

Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
5:30 – 7:30 PM on August 4, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
Pavilion Bldg, Point Hudson (355 Hudson St.)
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Emily Buckner, Marine Science, Chair
 Neil Harrington, Tribal, Vice-Chair
 Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC
 Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv
 Frank Handler, District 2 Alt
 Gordon King, Commercial
 Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
 Steve King, City of PT
 Brenda Johnson, District 2, NWSC Rep
 Troy McKelvey, Recreation
 Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
 Odhran Waggoner, Local Youth
 Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder

Via Zoom

Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt

Guest Speakers:

Suzanne Shull, NW Straits Commission, GIS Specialist

Absent:

Bella Ferland, Youth Rep
 Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
 Tim Cross, District 3 Alt
 Sarah Fiskens, District 3, NWSC Alt

Public

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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 5:31PM	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 - Under “Other MRC Project Updates” Brenda would like to give a summary of the latest Mystery Bay Mgmt. Plan developments with the Dept. of Health. - Heidi is adding the Derelict Vessel Removal Event to the BoCC update. Amendments to / Approval of Minutes - Brenda noted some clarifications on p 4-5 of June 2026 min’s - PS Recovery Committee should read PS Partnership. - Skagit’s NEAP tool (not NEAT) “Frank said...shoreline armoring removal” (not armory) - Ryan’s name only has one “n” - typo - Port Director’s name is spelled Eron Berg (not Aaron)	Jon moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Gordon. Motion passed. Brenda moved to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Emily. Motion passed.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments No comments.		
GUEST SPEAKER Suzanne Shull, NW Straits Commission, GIS Specialist	Sound IQ Suzanne gave a presentation on Sound IQ: what it is, how to access it, its functionality, how to pull data from it, how to export data (Excel, maps, etc.), and a discussion of how to improve the data — or whether JCMRC wants to keep data on the site at all. Getting to Sound IQ via the NWSC website - From the main page, go to Projects, then the last item — “Our Work.” Follow the photos at the bottom of that page to reach Sound IQ. - Resources are available at the bottom of the web page. CSV is the recommended export format, though many other formats are available. - Sound IQ is a web-mapping app combining geo-mapping data and more. It was originally developed in 2012 and has recently been rebuilt. NW Straits worked with DOE to gain their own ability to use, build, and add to this mapping application — previously they had to go through		

