

**Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
6-8PM on January 7, 2025 at
WSU Classroom (97 Oak Bay Rd)
Meeting Minutes**

Present:

Neil Harrington, Tribal
Heidi Eisenhour, *ex officio*, BoCC
Brad Bebout, District 1
Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1 Alt
Jeff Taylor, District 2, NWS Rep
Brenda Johnson, District 2
Sarah Fiskens, District 3, NWS Alt
Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv
Emily Buckner, Marine Science
Gordon King, Commercial
Troy McKelvey, Recreation
Carol Hasse, *ex officio*, Port of Port Townsend
Roy Clark, Recreation Alt

Absent:

Frank Handler, District 2 Alt
Judy Surber, City of Port Townsend

Via Zoom

Tim Cross, District 3 Alt

Guest Speakers:

Solenne Walker - DNR Aquatic Land Manager
Birdie Davenport - DNR Aquatic Reserve Program

Staff: Katie Kowal – Water Resources Program Coordinator
Jefferson County MRC/WSU Extension

Topic	Update or Issue	Decisions/Follow-Up	Responsibility
CALL TO ORDER GUEST INTRODUCTIONS	Chair Betsy Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Introductions were made. Brenda thanked Gordon for leading the meeting last year.	A quorum was present.	All members – please send volunteer hours to Katie.
AMENDMENTS TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Amendments to / Approval of Agenda Jeff: NWSFC vs NWCC update Amendments to/Approval of December 2024 Minutes Neil: Correction on the 5th bullet point: 1500 bags, 15 people could spread 100 bags each (correction below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neil thinks that if they had a few hours of low tide in March and 15 people, they could spread 1500 bags of shell. Betsy: Add at end of Dec 2024 minutes: the location of Fort Worden to the Marine Science Center Shark Talk	Neil moved to approve the agenda w/ amendments. Troy seconded. Motion passed. Janette moved to approve the December minutes. Seconded by Sarah. Motion passed.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	Peter Joseph, Local resident He has lived in Port Ludlow 29 years, Shore Steward for 20+ years DERELICT VESSELS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He sees a problem with enforcement in Port Ludlow. The Coast Guard doesn't do anything about the Vessels The State doesn't do anything, they seem to want to push off to County and he can't get the County to do anything. He is concerned that these boats could break free of their anchorage. Some have people living on them, some don't. He's talked to Sheriff, Health Dept., Port of PT, but he isn't getting anywhere. POACHING OF OLYMPIA OYSTERS IN Port Ludlow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three months ago, five men went to the oyster bed with buckets and cleaned them out. After filling buckets, then they filled blankets. 		

