

West End Natural Resources News

A publication of the North Pacific Coast Marine Resources Committee (NPC MRC) and NPC Lead Entity for Salmon Recovery.

Issue No. 3 April 2012

Seven Local Projects to be Funded by NPC MRC

The North Pacific Coast Marine Resources Committee (NPC MRC) consists of citizen and governmental representatives from across western Clallam and Jefferson Counties. As part of the coast-wide MRC program, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) approved funding for seven projects put forward by the committee this winter. All of the projects must be completed by June 2012.



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Dedicated Partners Work to Restore Lake Ozette's Threatened Sockeye Runs

by Megan Morlock, NMFS Communication Staff

On the northwest rim of the Olympic Peninsula, the history of Lake Ozette tells a compelling story in which a threatened population of sockeye is being restored by dedicated partners who refuse to let it go. Tens of thousands of sockeye once returned to Lake Ozette annually, spawning on the lake's beaches and rearing in its pristine waters. However, pressures from over fishing, timber harvest, road construction, and stream clearing have altered the freshwater ecosystem. The potential for residential and agricultural development may further degrade water quality and habitat, particularly beach spawning habitat. In addition, the introduction of non-native fish species to the watershed and the rise in West Coast pinniped populations subsequently increased the rate of predation on Lake Ozette's sockeye population. These collec-



Port Angeles student Loren Henry completes his Natural Resources Senior Culminating Project monitoring beaches for the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Photo: Dan Lieberman

ive pressures affected the reproductive success of Lake Ozette sockeye and the population was unable to sustain itself from one generation to the next. Once potentially exceeding 50,000 fish, the numbers dipped into the hundreds, and in 1999 Lake Ozette sockeye was listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The most current five-year average for wild spawners is 2,679 sockeye salmon. Though this is well below the recovery goal of 31,250 returning sockeye salmon, recovery progress is being made.

The sockeye's collapse spurred a coalition of concerned agencies and citizens, known as the Lake Ozette Sockeye Steering Committee,

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Welcome to the first of two *West End Natural Resources News* to be published during the first half of 2012. We hope you enjoy the articles. If you would like to receive future editions by regular mail or email please send a request to tpokorny@co.jefferson.wa.us.

to mobilize and address the biological and environmental factors impeding the population's survival.

Members of the Lake Ozette Sockeye Steering Committee include representatives of local landowners and interested citizens, Clallam County, Makah Tribe, Quileute Tribe, Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership, Olympic National Park, the Green Crow and Merrill & Ring timber companies, Washington Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Natural Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. When Lake Ozette sockeye became a federally protected species, the Steering Committee was instrumental in assisting the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to develop a biologically sound recovery plan to guide recovery efforts. NMFS adopted the Lake Ozette Sockeye Salmon Recovery Plan in 2009.

The recovery plan provides a blueprint for sockeye recovery, one that not only accounts for the biological needs of the fish but the cultural value they provide to the region's people, including tribes. Recovering this run will mean much more than restoring a healthy, self-sustaining population of salmon. Of course reestablishing a vibrant and resilient run of Lake Ozette sockeye is a core goal, yet just as significant are the cultural traditions that surround these fish. Achieving recovery also means we are able to sustainably harvest these fish to support traditional customs and engage in other historical traditions.



A giant spruce flirts with the Ozette River. Photo: NPC MRC archives



A promising future for Lake Ozette sockeye. Photo: NPC MRC archives

To achieve these biological and cultural goals, partners have taken the recovery plan from words to action, by development of an Implementation Plan. Through the work of the Lake Ozette Sockeye Steering Committee, the recovery plan is therefore coming to life in several key areas, including habitat restoration and scientific research. Some example recovery actions include:

- Makah Tribal biologists continue to monitor water quality in tributary streams and collect survival data by trapping juvenile sockeye migrants at a weir in the outlet of the lake;
- Implementation of and improvements in the Makah Tribe's Umbrella Creek and Big River hatchery programs continue to provide a genetic reserve for the at-risk beach spawners, and has improved the geographic distribution of the population by establishing spawning in these tributaries;
 - Local citizens continue to remove invasive weeds along streams, such as knotweed, to restore native vegetation and habitat complexity;
 - NMFS and Makah Tribe Fisheries Management collected river otter scat between 1998 and 2003. Through visual and genetic identification, the collected samples were analyzed to determine river otter food habits. The analysis documented monthly fluctuations of river otter predation rates on juvenile and adult salmon, with special emphasis on predation rates of adult Lake Ozette sockeye. This analysis was possible with financial support from the NPC MRC. The results of the analysis will inform and guide predation management strategies in the future;
 - Olympic National Park is managing fisheries in the lake to reduce the risk of incidentally



Lake Ozette sockeye spawning in the Big River. Photo: Caroline Peterschmidt, former project biologist for the Makah Tribe

catching sockeye and encouraging the removal of non-native fish that prey on and compete with juvenile sockeye;

- In December 2011, partners started censusing beach spawners using innovative sonar technology. This data will help to improve estimates of population abundance and distribution of beach spawners and will guide upcoming recovery efforts;

- Since 2001, forest landowners have implemented stream protection rules (Road Management and Abandonment Plan) designed to protect Lake Ozette sockeye and meet Clean Water Act standards. Nearly 25 percent of current timberlands are left unharvested to protect streams and unstable slopes that could deliver sediment to streams;

- In 1999-2000, the Quileute Tribe contracted with Rayonier, assisted by state (SRFB) grant funds, to build cross drains in the Ozette watershed. These divert drainage from ditches and roads back onto the forest floor;

- In 2011 alone, one forest landowner invested over \$100,000 fixing culverts and bridges and over \$300,000 in road surface maintenance to reduce sediment delivery to streams; and

- A new outreach committee is exploring communications and educational opportunities to inform and engage the public about Lake Ozette sockeye and how they can help the species on their road to recovery.

Several challenges lie ahead for Lake Ozette sockeye recovery. The Lake Ozette Sockeye Steering Committee continues to work diligently to identify on-the-ground actions that will provide the greatest potential benefit to the sockeye population. After identifying this critical queue of high value recovery projects, securing project partners and sufficient funds remains difficult during these uncertain economic

times. However, the dedication of individuals throughout the Olympic Peninsula is our greatest asset. We have made significant progress since the 1990s and there is no doubt that such devotion to this cause will carry Lake Ozette sockeye across the recovery threshold.

The Lake Ozette Sockeye Steering Committee welcomes new participants and meets quarterly at the Community Center in Sekiu. Meeting dates are noticed in local papers. To learn more about Lake Ozette sockeye recovery and how to get involved please visit:

The Lake Ozette Sockeye Recovery Plan: <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Salmon-Recovery-Planning/Recovery-Domains/Puget-Sound/Lake-Ozette-Plan.cfm>.

Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership: <http://www.wcssp.org>.

Seven Local Projects Continued from page 1

The NPC MRC is once again supporting the April beach cleanup (\$8000), two issues of this newsletter (\$5000), and the annual citizen science fair and potluck/bar-b-q (up to \$850) as well as science education for local elementary school communities through a partnership between the Feiro Marine Life Center, Seattle Aquarium and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (\$10,300).

New this year is a project sponsored by Daniel Lieberman, Natural Resources teacher at the North Olympic Peninsula Skills Center. The project is a feasibility study and proposal to the Quillayute Valley School District to support the implementation of student Senior Culminating Projects. These projects will connect students with trained mentors in natural resources science and foster understanding of the status of, and threats to, marine resources (\$3,223.60).

Also new this year, is a gap analysis of forage fish protection in our coast's oil spill response plan. Tami Pokorny of Jefferson County Water Quality will gather existing information about the presence of forage fish along the north coast and work towards developing new partnerships and outreach events to address the need for additional data. An important goal of the project is to identify a pathway for updating the Washington Coast Geographic Response Plan with forage fish protections in the event of an oil spill (\$1500).

The final project to be funded by the NPC MRC is Phase I of the Washington Working Coast project (\$7,000). Read the article "Jobs are Focus of Coast-wide MRC Project" on page 11 for more information.

Look for the announcement about future funding opportunities in the July 2012-June 2013 time frame on page 10.

Japan Tsunami Marine Debris (JTMD) Update

by Liam Antrim, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

In March 2011, the powerful Tōhoku earthquake off the coast of Japan and the ensuing tsunami created a human tragedy on an unconscionable scale. While recovery efforts continue, scientists are forecasting how tsunami debris will circulate across the Pacific and where some of it will likely wash up on dry land.

The tsunami engulfed low lying areas along Japan's east coast. As it receded, massive quantities of materials were carried into coastal waters. This was the stuff of everyday life and the broken remains, large and small, of human development – houses and lumber, cars and tires, boats and buoys, contents of kitchen cupboards and closets, shipping containers and plastic pieces.