	the City of Bellingham to make changes. The next step planned is a mobile app. Map - Shows all data from all MRCs. A dropdown menu lets you select different data sets. There's a feedback link on the right side of the page. - The Skagit NEAP tool was mentioned as a reference point. - Photos at the bottom link out to data (project pages) — Suzanne noted they don't really call it "data", rather "project pages." - The map of everything has a splash screen with legends, videos, etc. - Suzanne is soliciting feedback on this page — she wants to make it more user-friendly. Using the Map - Icons on the left include a "layers" list with a batch tool to turn layers on and off, so you can see groupings. - You can view many years of data — eelgrass was used as an example. Green marks native eelgrass (<i>Zostera marina</i>); red marks non-native eelgrass (<i>Zostera japonica</i>). - Clicking a point brings up an attribute table with more info. - Data can be "post-process" or "pre-process" — post-process means after the video has been reviewed. - The layers list raises the question of what the metadata says; Suzanne is working to compile metadata for all layers. - You can also view data layers in ArcGIS Online: go to the map, then add the URL from the metadata page. Note — you can't save the map unless you have an account. Shoreline Modifications Data - Next data set discussed: shoreline modifications, grouped for Jefferson County data. - Gordon asked about adding buoy information; Suzanne said NOAA's data could be added. - Neil thought the Mystery Bay data may have come from NOAA, from a particular zone — possibly 2008–2009, or possibly from State Parks. - Human structures — stairs, docks, piers. The group viewed bulkheads and zoomed in (brown on the map). - There's a newer web-mapping app from DOE — the Shoreline Condition Survey Web Explorer — where you can also add data. You copy the URL from the metadata and add Sound IQ data into that app to view it, though it's not a permanent addition. - The group discussed what other data Jefferson MRC has on the platform. Tim asked about the positions of derelict crab pots that have been pulled — Suzanne said that data isn't currently on there. - Katie asked about adding that pulled-crab-pot data, since Jefferson's MRC has pulled some out. Tim wondered whether Jefferson was already putting that data on Sound IQ, and how it would be used and communicated — the group noted staff would need to be informed, and a QAPP might be needed for monitoring data. Forage Fish Data - Under Jefferson County: historical WDFW data from 1972–2008 showing where surveys have been done. - Katie asked whether there's a way to check when a data set was logged. Suzanne said she'd double-check. Storm Surge Data - Unique to this county — includes an Excel sheet of all observations listing the highest water levels, with links to PDFs. Kelp Data - From the splash screen, go to North Beach and turn on the filter to zoom to that site. - Suzanne walked through the dropdowns and menus, showing how to filter to just Jefferson's data across multiple years, build a data dictionary, and view the story map. - She's looking for feedback on this section too. Olympia Oyster Data - Neil noted this data is tricky — he doesn't have GIS data for some years, though the last few years have been consistent. He has a video and a story map for it. - Suzanne noted that while there are data points, they can be difficult to consume as-is. Neil suggested a polygon format with info like average		
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	sizes would work better. DISCUSSION: What Is the Tool For? - Gordon: asked what the group sees the tool's purpose as. - Suzanne: At minimum, it's a great archive of everything at a glance — useful for turnover and staff. She pointed to the Skagit story as an example of discoverability; one objective is getting the data in front of decision-makers, and figuring out how to do that. - Gordon: Liked it more when it included other sources of data beyond just MRC data. He's looking for shoreline or marine data more broadly — why limit it to MRC info? - Emily: Suggested it may be limited to MRC data because that's easier to sort and keep clean. - Gordon: Referenced using Jamestown's data — helpful for groups to communicate so people aren't duplicating work. - Heidi: Pointed out that this approach also lets you see where the data gaps are. - Suzanne: MRCs would need to request that broader data be added — it's a communication piece. Alternatively, agencies could pull MRC data into what they're already working on. Either way, it's a good tool for others to use. - Brenda: Suggested it could also be useful for seeing what other organizations are working on, in case of overlap — so groups know who to contact.		
ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES	Administrative Updates (Katie) PROJECT SUMMARY REPORTS Due Sept 14th - NAZ, Oyster, Kelp & Forage Fish - Same template as last year Katie will send out email tomorrow.		
2026 NWSC CONFERENCE	2026 NWSC Conference (Katie) 2026 LOCATION: NW MARITIME CENTER Katie asked if the MRC wants to participate in the collaborative networking activity? (We did these in 2024 & 2025). - A “Lightning Talk”— 5-7 min PowerPoint - Everyone liked the idea of Emily & Neil giving a talk on Oysters. FIELD TRIP PLANNING (Betsy) Our MRC has the opportunity (but not the obligation) to offer a field trip or suggestions of places to visit when people are traveling to /from the conference. - Betsy asked if there were any ideas. - Two-day schedule, and would be in the morning when Science Advisory is happening. - They will be meeting again tomorrow (Wed 8/05). DISCUSSION: - Neil suggested a walk out on dock/breakwater behind the Maritime Center or Elevated Ice Cream to view Eelgrass and NAZ Buoys. Very convenient and right outside the conference. A Rain Garden is also right in front of the Maritime Center. - Suggestion to have a live-cam screen, or displaying pictures taken during Wooden Boat Festival when there are 100 boats all outside of the NAZ. Frank said he will take photos at the festival. - Betsy said a list of nearby activities would be good. - Ideas discussed, ranging from the whale at the Marine Science Center (with all of the Eelgrass Interpretive signage) to a downtown walking tour. - Produce a flyer / map with the different projects –QR codes could connect them to the respective web pages. Graphics? Brenda suggested Jessica at NWSC. - Betsy said she will know more about the schedule after the meeting on Wed.		

