farm (how to do it sustainably), and education for elected officials.
- Education component is critical. So important to communicate why shellfish are important to the ecosystem.
- Such a special body of water need to emphasize culture identity, capital C culture.
- Some confusion due to overlap between objectives.
- Generally, consider simplifying and paring down the objective language to be more inclusive of all constituents, rather than calling them out, which may present resource or political conflicts...
- Could be as simple as "shellfish that are available and healthy to eat."
- Consider adding: goal of world class science drawn to Hood Canal, great place to focus research.
- Assess climate change impacts and adaptation strategies (maybe sub bullet under existing climate objective)
- Currently focused on protecting and encouraging shellfish. There needs to be more of a balance so objectives reflect desire to take care of shellfish but in a way that doesn't adversely affect other species, it's a balance of the entire ecosystem.
- Also need to support the ecological functions that shellfish provide and rely upon.

- Need to address harvesting practices that affect other aspects of the ecosystem. Include language about “not adversely affecting other critters”
- Create a new objective to include: Education, engagement and research
- Important to engage local property owners, big players, research community, politicians, tourists. Ex: education through programs like Olympic culinary loop.
- Promote shellfish practices that minimize adverse environmental impacts
- Need to get at sense of place, Hood Canal is a very unique treasure. Water quality impacts shellfish mostly in a positive way here due to largely intact forest lands etc., ex: Olympic national park/forest

Group broke into sub-groups to continue revising Issue statement, goals and objectives.

Groups

1. Issue statement: Jodie Toft, Chris Eardley
2. Draft Goal: Joth Davis, Laura Butler, Paul McCollum
3. Draft Objectives: Jackie G, Phil Best, Kelly Toy, Sarah F

Issue statement:

- Sub group will email notes and edits to HCCC

Goals

- Sub group will email suggested edits to HCCC
- Comment: much of this work has happened in the statewide initiative, feel free to take a look at state wide initiative framework, it is a resource that is there for you to use, while still keeping it local and preserving unique local character of hood canal.

Objectives

- Sub group will email suggested edits to HCCC
 - There is a need to consolidate existing objectives
 - Proposing a new one addressing minimizing harmful impacts
 - Support sustainable shellfish harvesting and aquaculture practices
 - Respect not just support tribal treaty rights
 - Promote and expand shellfish Culture and harvest opportunities
 - Delete last objective

Groups can continue to work together electronically before the next meeting

Next meeting

- January/February 2020
 - Doodle poll will be sent out soon
- Review/agree on Issue Statement, Goal & Objectives
- Present DASEES
- Identify sub-objectives (DASEES)

HCCC Board Chair, Kate Dean adjourned the meeting 1:58pm