

Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
5:30 – 7:30 PM on June 2, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
Pavilion Bldg, Point Hudson (355 Hudson St.)
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC
 Troy McKelvey, Recreation
 Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
 Frank Handler, District 2 Alt
 Gordon King, Commercial
 Neil Harrington, Tribal, Vice-Chair
 Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
 Roy Clark, Recreation Alt
 Steve King, City of PT
 Tim Cross, District 3 Alt
 Sarah Fiskien, District 3, NWSC Alt
 Brenda Johnson, District 2, NWSC Rep
 Bella Ferland, Youth Rep
 Odhran Waggoner, Local Youth
 Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder

Via Zoom

Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
 Allie Simpson, NWSC

Guest Speakers:

Ryan Crim, Puget Sound Restoration Fund
 Robin Mills, NW Maritime Center

Absent:

Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt
 Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv
 Emily Buckner, Marine Science, Chair

Public

2

Staff

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

Topic	Update or Issue	Decisions/Follow-Up	Responsibility
CALL TO ORDER, MISSION & INTERDUCTIONS	Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30PM	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 No changes Amendments to / Approval of Minutes No changes Neil noted that it was Roy's last meeting and he thanked him for his contributions to the committee.	Jon moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Troy. Motion passed. Jon moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Troy. Motion passed.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments No comments.		
GUEST SPEAKER	Accelerating Olympia Oyster Restoration through Community Collaborations <i>Ryan Crim (Puget Sound Restoration Fund) & Robin Mills (NW Maritime Center)</i> Olympic Oysters - <i>Ostrea lurida</i> Biogenic habitat-forming species. Dense reef colonies needed to provide important environmental services. Habitat form is imperiled. 1850: 10,000–20,000 acres in Puget Sound - Today: ~150 acres Historic Decline - Overharvest — began in San Francisco Bay during Gold Rush - Habitat loss — sedimentation, coastal development - Pollution — pulp mill waste - Invasive species — Japanese oyster drill; European green crab emerging threat PSRF mapped 19 priority sites across 5 Puget Sound sub-populations. Progress to date: 140+ acres enhanced ~24 million oysters outplanted		

	• 2 of 19 sites considered restored — Fidalgo Bay & Liberty Bay Still working through what "restored" actually means — when is it okay to stop active intervention? RAS nursery built at NW Maritime Center (NVM) in Port Townsend — using filtered recirculating seawater; growing oysters from larvae to outplanting size. Partners: • PSRF — expertise, system design, larvae • Jamestown S'Klallam — funded tanks, ongoing advice • NWM — space, daily care, education Current test season — outplanting at Chuckanut Bay Blue Schools Initiative ties oyster work to bigger picture — maritime careers accessible & viable, community members connected to each other and the sea, local marine ecosystem healthy and thriving. They see 3 pathways in marine trade careers: • Vessel Operations • Marine Construction • Marine Resources Students in paid positions perform daily tank care, alongside volunteers. PT Maritime Academy students do population assessments. Nursery has opened up public engagement that technical hatchery work alone couldn't. Conservation Aquaculture as a Solution & Teaching Tool • Puget Sound Restoration Fund: providing expertise, designing & setting up the system, providing larvae, updating procedures as we go • Jamestown S'Klallam: funded the tanks, providing advice & expertise • NWM: daily caretaking, space, and especially education		
ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES	Administrative Updates (Katie) OPEN POSTIONS Ads placed in the next couple of weeks. • Interview subcommittee formed in mid-July ◦ Currently one applicant • Sarah is available in the later half of July, Gordon is also available. Katie will be on vacation 6/04 thru 6/22		
RECENT MEETING REPORTS AND ISSUE SUPDATES	Recent Meeting Reports and Issue Updates NWSC MONTHLY MEETING UPDATE (Brenda) Met on Friday, 5/29 via zoom EUROPEAN GREEN CRAB MOLT SEARCHES • MRCs taking on European Green Crab Molt Searches starting in 2028 -- revisited this topic. • Confusion about expectations for MRCs -- outside entities requesting the project will give a presentation at the next commission meeting to clarify. • Brenda learned that the people asking MRCs to take this on are the ones currently doing the Molt Searches. More to come next month. LEGISLATORS & MRC FIELD EXPERIENCES There is an effort to raise profile of NWS initiative with state legislators -- bring them into counties for field experiences, likely July/August. Idea for MRC working groups: • All MRCs, 1-2 members each, come up with a plan • Brenda asked if anyone is interested in serving Possible activities • Counting oysters • Kelp kayaking • Eelgrass protection zones during WBF • Lucas on a working group for key messages DISCUSSION/ Q&A		