	<p>Peter thought about calling the Sheriff, but there were five of them and one of him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He would love to see that area restored with Oysters and wanted to bring it to the MRC’s attention. • Is there anything the MRC can do to enforce or emphasize? • Betsy said these issues are very important to the MRC. • Neil mentioned that Tim Cross brought up Port Ludlow for Oyster restoration. • Neil recently saw poaching from his office and called the poaching line. He thought that nothing would come of it. A woman called him back in a couple minutes and traveled from Port Angeles to Sequim Bay immediately. She told him in the meantime, to watch discreetly and not identify himself. • She fearlessly approached two salmon poachers on Jimmycomelately creek. <p>WDFW Poaching Hotline https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/enforcement/report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jon Waggoner mentioned that WDFW is very quick and may even have a payout. • Neil said that WDFW has poaching enforcement with Shellfish, Fish, Hunting, and he was very encouraged. WDFW wants to know and brought up the idea of having them be a speaker at a future meeting. • Peter Joseph said that he thought this was a “one-off”. • Brenda addressed the Derelict Vessels topic- see her report below under PROJECT PROPOSAL DISCUSSION • They had a meeting this morning for more strategizing and outreach on this issue with partner agencies. <p>State Agency Hotline for Derelict Vessels 800-902-BOAT</p>		
<p>GUEST SPEAKER</p> <p>Solenne Walker, Aquatic Land Manager DNR</p> <p>and</p> <p>Birdie Davenport, DNR aquatic Reserve Program Manager</p>	<p>Solenne noted that as the Aquatic Land Manager, one of the most important things needed for Derelict Vessels is law enforcement to enforce the Aquatic Land Statutes that are on the books.</p> <p>Solenne is more DNR Aquatic Marine <u>Geologist</u> than Biologist. For the last decade, her area of work has been Island and Kitsap Counties. She has done a lot of work with Kelp restoration, overseeing most of Puget Sound restoration projects, in Central and North Puget Sound. Involved in MRC from 2019-2023 doing Kelp studies.</p> <p>Protection Island Aquatic Reserve Boundary Extension Proposal Solenne brought this Reserve proposal to Birdie Davenport in December, so they are at the beginning of this project.</p> <p>Two Reserves in the Eastern Straits of Juan de Fuca</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smith and Minor Islands • Protection Islands <p>The protected area would extend into Puget sound....potentially Point Wilson</p> <p>BIRDIE: WHAT DOES “PROTECTION” MEAN? AREN’T AQUATIC LANDS ALREADY PROTECTED BY THE STATE?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Reserves add additional protection for tidelands and bed lands, there are also fresh water reserves. Does not include private lands. • Aquatic Reserves do not include management of fish, birds, mammals – that is WDFW. They work with WDFW in part because they are managing the habitats and they consider them when nominating new Reserves. • They emphasize scientific monitoring and research, restoration and educational use. • Three scientists in program and a team of AmeriCorp folks that are year round that do much of the stewardship and monitoring of the reserves. 	<p>Please see email from Katie with PDF of slides from the presentation.</p>	

	<p>PROPOSAL SLIDES</p> <p>EXPANSION SLIDE - SOLENNE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eastern Strait is a high energy convergence zone of weather, wind and water bodies. Cold, nutrient rich water from the Pacific Ocean mixes with Admiralty Inlet at the main geographical entrance to Puget Sound. • Protection Island Aquatic Reserve includes McCurdy Point and NW shore of Clallam County. • Connecting this northern shoreline habitat--which is a near continuous Kelp forest-- and Sea Grass meadows to PIAQ. An ecosystem approach that would protect marine habitat and connectivity in this entire area. • Betsy asked if Patridge Bank was part of Smith and Minor Island Aquatic Reserve. Birdie replied that she thought it was and that there is a massive floating Kelp bed there. "The largest Bull Kelp bed in the state." <p>FLOATING KELP CANOPY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide showed locations of the densest Kelp beds: McCurdy Point and along the northern shore to Point Wilson. • Natural undeveloped shoreline in a rich, high-energy, convergence zone. • The North Shore has had: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 32 years of Fixed Wing Aerial Kelp Canopy surveys ○ Nearly a decade of Kayak-based Kelp Surveying by MRC and DNR ○ Conducted Linear Extent surveys and Drone surveys • There are new Kelp Index monitoring buoys at the site, one of fifteen in a network from Neah Bay to San Juan Islands to Squaxin Island • Is now the site of understory Kelp surveys • Kelp is food source for endangered Pinto Abalone in Salish • Seed source for Kelp Restoration • The area has been studied for years <p>Status and Trends Classification Categories</p> <p>BULL KELP CANOPIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North shore of Jefferson County is currently stable and is increasing. • Kelp Conservation is in full swing. • Significant - 80% declines in Central and South Puget Sound over 150 years. • 36% decline in San Juan Islands in one decade. <p>WORLDWIDE CONCERN ABOUT KELP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Beach Kelp still stable--doesn't have the stressors of the Puget Sounds. No overwater structures, vessel traffic, shoreline development, etc... • Primary impacts to North Beach are more from human uses, pollutants and climate change. <p><i>"Where floating Kelp is stable, conservation is a priority."</i> The Kelp Forest Monitoring Alliance of WWA State</p> <p>2022 STATEWIDE KELP AND EELGRASS HEALTH AND CONSERVATION PLAN SIGNED INTO LAW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation approach for DNR to protect at least 10,000 acres of Kelp-Eelgrass habitat by 2040 • 2023 KFPMA of WA is now a collaboration of organizations that develop floating Kelp bed areas as an indicator for the ecosystem health of Puget Sound. • Canopy Kelp is now a vital sign indicator • Shoreline is mostly used for public use and access • Per WDFW there is limited commercial harvest for Sea Urchin and Sea Cucumbers; with limited recreational fishing. • WDFW shared that Beach Wrack is being overharvested at North Beach for people's gardens. Citizens do not understand the importance of Beach Wrack on the shoreline. • Kelp feeds the terrestrials. <p>Future threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquaculture is not prohibited in Jefferson County • Potential threats are aquaculture, overwater structures or potential military activity 		
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	<p>PSRF (Puget Sound Restoration Fund) Underwater Kelp Community Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to PSRF, this area has some of the most diverse underwater kelp species. • At least thirteen species listed • Washington state is rich in Kelp diversity. We're just beginning to understand the importance of understory Kelp. <p>Seagrass meadows – Eelgrass and Surfgrass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide showing the growth areas of both grasses. • Eelgrass and Surfgrass can grow side by side. • Surfgrass tends to be continuous on the North shore, but patchy on the NW shore. • Gordon said he is not familiar with Surfgrass. • Betsy: Surfgrass tends to grow where is rocky, Eelgrass tends to grow where it's sandy. • Bryan: It provides the same habitat function as the other ones. That is the only area in Jefferson County that he has seen Surfgrass. • Solenne pointed out there is Surf Smelt Spawning Habitat on West side around Point Wilson <p>Kelp Forest and Seagrass Meadows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich habitat North Shore Jefferson County • Critical saltwater habitat • Kelp carbon gets around. According to Tom Mumford, @KaptnKelp: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certain percentage of kelp that comprises almost all marine species ○ From the Kelp Lifeways video, he stated that 15% of the carbon in Pigeon Guillemots are Kelp, and 50% of the carbon in Rockfish comes from Kelp. <p>Full length version of video here Short version here</p> <p>Questions:</p> <p>JOHN WAGONER (public): Does an Aquatic Reserve Designation have any impact to development on the beach that might be adjacent to the Reserve? Does it protect any of the bluffs from future bulkheads?