	• Neil asked for Betsy to ask Jessica @ NWSC about the project. What information do they need from us? • Katie suggested a scavenger hunt. ◦ Idea was well received. Discussion came up about the weather (what if it's raining), and to tell folks to bring binoculars, ◦ IDEAS: find a buoy, whale skeleton, a marine-themed piece of art in a gallery. ◦ Everyone seemed excited about that idea. • ACTION: Creating a map is the first place to start • Emily noted that she also has a <i>What to do in PT</i> brochure.		
RECENT MEETING REPORTS AND ISSUE SUPDATES	Recent Meeting Reports and Issue Updates NWSC MONTHLY MEETING UPDATE (Brenda) There are two meetings to report on: June & July (NWSC meets all year) Brenda noted that she receives a two-page summary report after every meeting, and she is supposed to read the update to us. She would like to make the process more transparent, to encourage a back & forth. It's a lot of information but important for everyone to know. JUNE MEETING: Morgan Harrington, grad student and PhD candidate from University of WA gave a short presentation about her survey of public attitudes towards shoreline habitat restoration. • Morgan is on the beaches asking for people's opinions about shoreline restoration. She is also maintaining a shoreline monitoring database. • Brenda said that this is a conduit of information we should be aware of and could potentially use. Morgan also wants feedback and is eager to have MRC's involved in her research. • Brenda has her email if anyone has thoughts on this. Christina Koontz (SJ County) just termed out of the Commission (she was Commissioner for 4 years). • Christina Koontz has been replaced on the NWSC by Mike Ramsey. NW STRAITS REAUTHORIZATION BILL The House of Reps passed the bill in June, it's now moving into the Senate. • This bill has been in process for the past 20 years. • There is no money attached, but it will make a federal department out of the NWS Initiative—an important first step. • Hence the emerging urgency to get Senators on board with reauthorization and steady funding. GREEN CRAB TRAPPING EFFORTS MRC parters and NWSC staff are trapping. • In June, 835 crabs captured in Drayton Harbor, including 29 egg bearing females. • Estimated that 5 million eggs were destroyed by removing these crabs. • Alex Simpson is still the main contact on this project. MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT • Cecilia Gobin, NW Indian Fisheries Commission – reported on their work to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act, to protect salmon of certain listings. • This would allow removal of marine mammals that are nuisance animals repeatedly preying on salmon. HAZWOPER TRAINING: OIL SPILL RESPONSE • Hosted by the Clallam County MRC • October 27-28 • Two-day training • Second day covers oiled wildlife treatment.		

	JULY MEETING • Jamestown S'Klallam Red Cedar Hall in Blyn • Prefaced by a visit to one of the Pigeon Guillemot monitoring sites in Clallam. They receive funding for the PGM by Olympic Audubon Society & NWSC (50/50). NWSC seems to be highlighting this project. • Everyone was out on the beach, looking at protocols. SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE • Brenda reminded MRC members that science advisors are still available to give advice on certain projects. This is ongoing through the end of the year. • Contact Dana Oster by Sept 18th • Dana can schedule small group meetings between advisors & MRCs if we need help. NW STRAITS KELP MONITORING • Jeffy Whitty gave a great presentation on Kelp monitoring happening in the NW Straits. She's never seen him so excited. He highlighted the story map on the NWSC's website, videos, drone footage and all of the MRC's work over the years. • She noted it was impressive that we're collectively monitoring 20 Kelp beds. DERELICT VESSEL EVENT IN AUGUST NWSC staff is working w/ Makah Tribe & DNR for this event in Neah Bay Planning to rescue 28 boats, including: • Boats brought in from the marina by the Coast Guard • Boats abandoned on the Makah reservation • Boats entered by community members • Dana Oster is coordinating. The NWSC is contributing all of their funding to this event. SITE VISITS w/ STATE REPS • MRCs are encouraged to offer site visits with State Reps. • No one knows where NW Straits funding is coming from after 2027. No state funding or Federal funding secured yet. • The plan is to remind representatives about the group's successes, and to highlight partnerships with other restoration groups. • Rick Larson visited Skagit MRC by kayak last Wednesday. • Alan Clark, Brenda, and Jeff Whitty met with staff from Senator Patty Murray's and Representative Emily Randall's offices. Heather Dudley-Nolette, Jefferson County Commissioner also attended. • The meeting focused on the partnership with the Puget Sound restoration fund and with area tribes. • Brenda mentioned that it got her thinking of how to craft the message of the MRC's goals. • NWSC's funding goal is \$10 million a year. The district includes Clallam, Grays Harbor, and Jefferson counties. • The plan is to invite representatives into the field for a couple of hours, and to continue outreach at Wooden Boat Festival and at the NWSC conference in November. DISCUSSION: • Gordon asked about the current NWSC budget. Brenda reported it is about \$3 million, with a goal of \$10 million; the approach is to request roughly three times the target amount. • Neil, Jon, and Brenda will hold a short meeting following this one. • Brenda reported that state funding comes through a Department of Ecology (DOE) proviso of \$455,000 per year, restricted to MRC projects. The group is still seeking federal funding for NWSC staffing and other costs. • Neil noted that he completed the HAZWOPER class two years ago and found it very valuable. • Brenda said that Whatcom and San Juan MRCs are very motivated to develop a big oil spill response program. She said that Jefferson MRC should consider doing the same, the group agreed that this is an important effort.		
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GRANT PROJECT UPDATES	Grant Project Updates FORAGE FISH (Sarah) Dabob No updates, