



## Quiet Sound Leadership Committee Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2022

v.5/10/22

### Action Items

Category	What	Who	By When
	Exec/Elected officials briefing on QS progress	QS staff organize, LC extends invites	TBD, likely in the fall
	Follow up with Jason Jordan about briefing Port of Tacoma regarding funding	QS staff	End of April
	Call Senator Cantwell/Murry's office regarding community funding ask of congress	Angel/QS staff	ASAP
	Send QS one-pager to Mike Moore to pass onto his contacts	QS staff	End of April
	Create space on website to honor donors	QS staff	Mid-May
	Share "Funding Opportunities Research" sheet with LC	QS staff	End of April
	Conversations between WG chairs and Port of Seattle regarding Noise Mitigation and Management Plan	Danielle Butsick, WG chairs	End of May

Acronyms: QS - Quiet Sound, WG - Work Group, LC - Leadership Committee

### Agenda

**Land & water acknowledgment** - Kate Snider

**Orca moment** - Grace Ferrara

- Calf sighted at beginning of March which brings Southern Resident Killer Whale numbers up to 74
- Two of the other pregnancies were unsuccessful
- J-pod is in and out of Puget Sound right now, K and L are on the outer coast

### **Reminder of shared behaviors for this meeting**

Contact Quiet Sound: Rachel Aronson, Program Director  
[rachel@maritimeblue.org](mailto:rachel@maritimeblue.org), 360-218-2307

# QUIET SOUND

- Minimize multitasking, stay present
- Make space for everyone to participate
- Please contribute to the discussion, be concise and stay on point
- Stay on mute when not speaking
- Use Zoom chat as needed

## Brief Introductions

- Rachel Aronson, Quiet Sound Program Director, Washington Maritime Blue
- Angel Menchaca, Quiet Sound Operations Manager, Washington Maritime Blue
- Caitlin O'Morchoe, Graduate Fellow, Washington Maritime Blue
- Kate Snider, Principal and Founder of Floyd|Snider environmental consulting firm
- John Veentjer, Past Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound and current Chair of the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee
- Laird Hail, Director of Puget Sound Traffic Services, US Coast Guard
- Patrick Gallagher, Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound
- Randy Lumper, Puget Sound Policy Analyst for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Regan Nelson, Senior Advocate, Oceans Program, Marine Mammal Protection Project at the Natural Resources Defense Council
- Nora Nickum, Ocean Policy Senior Manager at Seattle Aquarium
- Mike Moore, Vice President at Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
- Danielle Butsick, Sr. Environmental Management Specialist, Port of Seattle
- Kathleen Hurley, Sr. Environmental Program Manager, Port of Seattle
- Kevin Bartoy, Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability Program Manager, WA State Ferries
- Jason Jordan, Director of Environmental Programs at Port of Tacoma

## Work Group Updates

### *Monitoring Whales & Vessel Noise*

- Met April 12, 2022
- Brought WG members up to speed on the QS program
- WG members received updates on the Port study and was asked for feedback
- WG members are glad to lend their expertise when appropriate

### *Vessel Operations & Incentives*

- WG members had a substantive conversation about plan for trail slowdown area
- Questions considered regarding the slowdown area - seasonal or real time? Geographic location? Speed profile on different vessels at different locations in the sound? What timing delays would affect the ships? Pilot times? Speed over ground vs. speed through water?
- Upcoming decision for the WG - are we gonna have a slow down this year and how are we gonna kick it off?
- In initial conversations with vessel operators, WG co-chairs have been emphasizing the messaging of *voluntary* and *trial*

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- Co-chairs and QS staff are starting to consider what the communication plan could be to reach all vessel operators who could participate
- It is a priority to keep consistency between ECHO and Quiet Sound programming and messaging

## *Whale Notification System to Vessels*

- QS staff and WG chair, Kevin, met in March
- The team decided to do individual outreach to folks regarding their interaction with and usage of WRAS rather than holding a meeting
- Smaller ferry operators won't be able to participate in committee but would like to stay informed
- Waiting to have the first meeting until we have something actionable for the group

## *Innovation & Vessel Quieting*

- First meeting will be April 20, 2022
- Rachel will lead the meeting since Joshua is out on leave
- Will be a lot of folks who may have not had overlap with QS yet
- Would be great to link this group to the IMO conversation

## *Evaluation & Adaptive Management*

- First meeting April 13, 2022
- Discussed the WG's workflow regarding monitoring and evaluation
- Members envision having input at the beginning and end of projects to help plan and follow up with monitoring
- Developing metrics will happen in collaboration with the project leads/WG chairs

## **Project Updates**

### *Project 1: Improve and Support the Whale Report Alert System (WRAS)*

- Contract w/ Ocean Wise for 25K of WRAS-related services almost complete. This funding will cover reports, trainings, etc. regarding WRAS usage
- Negotiation continues with Orca Network on inputting their real-time, location-specific sightings data into WRAS (via the platform Acartia)
  - Challenge - our anticipated funds from NFWF have not yet coming through and we are unclear on why
- The hope is for Orca Network real time sightings to come through in time for the trail slowdown (potentially this coming fall or winter)
- Orca Network and Ocean Wise are working on a data-usage agreement
- Could be beneficial for vessel operators to know "the whales are not here" as well as knowing when the whales are present
- The ferries have an understanding of what path the whales are taking when they cross ferry routes
- How accurate is the sightings data currently available? How do acoustics sightings support? Summer is great for visual sightings, in the winter there are fewer observers out on the water. Acoustic information/tech is not yet where we need it to be to accurately and timely locate SRKWs