In waters surrounding Japan, a dense “debris field” was



NOAA's Marine Debris website.

tracked for days by satellite imagery and aerial photos until materials sank, dispersed and blended with existing marine debris circling the Pacific. Only a few items, including one ship, have been spotted from ocean going vessels in recent months. Yet interest and concerns about the fate and effects of these materials persist.

A new acronym has emerged: JTMD refers to Japan tsunami marine debris. JTMD remaining on the water surface has been distributed by winds and ocean currents in patterns predicted by well-tested computer models. Scientists



Jefferson County citizen representative to the NPC MRC Chiggers Stokes holds a float that may be linked to the Japan tsunami of March 2011. Photo: Ed Ansorg

predict some of the debris that remains on the water surface will reach shores of the Olympic Peninsula in 2013. Some fast-travelling items have arrived already. But few who have studied the issue expect a mass of JTMD large enough to impact normal marine activity off our coast, and no experts expect there to be radioactivity associated with the debris.

This article focuses on government agency responsibilities and actions in the Pacific Northwest related to JTMD and where to go for specific information or to report sightings of various types of debris.

At the Federal Level two agencies have leadership roles – the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Debris Program (NOAA MDP) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Prevention, Outreach and Education

NOAA's Marine Debris Program (<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/welcome.html>) is our nation's lead agency addressing marine debris through education and outreach, research, and funding for various removal and prevention projects. In response to this issue, NOAA MDP developed a web page focused on JTMD (<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/japan-faqs.html>) as a portal for information sharing, including a set of “frequently asked questions.”

Debris Sightings

NOAA MDP has set up a central reporting mechanism for significant debris sightings – DisasterDebris@noaa.gov – where individuals can direct their observations from the ocean and shores.

Monitoring and Predicting Debris

NOAA's oceanographic models are being used to predict the path of JTMD traversing the Pacific. NOAA MDP has assumed a lead role in working with various agencies to collect marine debris data and to develop regional assessment and response frameworks, including one for Washington. Groups or individuals may request NOAA Marine Debris Program shoreline monitoring protocols at MD.monitoring@noaa.gov.

The Joint Information Center website, a “one stop shop” for Japan tsunami marine debris information.

Contaminants

EPA's responsibility is focused on contaminants and water quality, and their marine debris work focuses on prevention, reduction and clean-up. EPA produces a JTMD bulletin, which is available for download or subscription at <http://www.epa.gov/region9/marine-debris>.

At the Washington State level, three agencies have key responsibilities related to JTMD.

Coordination

Washington Department of Emergency Services serves as a coordinator for information sharing and has assembled a team from various state agencies to coordinate JTMD response in a whole government team approach, which includes state, federal, county and tribal representatives. One result of this collaboration is a series of JTMD community forums held in coastal communities in recent months.

Radioactive Materials

Washington Department of Health is the lead for radioactive materials. There is unanimous expert opinion

that there is extremely low risk of radioactivity associated with JTMD (see <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/rp/> and <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/japanfaqs.html>).

Hazardous Materials

Washington Department of Ecology has responsibility for hazardous materials such as containers of fuels and chemicals. Ecology will respond to reports of hazardous waste on the shore and work to recover and dispose of these materials in a safe manner. If you find a container that may contain hazardous materials, call 1-800-OILS-9119 (800-645-7911) to provide information to Ecology.

Human Remains

In the unlikely event that human remains are encountered, note the location and call 911. Report the finding to the county coroner and local law enforcement (Olympic National Park, county or tribe).

Personal Effects

Contact the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle (<http://www.seattle.us.emb-japan.go.jp>) or Ph: (206) 682-9107.

Learn More:

On March 13, the premier of British Columbia and the governors of Oregon, Washington and California announced that they will collaborate to manage potential marine debris. The new Japan Tsunami Marine Debris Joint Information Center is designed as a new “One-Stop Shop for Official Public Information and Helpful Resources from Government Agencies” (<http://disasterdebris.wordpress.com>).

Get the Marine Debris Tracker App



The Marine Debris Tracker mobile application, developed through a NOAA partnership with the University of Georgia, allows you to help make a difference every time you walk the beach by checking in whenever you find trash on our coastlines and you have cellular reception. You can easily track and log marine debris items from a list of common debris items found on the beach or in the water. The app records the debris location through GPS and you can view the data on your phone and submit to the Marine Debris Tracker Website for viewing and download later (requires registration, which you can do from the app). View it at <http://www.marinedebris.engr.uga.edu>.

Whale Spouts Spotted Along our Coast

Each spring, gray whales leave the shelter of the calving grounds in Baja California, Mexico and travel to their summer feeding areas in the North Pacific. Their route gives many Washington Coast residents and visitors a front row seat to the spring migration. This is a great time of year to grab a pair of binoculars and linger along our coast looking for spouts. The Pacific Northwest Whale Trail, <http://thewhaletrail.org>, singles out Cape Flattery and LaPush as prime places to watch whales during the spring migration, but these 40+ foot long mammals can be seen from many additional vantage points as well.

water in the Strait of Juan de Fuca between Neah Bay and Bullman Beach. Many linger at First Beach near LaPush – to feed on amphipods inhabiting the muddy bottom. Curious animals sometimes have look around above the water’s surface by orienting their bodies vertically and “spy hopping.”

Vessel-based watching

Another way to experience the gray whale migration, and to potentially see other marine mammal species en route, is by boat. Accessing the whale migration corridor directly requires special care and an eye to the weather but can be very rewarding. On calm spring days the numbers of gray whale spouts visible offshore can be truly impressive.

Most of the gray whales will be determinedly travelling north. They’ll surface to breathe and then often submerge for up to several minutes at a time. Behaviors such as spy



Photo taken in 2011 two kilometers SSW of La Push, WA. Photo: John Calambokidis/cascadiaresearch.org. Taken under NMFS Scientific Research permits issued to Cascadia Research Collective.

A large majority of the whales travelling through our area at this time of year are within a mile off shore. By contrast, the southward migration route is further offshore –18 miles or more from land. In the spring, gray whales come quite close in to feed, especially near Cape Alava and Kalaloch Beach. Whales are also occasionally seen feeding in shallow

hopping are typically less common out here than along the beaches.

Dall’s porpoise and white-sided dolphin frequently approach boats to ride the bow wake. As summer progresses, feeding humpback whales become more numerous. Killer, and even sperm whales may also be spotted now and then. If vessel-based gray whale watching interests you, inquire about

available tours in Neah Bay and Westport.

Something to Celebrate

The whale migration is a cause for celebration on many levels. The Eastern North Pacific stock of gray whales is a great example of the recovery of an endangered species and was removed from the U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife in 1994. There are now thought to be upwards of 26,000 animals! Their round trip migration of 7,400-12,400 miles is believed to be the longest of any mammal.

The Quileute Tribe honors whales during a special ceremony each spring. This year, the Whale Welcome was held on March 30 at First Beach in LaPush. The event began with a traditional dance performed by students at the Quileute Tribal School. The dance commemorates the ancestral relationship between killer whales and wolves and celebrates the tribe's reverence for all species of whales. Tribal elder Justin "Rio" Jaime greeted those present and shared words of appreciation for the children's involvement in this traditional event and the deep connection between the Quileute people and whales. Two young



*Killer whale dancer Jonah Black at the 2012 Whale Welcome ceremony, LaPush.
Photo: Tami Pokorny*

men, John Rush and Jonah Black, were designated to wade into the frigid surf in order to present a gift of salmon as an expression of goodwill.



The distinctive coloration and profile of a diving gray whale. Photo: Annie B. Douglas/cascadiaresearch.org. Taken under NMFS Scientific Research permits issued to Cascadia Research Collective.

BE WHALE WISE

STAY 100YARDS AWAY

Especially at this time of year, whales can come into close contact with vessels, people and fishing gear. When a person sees blows out on the water it's a good reminder to keep a close watch out for whales in the area, and keep extra line and debris out of the water. All marine mammals, including gray whales, are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended. New regulations also protect southern resident killer whales in inland waters of Washington, east of the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The Be Whale Wise campaign website, www.bewhalewise.org, explains how these new regulations work and offers guidelines for viewing all types of whales, porpoises and dolphins as well as seals, sea lions and birds on shore.

Gray Whale Strandings

by Adrienne Akmajian, Makah Fisheries Management

Gray whales are often in poor body condition as they travel north along our coast because little feeding occurs during the migration south to Mexico or in winter breeding and calving grounds. By early spring, much of the whales' fat reserves have been used up, so gray whale strandings on Washington beaches are fairly common during this time.



Photo: Jonathan Scordino, Makah Fisheries Management (Field ID# MKH-ER-09-1)

In April of 2009, a subadult gray whale washed up dead in Clallam County on the Makah Indian Reservation in a state of advanced decomposition and was investigated by the Makah Tribe's Marine Mammal Stranding Network.

Over the past 10 years, a total of four dead gray whales have been responded to on Clallam and Jefferson County beaches. Public reporting of dead whales on the beach can be very valuable to assessing the health and status of a population. For example, in 1999 and 2000, increased reporting helped to document an unusual mortality event in which large numbers of gray whales stranded throughout their entire range, with more than 50 gray whales stranding on Washington and Oregon beaches alone.

How do I know if a marine mammal on the beach is stranded?

Not all marine mammals on the beach are stranded. Seals and sea lions regularly use shoreline habitat and may spend extended periods of time out of the water. They use this time

to rest and regulate their body temperature and can go without food or water. A marine mammal is stranded if it is dead on the beach or floating in the water or if it is alive and injured or otherwise unable to return to the water or to its natural habitat.

What should I do if I find a live or dead marine mammal on the beach?

Keep your distance – if possible, stay back 100 yards and keep pets and children away. Live seals and sea lions on the beach can be dangerous to both you and your pet. Additionally, sick or dead marine mammals may carry zoonotic diseases that can easily transfer to humans and pets. Federal law prohibits harassing any marine mammal including touching, feeding, or disturbing their natural behavior.

You can help report live or dead stranded marine mammals on the beach by contacting the Northwest Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network. Please take pictures of the animal and collect as much information as you can about the stranding including when and where you saw the animal - date, time, and location - and a description of the animal - size, color, length of flippers, size or shape of dorsal fin, and any noted injuries or scavenging.

To report a stranding please call the Northwest Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network at 1-800-853-1964 or visit <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Marine-Mammals/Stranding-Maps.cfm> to find the number for your local Clallam or

Jefferson County responder.

For more information about marine mammal strandings in Washington State, please visit: <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Marine-Mammals/Stranding-Information.cfm>.

Marine Mammal Stranding Training Opportunity

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with partners from the NW marine mammal stranding program, will be holding a marine mammal stranding training on June 15, 2012 in Forks, WA. If you are new to this effort, this training will familiarize you with the marine mammals species that most often strand on the outer Washington coast and what to do when you encounter a stranded animal. If you are a past volunteer and would like to get a refresher, this is a great opportunity. For more information and to RSVP, write to Deanna_Lynch@fws.gov.

Improving Local Preparedness for Oil Spills

by Liam Antrim, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

Despite deep concerns about marine debris, a large oil spill would likely present the greatest threats to the marine resources and habitats and marine-based economy of the Olympic Peninsula. We carry memories of the 1989 Exxon-Valdez disaster in Prince William Sound, or the Nestucca (December 23, 1988) or Tenyo Maru (July 22, 1991) spills that affected our coastline. More recently, the 2010 Deep-water Horizon catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico reminded us of the devastating natural resource and economic impacts associated with large volumes of oil being released into marine waters.

Much is underway in our region to reduce this threat. Professionals who work on oil spills consider four phases of planning – prevention, preparedness, response, and restoration. Vessel traffic management and a permanently staged rescue tug in Neah Bay to assist vessels in distress offshore or in the Strait are examples of prevention measures.

Restoration mostly occurs after spill response is done, and it is directed at reversing or mitigating the damages caused by a spill. Other than being a citizen watchdog over government functions, there is not much a local resident can do to help with prevention and restoration.

Preparedness and response is where local citizens can contribute most effectively. Being prepared means having plans in place, having rapid access to spill response equipment, and having people trained to use the equipment properly and approach the incident safely. If there is a large petroleum spill, state and federal response agencies will depend on support from the local community, which means that local and tribal communities can be an important part of the national response system for our area. A petroleum spill, however, can create a situation hazardous to human

safety and health. A cautious person might ask - Can this fuel burst into flames? Is it safe to breathe these fumes? A first responder needs to know how to avoid dangerous situations, where the equipment is and how to use it. One basic class all trained spill first responders are required to have is called HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response).

Ecology, the U.S. Coast Guard, ExxonMobil, Marine Spill Response Corporation (MSRC), and NRC Environmental Service teamed up to offer free HAZWOPER classes in Neah Bay, Forks, and Taholah during the winter/spring of 2011 to bring this training directly to the communities where first responders are needed, and where people have the most to lose from a major oil spill. This year, HAZWOPER trainings will be offered the week of June 26-29.

These classes are an outreach effort of the Northwest Area Committee, the multi-party organization that coordinates oil spill prevention, preparedness, response in the Washington, Oregon, and Idaho region (see <http://www.rrt10nwac.com>). This training builds capacity for outer coast residents, especially tribal members living on the water, to more effectively protect natural resources from spill impacts. Local response to the tank truck incident near the Hoh River is a recent example of the value of this training.

