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June Natural Resources Newsletter

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**Natural
Resources**

Newsletter

June 2020

Announcements

COVID-19 Update

Island County Public Health staff, including Natural Resources, has had to limit work on committees in order to accommodate the COVID-19 response efforts. We appreciate your patience, understanding, and flexibility during this time.

For COVID-19 resources and updates, please visit [Island County Public Health's COVID-19 webpage](#). We wish the best to all of you, and are thankful to be part of such a strong, resourceful community.

Programmatic Updates

[Island Local Integrating Organization \(ILIO\)](#)

The ILIO Technical Committee will meet via WebEx Tuesday, June 9 from 1-3pm.

Puget Sound Partnership and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission are hosting a Virtual Puget Sound Days on the Hill. These will take place Fridays in June from 1:00-2:30pm. Advanced registration is required. Please [click here](#) to register. Announcements with confirmed speakers for that week as well as a registration link for each event can be found [here](#).

The Strategic Initiative Leads for Habitat, Stormwater, and Shellfish are pleased to share the funding recommendations of the Strategic Initiative Advisory Teams (SIAT) and the Local Integrating Organizations for FFY2020 Puget Sound Geographic Funds (commonly known as National Estuary Program, or NEP, Funds). The recommendations are accessible via the [Partnership's Strategic Initiative Leads website](#)

The Habitat Strategic Implementation Advisory Team approved the ILIO recommendation to fund the Livingston Bay Near Term Action (NTA). The \$200,000 will be applied to engage landowners to advance Livingston Bay protection/restoration project. The project area is located adjacent to the Stillaguamish River. Thus, protecting/restoring this site will provide critical habitat for out-migrating salmon. Livingston Bay is identified as a priority area in the ILIO Ecosystem Recovery Plan and in the WRIA 6 Salmon Recovery Plan as a high priority project. We all look forward to the feasibility study to see what might be possible for protection and/or restoration for this priority nearshore habitat!

Be sure to check [ILIO's website](#) for upcoming meeting agendas and minutes.

[Marine Resources Committee \(MRC\)](#)

The MRC will meet via WebEx on Tuesday, July 7 from 3-5pm.

Congratulations to Inari, the winner of the 2020 Discover Our Island Shores art and essay contest hosted by the MRC and [Sound Water Stewards!](#) See Inari's beautiful artwork and

creative essay responses [here](#).

The MRC and Sound Water Stewards are hosting another art contest this summer, open to students in Island County entering grades 2-7. Find more information [here](#)!

MRC monitoring activities have resumed, with volunteers following COVID-19 safety protocols, and conducting activities individually or in groups no larger than five. We still need a couple Whidbey volunteers for our forage fish spawn surveys. If you are interested or would like to learn more, contact Anna Toledo (a.toledo@islandcountywa.gov, 360-678-2349).

The [Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan](#) is now available! This plan, prepared by the [Northwest Straits Commission](#) and several partners, provides a research and management framework for coordinated action to improve understanding of kelp forest population changes and declines, while also working to implement and strengthen recovery and protective measures. Many thanks to the MRC members who participated in the development of this plan!

Be sure to check [MRC's website](#) for upcoming meeting agendas and minutes.

Salmon Recovery

SRTCC (Salmon Recovery Technical and Citizen Committee) will meet via WebEx Wednesday, June 17 from 1-4pm.

SRTCC postponed ranking projects until the upcoming June meeting to enable more robust discussion around this year's project and funding strategies moving forward. SRTCC will also be working on lessons learned from recent project developments and considering if and how to adaptively manage our work in salmon recovery for WRIA 6.

The [Northwest Straits Foundation](#) (NWSF) was successful in securing funding for beach seining at Cornet Bay, which will resume in February 2021. This monitoring research will be providing information on the long term recovery of the restored beach and how it is still responding 10 years after the bulkhead and creosote were removed. Thanks Jason Morgan and the NWSF staff for your support!

The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council is working on several large policy topics, including the update to the Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan, how to support the Action Agenda and Vital Sign updates, and how to create new funding sources, or align with existing funding sources, to better fund salmon recovery in the region.

There is an acute awareness among the Puget Sound Partnership and other ecosystem recovery partners that the current COVID-19 emergency will impact all things fiscal and

that natural resources work across the board is very vulnerable to budget reductions. Efforts are being made to assess priorities, develop creative funding strategies and to demonstrate how a healthy ecology is still crucial to all recovery, including human health and economies.

Be sure to check out the [Salmon Recovery website](#) for upcoming meeting agendas and minutes.

Resources and Interesting Reads

Local News

Check out this [article](#) about the upcoming fire season. This year, the National Weather Service predicts a summer that is warmer and dryer than average. Officials are preparing for the fire season to begin early. Climate change is increasing fire risk west of the Cascades.

Funding Opportunities

The [National Estuary Program \(NEP\)](#) Coastal Watersheds Grant (CWG) Program is a nationally competitive grants program designed to support projects that address urgent and challenging issues threatening the well-being of coastal and estuarine areas within determined estuaries of national significance. For more information and to download their 2020 Request for Proposals, visit their [website](#). Letters of intent are due Friday, August 7. A recorded webinar will also be made available on their website.

Learn

[Jefferson Land Trust](#) has a new program called [Nature in Your Neighborhood](#), which hosts weekly explorations guided by an experienced naturalist (or two). They'll kick off a week of learning with a Virtual Nature Walk and then send you out with activities to explore and observe hidden wonders close to home. In addition, each week the Online Study Group will come together to wrap up and discuss their adventures from the previous week. The program is free and open to all ages, so you're welcome to encourage your loved ones to participate with you. Sign up [here!](#)

Are you staying home a lot with children right now (or do you just like to color)? This sweet eco-friendly activity book, *The Great Gorge Adventure*, from [Oregon's East Multnomah](#)

[Soil and Water Conservation District](#) looks pretty fun! It's available in multiple languages. [Download it here.](#)

[Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program's](#) (PSEMP) Nearshore Work Group hosted a webinar showing a mix of presentations planned for the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference. [Visit this link](#) for a recording of the presentations.

Listen to this [Coastal Café episode](#), "The Blob," featuring a conversation with Chris Harvey, a National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Northwest Fisheries Science Center biology, about the famous warmwater "blobs" of 2014, 2016, and 2020 and the havoc they caused on marine life.

Check out this [article](#) about the search for the invasive European green crab in Puget Sound (see photo below).

Learn about the role of fishing piers in our communities in this [article](#) about Seattle's vanishing piers.

Tools

This [new resource](#) from the [Stewardship Centre for British Columbia](#) provides a way to look at commercial, multi-family residential, subdivision, park, and institutional waterfront development. To learn more, two webinars will be hosted. 1) Helping Canadians do the right thing: Green Shores for Shoreline Development (2020) will be on Tuesday, June 9 at 11am. 2) Green Shores for Shoreline Development 2020: an update for shoreline practitioners will be on Wednesday, June 24 at 11am. Register [here](#).

The [Align Grant Coordination Workgroup](#) has been working together with [South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group](#) and [NOAA Restoration Center](#) to develop an optional "conservation project budget standard" for Washington State. This allows a project sponsor to develop a single budget worksheet, and from that master worksheet extract the information necessary for multiple grant applications and to track grant funding over the lifecycle of a project. Some funders may accept the worksheet as a project budget, and this whole project budget may serve as a tool for coordinating funding among sponsors and funders. This capability is important as our projects become more phased and complicated as we rise to the practical challenges of ecosystem recovery and stewardship. A current version is available at the [Conservation Project Budget Standards](#) wiki page.

Act!

The [Washington State Department of Ecology](#) (Ecology) is developing a quantitative model to assess current and potential future risks of oil spills in Washington waters, and

would like input. They are planning a series of events extending into 2021. The first events are introductory webinars. The webinar on Wednesday, June 17 from 12:30-2pm will focus on Grays Harbor ([register here](#)). More information about the project can be found on [Ecology's risk modeling webpage](#).



The European green crab (Carcinus maenas). Photos: Kelly Martin and Jeff Adams/WSG

Events - Attend While You're At Home!

Tuesday, June 9	At 11am, DG Blair (Stewardship Centre for BC) and Jim Johannessen (Coastal Geologic Services, Inc.) will provide an overview of the recent update to the Green Shores for Shoreline Development guide and its application for marine and lake shoreline management in Canada. The webinar is titled Helping Canadians do the right thing: Green Shores for Shoreline Development (2020). Register here .
Tuesday, June 9	The ILIO Technical Committee will meet via WebEx from 1-3pm.
Wednesday, June 17	Ecology's Risk Modeling introductory webinar will take place from 12:30-2pm. It will focus on the Grays Harbor area. Register here .
Wednesday, June 17	SRTCC will meet via WebEx from 1-4pm.
Wednesday, June 24	At 11 am, DG Blair (Stewardship Centre for BC) and Jim Johannessen (Coastal Geologic Services, Inc.) will provide participants with an overview of the recent update to the Green Shores for Coastal Development credits and ratings guide. The webinar is titled Green Shores for Shoreline Development 2020: an update for shoreline practitioners. Register here .
Tuesday,	The MRC will meet via WebEx from 3-5pm.

July 7

Thanks for your interest in [Island County Natural Resources](#).

For more info, contact Ann Prusha: a.prusha@islandcountywa.gov or 360-678-2347.

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