



Quiet Sound Leadership Committee Meeting Summary

October 18, 2022

Meeting notes v. 12/15/22

Action Items	Who	By When
QS to discuss with Orca Network options for adding sightings directly to WRAS if API not available	QS staff	Oct 24
LC members contact Rachel if you have people that would like to speak at the Dec live event	LC members	November
QS staff will prep for the next LC meeting to discuss the cetacean scope of QS	QS staff	January
Review the Makah tribal ocean policy and coordinate with their ocean policy workgroup to make sure that sightings collection is sensitive to treaty interests.	QS Staff	Q1
Quiet Sound will meet with the Port of Seattle to confirm that priorities for use of port funds are consistent with the scope of work	QS Staff	Q1

Decisions

The LC supported QS exploring how to mobilize other support for getting all cetacean sightings into WRAS.

Acronyms: QS - Quiet Sound, WG - Work Group, LC - Leadership Committee, SRKW - Southern Resident Killer Whale

Agenda

Welcome/Introductions

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- Land and water acknowledgement
- Agenda overview and expectations

2022-2023 Fundraising Update

- Fundraising asks
 - NFWF- QS submitted a 250K proposal to NFWF for continued WRAS development by potentially connecting Ocrasound hydrophones, project manager staff time and funding for an early career fellow
 - Note from Kevin - confirm physical infrastructure of hydrophones is adequate for the data needed by end users of WRAS
 - Cruise Foundation - Quiet Sound is working on a 20K proposal to support data analysis
 - Legislative outreach for 2023-25 biennium -
 - Legislative briefings for Representative Lekanoff, Senator Lovelett, and Senator Rolfes
 - NGO briefing
 - Engaging with Gov's office - in December will send a budget ask letter from the QS LC
 - Proviso request in January
 - Also finishing paperwork to be set up for NOAA dollars, which may be about \$25k/year for 4 years
- Reminder of budget process - while we originally envisioned that workgroups would shape up proposals to the LC, at this time QS doesn't have the dollars for WGs to propose projects. Instead, QS staff will draft a proposed budget for 2023-24.
- Next steps:
 - State budget outreach
 - Foundation/philanthropy budget outreach

Project Updates

Caitlin O'Morchoe gave updates on the major Quiet Sound projects currently underway.

- Project 1: Further Develop the Whale Report Alert System
 - Quiet Sound developed a contract with Orca Network for \$25k to add real-time SRKW sightings to WRAS as of the end of September. This a six-month contract.
 - Quiet Sound developed a data usage agreement with Ocean Wise, Conserve.io, Acartia.io, and Orca Network
 - The WRAS/Acartia.io API connection has taken longer than originally anticipated because of developer availability.
 - End goal is that Orca Network sightings go into WhaleAlert, WhaleAlert shares sightings with Acartia.io, Acartia.io goes to WhaleReport.

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- Comment: Please review the Makah tribal ocean policy and coordinate with their ocean policy workgroup to make sure that sightings collection is sensitive to treaty interests.
- Question: Why hasn't Orca Network started putting data into WRAS already and why just SRKWs?
 - 5-way data usage agreement took a significant amount of facilitation and mediation
 - Developer availability has limited the API development
- Comments: Several members of the LC expressed support for getting all cetacean sightings into WRAS (not just SRKW, noting that endangered humpbacks are in WA waters and that a minke whale was struck by a ship recently), and frustration that it hasn't moved further along. The LC supported QS exploring how to mobilize other support for getting all cetacean sightings into WRAS.
- Project 3: Port of Seattle hydrophone gap analysis
 - Jon Sloan suggested that Quiet Sound meet with Port offline to confirm that priorities for use of funds are consistent with the scope of work
- Project 4: Oceans Initiative hydrophone study
 - Research started in summer/fall 2022
 - Calibrating the existing Orcasound hydrophones
 - Mapping underwater noise across Puget Sound
- Project 5: Navy NW Tech Bridge Challenge
 - Winners selected, not publicized yet
 - Options for continued development support from Quiet Sound and other Maritime Blue programs

2022-23 Voluntary Trial Slowdown Update

- Caitlin reviewed the progress on preparing for the voluntary slowdown.
- Question: What percentage of voyages are covered by the people who have committed in advance in the survey? We don't know that right now.
- Question: Has there been an increase in traffic to the trial web page? Unknown but Quiet Sound staff can look.
- When slowdown starts, we plan on an email update every other week.
- Jason Wood
 - Hydrophone location chosen for being close to shipping lane, far from ferries, good depth and currents
 - "Shakedown deployment" already done
 - The hydrophone will be in the water Nov 22- Jan 2023
 - Lander has: Primary and backup hydrophone, current meter, AIS and wind
 - SMRU will provide ambient noise analysis in April to QS. Analysis will show how often the slowdown period was quieter than the baseline period

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- SMRU will exclude periods when small boats are present through AIS and exclude periods when the wind blows more than ~10kts, and focus on periods with slacker currents
- Question: Should the analysis exclude small boats? Will we lose an oppt. to measure all anthropogenic noise? Answer: we could provide a curve for a noise, but Quiet Sound wanted to focus on large ships in this trial period. Because January is the control period, there should be fairly few rec vessels.
- Comment: Analyzing all anthropogenic sources would be valuable, if Quiet Sound and SMRU can add that to the scope.
- Question: Will you get enough data if excluding periods when currents are higher than 1/2 a kt? Answer: That was why we picked the area we did off Useless Bay, but we expect to get about 10% of the entire period as useable data. But we could also exclude flow noises by decade bands.
- Question: Can you see the impact of ultrasonic antifouling systems? Answer: Yes, the system will pick it up, but it was a particular cruise ship using it and this trial is happening after cruise season. Jason was one of the authors on the study that picked this up in Burrard Inlet.
- Comment: Would be interested in further study to determine which vessels contribute what percentage of noise in this area.
- AIS data will be collected by Marine Exchange and reviewed by SMRU. SMRU will calculate speed through water. We'll be able to identify, for example, are there sections of the slowdown where it's harder to meet speed targets.
- Question: How is the tidal model calibrated? Answer: We've worked to find the best model available with fine resolution, the ECHO model. We can validate one area with the current meter on the hydrophone. This is a very dynamic area, and any model is just a model. We recommend having a buffer of a knot or so for the speed limits because we're using the best tools we have access to but it will never be perfect.
- Rachel reviewed media coverage of the slowdown.

Other topics

- Kate noted that the LC should have a conversation around Quiet Sound's approach to conservation of other cetaceans. Could Rachel prioritize an offline conversation this quarter and bring back to LC in Jan 23? Kate noted that there may be certain initiatives where it would be possible to focus on additional cetaceans.
 - Comments: Some initiatives may likely have co-benefits (eg slowdown could benefit in area) and some initiatives won't have co-benefits unless we focus on that (eg only adding SRKW to WRAS). Might there be a marginal cost to adding other cetaceans with higher ship strike risks? Would be valuable to have an estimate of additional costs for other cetaceans for different projects from staff.

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- Comment: Would rather have the conversation only as a LC committee with no offline sidebars
- Comment: Please remember that it would be a Leadership Committee decision to revisit the Operating Procedures and expand the scope of Quiet Sound to all cetaceans, or all anthropogenic noise. There is interest in having this conversation in January 2023.
- Action Item: QS will bring a review of projects re: focus on orcas or other cetaceans and see where additional benefits to other cetaceans can be pursued

Updates from LC members

- From Todd: develop supplemental SEPA checklist for recommendation #27, consolidate/review mitigation options to reduce underwater vessel noise - folks have been invited to be involved in this upcoming meeting to develop a list of mitigation options for vessels to consider
- From Regan: Regan has been representing QS in initial conversations with other west coast slowdown areas about the potential development of an alliance of all slowdown areas - increase understanding of slowdown areas for vessel operators, collaboration on analyzing AIS data
- LC members should let Rachel know if they have electeds that are REALLY interested in speaking in the Dec live event

Attendees

- Rachel Aronson, Quiet Sound Program Director, Washington Maritime Blue
- Caitlin O'Morchoe, Quiet Sound Project Manager, Washington Maritime Blue
- Patrick Gallagher, Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound
- Joshua Berger, President/CEO of Washington Maritime Blue
- Kate Snider, Principal and Founder of Floyd|Snider environmental consulting firm
- Todd Hass, Special Assistant to the Director, Puget Sound Partnership
- Kevin Bartoy, Chief Sustainability Officer for WA State Ferries
- Natalie Lowell, Hershman Fellow with the Makah Tribe
- Nora Nickum, Ocean Policy Senior Manager at Seattle Aquarium
- John Veentjer, Past Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound and current Chair of the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee
- Randy Lumper, Puget Sound Policy Analyst for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Jon Sloan, Sr. Manager Environmental Programs, Port of Seattle
- Regan Nelson, Senior Advocate, Oceans Program, Marine Mammal Protection Project at the Natural Resources Defense Council
- Laird Hail, Director of Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Services, US Coast Guard
- Councilman Chad Bowe chop, Makah Tribe Council
- Jason Jordan, Director of Environmental Programs at Port of Tacoma
- Jason Wood, Managing Director, SMRU Consulting

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- Kathleen Hurley, Sr. Environmental Program Manager, Port of Seattle