	Gordon: - MRCs don't get funding directly from state--they use Puget Sound Partnership to funnel funds to MRCs. Suggested emailing legislators to see what they know about MRCs. Brenda: - NWSC External Affairs Committee talks to Olympia – the legislators are interested and want to share field experiences Gordon wondered about last-minute cancellations. Katie confirmed that has happened in the past, but these meetings sound like they may be planned further in advance. Carol: - How many MRCs are there? (there are seven) - Timeline— lobbying in spring, site visits in summer? - Maritime Center visit would be a good event. She'll be available later to host, but not to plan. Heidi noted that she is the Legislative Lead for the county and the 2027 session is January through April - Something could happen at Wooden Boat Festival. - Maritime Center organizes elected officials on a boat during the festival. Neil said he supports having legislators jump in on surveys. Having them at the Wooden Boat Festival would be great. MRC STAGE AT WBF Short discussion with everyone about the WBF & the MRC's key topics - No Anchor Zones, Oyster surveys, Rain Garden, etc. - Jon brought up that the Jefferson County Fair is on the same Saturday as a Kelp Monitoring. Legislators could do the Fair and Kelp same day; then return later for the WBF. Brenda and Sarah volunteered to help plan. DERELICT VESSEL, NWSC 2026 FUNDING (Heidi) Heidi attended the meeting; six of the seven MRCs on the call. \$200,000 of funding remaining for DV removal for individual boats and Vessel Turn-In (VTI) events. - Presentation showed cost benefit analysis of both; VTIs per pound a fraction of the cost. - They discussed emphasizing VTIs—the events have been very successful where held. - VTI event held in PT a few years ago; mostly boats the Port had already collected. Heidi said Jefferson County would like to do a VTI event in 2027—she was texting Eron Berg during the meeting and he said he would like to do one then as well. Brenda asked how much money they had for this. Heidi noted they have \$200,000 but \$40k is committed to the Makah Tribe. The Port is ready to partner with MRC, and the JCMRC can help promote it. Heidi mentioned the "Boatyard of Forgotten Dreams." Six abandoned vessels are there and ready to go to a VTI event. Q & A / Discussion - Neil asked if there is a boat out in the water that may sink, is there any way to get it out without being charged? - Where does the boat go? - Heidi answered that the boat is recycled at the VTI. - Carol explained that once a vessel is in the yard, the Port can demolish it and be reimbursed by DNR. She wasn't sure on the haul out fee. - Heidi said that some of the haul fees would be covered; it was discussed at the meeting. - House vote passed last year—(WA HB 2199)—changed many administrative rules around derelict vessels; retrieving and recycling them is much easier now.		
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	- Katie noted that this was a carryover from last month...the MRC had discussed about if we needed a subcommittee for this. Each MRC had a vote on how the money was spent. Katie wondered if this came up in the meeting. Heidi said it did not. - Heidi said that she pitched this to the entire group as an idea for a dream use of funding. All MRCs were excited about that---a NWSC-wide Derelict Vessel effort. BIG DREAMS <i>NWSC Executive Committee is asking each MRC to contemplate how it would spend \$500,000 in FY27 and beyond, should that level of funding become available.</i> Puget Sound Partnership is requesting \$550 million. Brenda pointed out that the NWSC is asking for \$10 million, which is a tiny bit of that, but so much more than we're used to. Let's not limit ourselves. Brenda shared the other MRCs' ideas: SAN JUAN MRC - Increase the funding for their county marine programs, which includes their bringing back their Derelict Vessel Program - Increase funding for other existing programs in their county: MRC operations, Orcas, Plastic-Free Salish Sea, some Salmon Recovery - Main goal is to resuscitate the DV program. SKAGIT MRC - Use it for 6-10 projects, ones that were eliminated by their NEAP tool. They demonstrated this tool at the MRC conference. - Using this tool (Needs Assessment of their shoreline) they can pin down the projects that would be most important for their county...mainly restoration. WHATCOM MRC \$500K on oil spill risk assessment tools & data management - Developed by them, but used by all the MRCs Brenda said this is helpful, because it shows a collective need to remove things from the water. DISCUSSION Katie asked if the other MRCs have staff and volunteers for their proposed work, or if they plan to hire contractors? Brenda said that was a good question, and she noted that sustainability is another item that is unknown. Tim B – can the funds be used in a partnership or with other entities? - ROV for crab pots approx. \$150,000 Jon W – Deploying wave buoys - Can measure currents, depth, waves ~ \$20,000 each - Use at PT Bay, off North Beach, Oak Bay, etc. - Would help build out data network - Funding for buoys was pulled last week. Deploying our own would tell us a lot...re: storms, tides. - Jon proposed 3 – 5 buoys Carol asked if these are relevant to renewable energy sources? - We have no way to verify the model runs USGS has. - Wave buoys would enable us to do wave forecasting - So much information could be gathered by these buoys Frank - Shoreline armoring...could money be used for a survey? - Neil said that \$500k is enough to start pulling out bulkheads and incentivize soft shore armoring. - Armory removal		
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	Neil added \$500k would buy a lot of shell. 😊 • He also noted that if we are running these projects, we would need a project manager on staff. Carol: • Port of PT has done a lot of study about Sea Level Rise, Storm Surge, etc. Is there a chance for collaboration between Port & MRC for Sea Level Rise protection? • Neil said he didn't know about shoreline protection, but maybe if it's soft shore. Carol said it was a mix of armored and soft. A lot of study could be mutually beneficial. • Brenda: Hasse are you proposing more study? • Hasse: Collaboration, she explained that she is trying to see where the work of the Port could come together with MRC Steve King: • They don't know what to do with downtown, they could add on to that and find a natural based solution. Bella: Funding for Students for Sustainability (SFS) • The SFS club went to the coast for a beach cleanup, it was bad. They discussed putting out stations for trash. • She proposed funding for students to travel out there and build those stations. • Neil loves the idea, but there is another MRC on the coast. He wonders if there could be funding for collaboration with the two MRCs. • Jon said that Whatcom Co. does a remote beach cleanup; MRC members & volunteers on a boat • There are many remote beaches that are hard to reach. • Neil added proposed a trash cleanup day on Protection Island. • Katie mentioned that WDFW funds the MRC on coast. It is led by Rebecca Mahon in Clallam County. They work with grant money and offer funding for projects. Katie offered to connect with Bella and they could contact Rebecca. Brenda told everyone that this was a great list.		
GRANT PROJECT UPDATES	Grant Project Updates FORAGE FISH (Sarah) Dabob, Quilcene Marina • Sarah, Tim, and Troy sampled last Friday in Dabob and Quilcene. OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay and Killisut Harbor SURVEYS SCHEDULED: • July 15th Discovery Bay • July 16th Killisut Harbor Permit app for Discovery Bay is in, QAPP is in for Killisut harbor Neil and Julietta Martinelli from WDFW looked at property across from Nordland store and found Olympia oysters. • The store owner is very interested in project • They want to do a survey; there is good habitat and • The idea is there is enough brood stock to collect enough for 1200 oysters, have them to set at Maritime Center, and set out shell next summer. • Project's goal is to restore our only native oyster. Population was decimated mostly due to overharvest and sedimentation. BULL KELP (Jon) KELP SURVEY SCHEDULE • Sat June 20th at 2:00 pm • First time in number of years ◦ Contact Jon if you're interested in joining • Sat., July 18th • Sat, August 15th (during the County Fair) • Tentative survey at end of September.		

	○ They have alternate backup dates for the surveys, NO ANCHOR ZONE BUOYS (Troy & Gordon) Troy went to NWSC's voluntary training today • Lots of pictures of PT, buoys, etc. • Troy said it made them look good Gordon • He was going to work in Hadlock, but Bryan C. got married. • They ask volunteers to take photos once a month • Katie asked if they talked about monitoring data collection. She was interested. Troy has numbers and data collection on sheets. They also have an app. • Alli Simpson, NWSC said that they would also love data from the PT No Anchor Zone EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Betsy absent) CRABBER OUTREACH: June 24th • Registration is live • 5 people registered to date SEARCHING FOR SEAWEED • Sarah said it went great. SHORELINE LANDOWNER OUTREACH (Sarah) • Lisa Kaufman from NWSC is writing a grant to remove the Yacht Club bulkhead in Quilcene. • Neil mentioned that Lisa will be speaking in September. Katie said it was confirmed, but not sure if zoom or in person. RAIN GARDENS (Neil) WORK PARTY • They pulled a lot of weeds and gardens look good; positive event • Potential need for landscaper. Neil thinks another work party is needed for Fall. • Katie spoke with Bridget Gregg about a contract. ○ Bridget thinks they can do another work party in the Fall; clear thistles, then let it die back a bit to get rid of them. ○ Chetzemoka sediment removal • Frank said that he would like to keep the RG's low maintenance. Other MRC Projects STORM SURGE (Jon) • No update ROV CRAB POTS (Tim) • Reorganizing Robotics team for next year. • Possible collaboration with another entity...side scan Sonar. A long shot but would be perfect if it works. • Katie mentioned that we have our next project planning in January...it would be good to include the ROV project then. • Carol H. would like to include Crab Pot Removal as part of the grant.		
PORT of PT UPDATES	Port of PT Updates (Carol Hasse) 20 YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • Port is looking at economic development for the next 20 years; including collaborative group City, PUD, Port • What kind of economic development do we want to invite into our community? • She feels strongly that the MRC may want to weigh in on what we need in the next 20-50 years. ○ Disaster independence		