</p> <p>BIRDIE: Only if the bulkheads are on state owned aquatic land. If they are being built on land that the state manages, then yes, but otherwise, on private land, no.</p> <p>EMILY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the teeth with an Aquatic Reserve designation to protect Kelp and Habitat? 2. What can the MRC do to push this proposal forward? Where do you see the MRC having a role in this? <p>BIRDIE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they get a proposal, they try to communicate about it very early in the process. The members of the MRC represent strong interest from community. • They want to see if there is support or concerns on the proposal. Much of that will happen later with public interaction <p>SNAPSHOT OF THEIR PROCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process was developed to ensure "buy-in" along the way before a Reserve is created or expanded. • Committee / Advisory meetings • Conversations with Tribes and other agencies (i.e. WDFW) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invites Natural Resource folks from tribes, staff from WDFW, community members and others on committees. • It is reviewed and sent back to Solenne with comments. • Need Management approval to move forward. • Convene an external and objective Technical Review Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This Committee makes a recommendation to Commissioner of Public Lands • If Commissioner approves, then they continue process 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEPA permit, could include public meeting • Final step – if process goes well • Commissioner withdraws area from leasing—removing it from potential overwater structures, like cable-crossing, pipeline type things. <p>BRYAN DECATERINA How would this affect a project like the North Beach Outfall?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIRDIE: At Cherry Point, a pre-existing outfall was included in the Aquatic Reserve. The land managers track that and work with the DOE on how the Outfall is managed. There is a precedent for an Outfall being included in an Aquatic Reserve. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Something to consider is whether the Outfall <i>should or shouldn't</i> be included in the Reserve expansion. • SOLENNE: We have not seen significant impacts to the habitat from the Outfall. <p>They will keep the MRC updated as this project progresses.</p>		
<p>PORT of PT UPDATES</p>	<p>Port of PT UPDATES (Commissioner Carol Hasse)</p> <p>First meeting of the year is tomorrow (1/08/2025)</p> <p>Many capital projects are happening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cupola House restoration is almost finished. • Creosote has been mitigated, efficient HVAC in place. • Carol believes that after decades of stress, that Point Hudson is safe now. • Moving forward with a Gardener Ramp • They have a grant for an 75-ton Electric Travel Lift • Working on infrastructure for two Airport Business Parks for decades-long, established PT businesses have outgrown their spaces. • Stormwater has gone out to bid. It will happen this year. State of the art, gigantic rain gardens. • Planning the Boatyard expansion to the North and the West 		
<p>BoCC UPDATE</p>	<p>BoCC UPDATE (Commissioner Heidi Eisenhour)</p> <p>BOARD REORGANIZATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heather Dudley Nolette is the new District 1, Commissioner. Reorganizing committees and assignments • There are about 25 committees • Committees are organized by geography, specific districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heidi has maintained her membership on the MRC ○ Greg is taking the Olympic Discovery Trail and all committees that lie in his geography. ○ Heather is taking the Olympic Coast Sanctuary and the Maritime Heritage Area – very large area, includes six counties <p>SHORELINE SMP PROCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney’s office has been collaborating actively with Dept of Ecology over the last month. DOE has asked for a high-level review before restarting the County legislative process. • DOE wants to do some work with our team who is finalizing the SM to get it ready for public comment. <p>DEPT OF ECOLOGY SUGGESTED THIS PROCESS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecuting Attorney’s office will complete its review • Then Dept of Comm. Development will review the changes • DOE will then do a high-level review • Expect process to take until the end of February 2025 • Heidi thinks it will be a better product with DOE involved. • They are trying to get the best final draft before it goes out to public review. • She’s heard that many counties are more delayed than we are. • There have also been rule changes during this process. 		

	<p>DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She is excited we are gathering our DV resources in the County. • Heidi addressed Peter Joseph's comment about the DV in Ludlow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ There are many intricacies managing the pull out of a Derelict Vessel. Cost, Logistics, etc.. ◦ She is working right now with DV team at DNR to get a Vessel Turn-In Program. However, these boats are on land. • Carol: For any vessels to be delivered, they salvage what they can and demolish the boats. The Port can't bring them in unless they end up on their shores. • Peter Joseph: He is simply asking that the State law be enforced. Which says that after 30 days of anchor in one place, you are required to go three nautical miles. 		
<p>RECENT MEETING REPORTS AND ISSUE UPDATES</p>	<p>NWSC meeting update (Sarah & Jeff)</p> <p>NWSC has two new Commission members. Gubernatorial appointees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Else Schwartz – Chair of the Science Advisory • Emily Grayson • Nan Mckay and Julia Parish have retired. <p>Next NWSC meeting is Jan 31st in person at the Coupeville Library</p> <p>SAVE THE DATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Conference • Maple Hall in Skagit County • November 7th and 8th in LaConnor <p>NWSF vs NWSC update (Jeff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting will discuss changing the definition of NWSC initiative • To be the NWCC and the MRC and not the Foundation. • Lucas wanted to know if anyone had concerns or questions. • Don Hunger Executive Director of foundation would like to present what the Foundation does and how the MRC's can interact with them. • This is formalizing what currently exists. 		
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES</p>	<p>Two MRC Open Positions: Marine Science Alt, District 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising positions in <i>The PT Leader</i> • They have received one application already • Close date is Jan 22nd • Interview committee needed, 2-3 people • Sarah, Betsy and Heidi volunteered to be on the interview committee <p>Volunteer hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katie is resetting hours on the spreadsheets. Previous hours will disappear. <p>2025 JCMRC Annual Workplan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katie asked if there were any changes? • Vote is needed and she will send to NWSC 	<p>Troy made a motion to accept the workplan for 2025. Neil seconded.</p>	
<p>OCTOBER 2025 – DEC 2027 PROJECT PROPOSAL DISCUSSION</p>	<p>Katie explained the process and displayed the spreadsheet</p> <p>Reviewed the Workplan in detail and what resources the MRC is asking for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff asked if we knew how much money is available • Katie said the estimate should be the same as in prior years, roughly \$350,000 over a 2 year period, less admin cost <p>TWO GRANTS: One time grant and the Shorelines grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard funding and add'l money that showed up from NOAA • Katie reviewed the list and the leads. <p>BULL KELP KAYAK MONITORING PROJECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily: Do we need to write it in to keep the option open? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's the kayak piece and there is not an alternative project ready to go. • Katie explained that a Grant is an agreement and a responsibility. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We could file an amendment, remove it and they will remove money from the grant. This is a lot of work for the Coordinator. • Limit to one amendment per grant cycle ideally. • Best to enter a grant cycle and be as ready to go as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brenda: waiting for input from Jeff Whitty from the Commission. • Emily : “Continuing” versus a “new” project. • Katie will submit as a question mark on the Kelp project. <p>Katie reviewed the Grant process on all projects. She went down the list of items and asked if they need to be included in grant. Short discussions regarding if each project would continue or not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OLYMPIA OYSTERS - new sites listed • FJORD FEST – Katie asked who could be there during Memorial Day weekend • SPEAKER SERIES - Brenda asked to continue this project. It was done in collaboration with the PT Marine Science Center. It was an evening talk with an experiential event the next day. Brenda offered to be the lead. • ROV DERELICT CRAB POTS – (Tim) • School situation: struggling with risk management of having students on the water. It may have to be an outside event. • Tim asked if there was funding for the acquisition of a robot. Either to build one or to buy one. • Who stores it? What if it breaks? • PIGEON GUILLEMOT BREEDING SURVEYS (Brenda) • Brenda: It would be nice to have MRC involved in it. It will require a meeting with Sasha. • Katie brought up the Grant Reporting piece for the project. • NWSC is already funding this same work in Clallam co. • DERELICT VESSELS (Brenda) • Brenda spoke about this as a project. • Not focusing on land-based boats. • What about more eyes on the water to spot DV’s? We need a more comprehensive solution. • Katie asked if this is an official project to be included in the grant or a subcommittee. • Brenda would like it to be an ad-hoc group/subcommittee. • OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) • Neil asked to schedule a subcommittee meeting. • Keep Killisut Harbor and Port Ludlow <p>Katie will send out an email with this list and questions can be addressed then.</p> <p>Topic ended due to time constraints.</p>		
<p>CURRENT and UPCOMING PROJECTS</p>	<p>Updates abbreviated due to time constraints</p> <p>Forage Fish (Dabob – Quilcene Sarah/Brenda)</p> <p>Forage Fish (Fort Townsend – Janette)</p> <p>Olympia Oysters (Neil)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big News! They got \$16,000 to get the Shell • Deck hands from Seabeck • DONE! • 2023 shell has some babies <p>Kelp (Emily)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 data review 2:00pm – 4:00pm • Jan 30th via zoom <p>Eelgrass Buoys (Troy)</p> <p>Rain Gardens (Janette)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday Quilcene clean up, 1/18/2025 • Public Works agreed to pick up the green waste 		

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	<p>ROV Crab Pots (Jeff, Tim)</p> <p>Storm Surge (Jeff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are continuing to monitor <p>Education and Outreach – Marine Science Stage @ WBF (Betsy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee will have a meeting soon. • Betsy met with Barb Traylor @ WBF, they will see about a bigger tent • Moving forward--thinking about speakers. • Open to any ideas or thoughts about speakers. 		
PUBLIC COMMENT	<p>Public Comments (John Wagoner)</p> <p>Regarding the role of the MRC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does MRC sponsor restoration projects? • In the past (over 15 years ago) one of the MRC members got a Grant and hired someone to look at a County park. He hadn't heard of that before. • Neil said he remembered that project. He said Olympia Oysters contracts to bring Shell in for an MRC designated project. • John he doesn't remember the funding source on this project, he was just wondering. 		
MRC ROUND TABLE/ ANNOUNCEMENTS	<p>Future Agenda Topics</p> <p>Carol Hasse is happy to announce she can stay on the MRC</p> <p>Future speaker topic suggestion: WDFW poaching</p>		
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM. Next meeting will be Feb 4 th .	Gordon moved to adjourn, seconded by Janette. Motion passed.	