

HMSC Marsh and Estuary Advisory Committee
Barry Fisher Room, Guin Library, HMSC
Monday, 3/28/11, 1:00 to 2:30 PM
Minutes

Attendees:

OSU Representative: Sally Hacker (OSU Zoology): Chair
HMSC Representative: Sarah Henkel (HMSC)
Educational Representative: Nancee Hunter (Oregon Sea Grant)
HMSC Facilities Representative: Todd Cross (HMSC facilities/groundskeeping)
USDA Representative: Lee McCoy (alternate for Brett Dumbauld)
USEPA Representative: Walt Nelson
USFWS and Birding Community Representative: Roy Lowe
Port of Newport Representative: JoAnn Barton
Public Representative: Ralph Breitenstein
ODFW Representative: Mitch Vance
City of Newport Representative: Derrick Tokos
Oregon Coast Aquarium Representative: Marsh Myers (OCA)

Ex officio: George Boehlert, Maryann Bozza; HMSC

Committee Members absent:

Conservation Community Representative: Esther Lev, Wetlands Conservancy;
NOAA Representative: Dan Bottom; DOGAMI Representative Jonathan Allen

New Business

HMSC: Land ownership and responsibilities

Boehlert

- A campus map was presented and discussed regarding land ownership and stewardship issues. George gave a brief history of land acquisition for OSU and agencies, and indicated that no restrictions have ever been established on OSU's holding with the exception of duck hunting. He also raised the current wildlife management issue at OSU's Guin House property due to beaver activity, which has resulted in flooding of the property but also creation of coho habitat, potentially complicating management options.
- The question of ownership of the fringing marsh and other bordering properties was raised, i.e. the area upland of the Idaho Flats OSU property. It was decided that a comprehensive map of land ownership delineating boundaries for the areas around Idaho Flats is needed, and adding a layer of habitat information would be especially useful. Derrick Tokos (City of Newport) can help, as well as EPA for

habitat information. Ralph Breitenstein can provide species lists (algae and invertebrates) from the recent Rapid Assessment.

- It was suggested that Committee Member Ester Lev would have much to contribute on the integrated maps as well as on any plan due to the current work on the Lower Yaquina Plan.

Purpose of Committee

Discussion

Draft Terms of Reference

Establishment of Subcommittees

- A draft terms of reference was provided for the group's consideration.
- It was noted that the responsibilities of the committee could be loosely divided into several groups (possibly subcommittees), as follow: i) Preservation and Public Use, ii) Education and Outreach, and iii) Research Coordination.
- Important data that is currently not being collected is numbers of trail users; suggestions included automatic counters and/or trail logs. The committee needs to know how many people are using the trail and for what purposes if we want to manage that use. Sea Grant has numbers for formal educational uses, and ODFW may have some data on recreational use of the tide flat.
- JoAnn Barton said that the Port is increasing access to McLean Pt as mitigation for Port projects, and pointed out that there are eelgrass beds and marshes on the Port's holdings with no current stewardship plans, so this committee's work may serve as a model for the Port.
- Potential outcomes for the committee would be guidance documents for best practices for each user group (i.e. best practices for field trips). A set of these documents including maps might serve as a model for other marine labs. Committee members were asked to look for documents that can serve as a model for this committee.

Estuarine Trail, Erosion, and Joint Permit Application

Boehlert, Bozza

- George gave an update of the erosion control project, including a timeline of the fill permit application process and current status, which generated discussion but no new information. George will keep the committee informed as the permit process and revetment installation progresses.
- A monitoring program for the revetment will likely be a condition of a fill permit, so one of the committee's first responsibilities will be to engage in the experimental design and oversight.
- There was a question on the relative usefulness of letters of support for the Estuary trail from community partners; it was advised that, in general, there is no mechanism for them to be considered as part of the permit process right now.

General Discussion and Roundtable

Committee

- JoAnn Barton: Port of Newport may be able to help with erosion and estuary trail issues, with equipment, staff and/or grant funding (i.e. county, or economic development funds). The City offered that State funds are potentially available this year.
- Mitch Vance suggested that we collect data on the state listed marsh plant *Cordylanthus maritimus* this year when it is in bloom (in response to a discussion earlier in the meeting); we will need to be prepared with a protocol, and Todd Cross can keep an eye out for a spring bloom. Sally Hacker can help with protocols and possibly student help in data collection through the spring Marine Biology course.
- George mentioned that an environmental monitoring program will need further discussion, although we ran out of time at this meeting. A YSI probe is currently collecting data which is posted live on our website, including turbidity, salinity, depth and temperature. These data were recently useful during the tsunami event and are useful for a variety of researchers at the HMSC; a plan for data collection, archiving and dissemination would be useful.

Walking the trail (pending weather):

- Several committee members walked the trail to view the points of estuarine entry, the locations of major erosion, and to view the closed area with attendant signage and fencing.

Action items:

1. Committee members should comment on trail use policy, to be provided in an electronic format. Please send edits to Maryann.Bozza@oregonstate.edu.
2. Committee members should also provide comments about public use in response to the trail closure; this is likely to be a long-term closure, and signage, fencing and public access can be improved.
3. Develop a comprehensive map of land ownership delineating boundaries for stewardship areas
4. Develop a plan for quantifying trail users and uses.
5. Examine developing a protocol and plan for baseline distribution data for *Cordylanthus maritimus*.
6. Committee members will look for documents that can serve as a model for guidance documents for best practices for each user group.