	○ Sustainability ○ Any ideas that could be mentioned during public comment would be great (either as an individual or as a group). Stormwater system is about to come online SPRING SEMINAR • She wonders if WA public ports are going in the wrong direction with Natural Gas, Nuclear Energy • There are many in the WA public Ports that are resisting that and pushing for renewables.		
BoCC UPDATE	BoCC Updates (Heidi) SHORELINE MASTER PLAN (SMP) UPDATE • Critical Areas Ordinance is finished; comment period is closed. ○ June 22 workshop on Comp Plan ○ July 6th hearing on Comp Plan ○ July 13th BoCC takes final action on Comp Plan • After that, they can return attention to the Shoreline Master Program (SMP)		
MRC MEMBER ROUNDTABLE	MRC Member Roundtable NEW BRIDGE, QUILCENE MARINA • Troy mentioned the new bridge at the Quilcene marina. Habitat is largely restored, he was very impressed, • Neil said that Randy Johnon was lead on that project...he will be speaking at the October MRC meeting. WESTERN FLYER TOUR • Frank said that he got a tour of the Western Flyer...the John Steinbeck boat at Maritime Center. It's on the pier. Next Sunday there will be public tours and a talk on the history of the vessel. Shipwrights Coop did the restoration, and it cost \$7 million to restore it. • Lecture is at the NW Maritime Center • <i>Western Flyer</i> Foundation JEFFERSON CO. SEARCH & RESCUE (Roy) • June 28th, 8:00 a.m. -12:00 pm Crab Pot sale • July 2nd Crab season opens Katie reminded everyone that she needs paperwork from anyone who went to the Rain Garden work party. Form needs to be signed.		
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments No public present.		
FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS	Future Agenda Topics None.		
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Announcements Gordon noticed many gaps from others when he was entering his volunteer hours. A friendly reminder for everyone to enter their volunteer hours.		
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm. Many members of group went to the NW Maritime Center to view the Oyster process	Neil adjourned the meeting.	