In addition, Ecology, the U.S. Coast Guard, Exxon-Mobil, Marine Spill Response Corporation (MSRC), and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife sponsored free HAZWOPER classes in Sequim and Everett in 2011 that focused on wildlife recovery and rehabilitation during a spill incident. Approximately 140 volunteers attended these training sessions. Participants learned how to handle and clean



Photo Courtesy of Olympic National Park

Oil in ocean water after the Nestucca oil spill, probably on an Olympic National Park beach, 1988.

oiled wildlife effectively to give the wildlife the best chance for survival and recovery. This year, two oiled wildlife recovery classes will be held in Port Angeles on June 2 and June 23. Watch www.clallam.net/ccmrc for more information. Refresher classes are offered periodically in Port Angeles as an annual training to maintain qualifications for oiled wildlife responders.

There will be additional opportunities to take HAZWOPER classes in the future. The Northwest Area Committee plans to continue offering these classes each year to help local residents and first responders maintain preparedness and improve response capacity on their home territory. For oil spills, investment in prevention is a top priority, but it is also critical to retain strength in planning and preparedness to respond when a spill occurs.



February 2011 fuel tanker accident on Hwy 101. Photo courtesy of WA Department of Ecology.



Hazwoper training. Photo courtesy of NOAA.

Apply Now for Grants

The North Pacific Coast Marine Resources Committee (NPC MRC) is soliciting project proposals to be completed on the ground between July 2012 and June 2013. PROPOSALS ARE DUE May 11th, 2012.

Projects must be for marine oriented research, education or public outreach activities that focus on the Washington State outer coast between Cape Flattery and Queets. Projects may also engage the other Coastal MRCs in a coast-wide effort. Proposals may range from \$500 to \$20,000 and can stand alone or be the match for a bigger project. For more information please contact Rich Osborne (contact info on page 12).

Jobs are Focus of Coast-wide MRC Project

A project to analyze our region's marine resource-based industries is in its planning phase. It's one of two coast-wide projects selected by the four coastal Marine Resources Committees (MRCs) during the "MRC Summit" meetings last fall. The second project addresses fishing-related marine debris.

During Phase I of the project, staff at UW ONRC will assemble existing studies of marine based sectors of the coastal economy and develop lists of marine-based businesses and business leaders. If full funding for the project is obtained, an "Assessment of Washington's Working Coast" will be developed to describe and quantify the jobs that are sustained by our coast resources. The report will gage the importance of these jobs to the local, regional, and state economies and evaluate the regulatory environment.

According to a draft proposal developed by project advisor Miranda Wecker of the ONRC and MRC participants,

the University of Washington's Olympic Natural Resources Center could sponsor a class in the "Program on the Environment" (POE) to create the assessment. Graduate students would be engaged "in evaluating a range of factors important to the sustainability of the marine based economy of the coast: social, economic, legal and ecological." The project vision also includes an "economic summit" to bring together the region's marine resource-based industry leaders and to present and discuss the assessment's findings.



City of Forks attorney Rod Fleck helps sort out coast-wide priorities at the MRC Summit last fall. Photo: Tami Pokorny



Five counties participate in the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Coastal MRC Program (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/mrc>). The NPC MRC was established through a partnership between Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

SAVE THE DATE:

The 4th annual NPC MRC Citizen Science Fair and Potluck/Bar-B-Q will be held June 16, 2012 at the beautiful new Forks High School. Learn ways to get involved in hands-on projects to protect our coast. Enjoy the food, music, presentations and conversation about our spectacular part of the world. Family friendly!

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Volunteer for the Annual Beach Cleanup

This spring, the annual beach cleanup will be held on Saturday, April 21 along Washington's outer coast and in several places along the western Strait. To participate, please register in advance at the Washington CoastSavers website: coastsavers.org.

The North Pacific Coast Marine Resources Committee (NPC MRC) has supported the annual cleanup in Clallam and Jefferson Counties since 2009. This year, the MRC is contributing \$8,000 towards project management, waste disposal costs and supplies for the post cleanup bar-b-q for volunteers. The Lyrid Meteor Shower which will be in progress that same weekend according to a "heads up" on the CoastSaver's Facebook page. If the sky is clear, enjoy the celestial show from one of our newly cleaned beaches!



Bagged marine debris collected from Hobuck Beach during a recent clean up event. Photo: Tami Pokorny