### *Project 2: Trail Slowdown Area*

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- QS staff met with ECHO staff to learn more about their trail slowdown process and learnings, specifically concerning data collection for adaptive management
- QS staff submitted a grant to NOAA for 100k over 4 years to fund the communications to vessel operators about the slowdown
- Next step for this project is to create options for slowdown plans to help the Vessel Operations & Incentives WG decide how to move forward
- Whether or not we are able to monitor vessel noise through hydrophones when we do our trial slowdown, we can benefit from ECHO's findings that slowing a vessel by a certain number of knots reduces the noise profile

## *Project 3: Port of Seattle Gap Analysis for Hydrophone Network*

- Project leads from the Port came to the Monitoring Whales & Vessel Noise WG meeting for feedback on the project scope.
- The scope of the project is to
  - Phase 1: understand the underwater noise data collection capabilities that currently exist in Puget Sound
  - Phase 2: recommend tech to deploy to cover any gaps

## *Project 4: Support Ocean's Initiative Hydrophone Study*

- Ocean's Initiative is conducting research this summer to collect noise levels in certain areas, as well as recalibrate existing hydrophones, and facilitate a community science project with hydrophone kits for the public to use
- QS has a hydrophone kit!
- Port of Seattle could help with QS getting some boat time to try out the hydrophone kit

## *Project 5: Navy's Northwest Tech Bridge challenge*

- The tech challenge is now closed
- Rachel is the lead evaluator for the proposals
- There were 14 valid responses, 9 moved on to the evaluation stage. The winner will be announced in about a month

## *Other thoughts*

- Request from Jason for Rachel to give an update to the Port of Tacoma council on these exciting project updates! Kathleen will follow up with Rachel and Jason to help coordinate
- Idea proposed for a QS briefing for elected officials/appropriate executives
  - If more than 2 commissioners are invited then we'll need to make it a public meeting with options for public comment

## **Budgeting/funding**

### *Review proposed annual budget*

- Reminder - the QS Operating Procedure says the LC must pass a budget that will go on to the Maritime Blue Board of Directors for final approval
- We can pass an unbalanced budget as Maritime Blue may be able to supply occasional funds to fill some gaps
- Review of current year budget - we are ending with no surplus this fiscal year, we did not use some buckets of money this year which will be moved for use in the next fiscal year
- Reminder - the fiscal year is the same as the state, July 1 to June 30

# QUIET SOUND

- Three options of the budget for fiscal year July 2022 - June 2023
  - Option 1: We fund everything we had originally planned on, hire a full time project manager, and we don't have any additional sources of funding - this would land QS in a significant deficit
  - Option 2: No additional funding and we don't fund everything - no project manager, no Ocean Wise WRAS services, no external facilitator - still has a deficit but not as significant
  - Option 3: Moderate additional income and low expenses - no project manager, no Ocean Wise WRAS services, no external facilitator, presumed additional funding - ends in a minor surplus

## *Accept the budget*

- Budget option 3 is approved

## *Funding team request*

- Let QS staff know if you have a connection with development person that can connect us with funding opportunities
  - Kathleen has connections with folks who do foundation fundraising
  - Patrick wants to help anyway he can! He will reach out to his contact at the Gate's Foundation
- QS needs to start the prep work for the next state legislature funding ask to occur fall 2023
  - Nora is happy to discuss ideas and help prep
  - Kathleen is connected to state leg funding work with Port of Seattle, is happy to help
- QS could submit a community request to congress for financial support, QS staff will contact Senator Murry's office
- QS staff will share our list of funder ideas with the LC to see if we're missing anyone
- What is most helpful for Rachel/QS staff in support from the LC/fundraising sub-committee?
  - Rachel is most unfamiliar with the foundation scene
  - Long-term goal is for regular committed federal dollars
- Request to keep LC informed on the fundraising-related work so folks aren't duplicating efforts
- Request for written note that could be passed on (through Mike) to organizations requesting dollars
- Publicize contributors/donors on QS website - companies may be incentivized to donate if their name is publicized
- Ask LC members to support specific capacity items while Rachel is looking to fund more staffing capacity

## **Port of Seattle update on Underwater Noise Mitigation and Management Plan**

- Port of Seattle (Danielle Butsick) is starting to write an Underwater Noise Mitigation and Management Plan. The work is supported by a consultant
- The Port wants to increase their level of certification from a 2 to a 3 in the underwater noise realm, which requires having a noise mitigation and management plan

# QUIET SOUND

- There are four categories within the plan:
  - Partnerships
  - Advocacy for policy regarding underwater noise
  - Financial investments in studies and tech advancement regarding underwater noise mitigation
  - Leadership in stewardship of facilities
- The Port is conducting initial underwater monitoring to understand baseline noise levels which will help set noise reduction targets and will lead to a plan for consistent monitoring
- Danielle would like to connect with WG chairs to discuss what kinds of actions the Port could include in their plan that would support QS work, this plan will direct the Port's work over the next many years
- Danielle would like to have those meetings within the next few weeks, the final plan is to be submitted by October
- Danielle's email is [butsick.d@portseattle.org](mailto:butsick.d@portseattle.org)

## **Media updates/Other/Closing**

- QS has been in the media/news a lot!
- Quiet Sound was featured in Tradewinds, KNKX public radio, Seattle Times, Kitsap Sun, Edmonds Herald, and West Seattle Blog.
- Quiet Sound Program Director was interviewed for future features in Made in Seattle, SEAtoday, and Work Boat Magazine. Upcoming op-ed in Sea Tech Magazine by the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound
- Quiet Sound Director presented at the Whale Lecture hosted by The Whale Trail.
- QS and LC members will be presenting at the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference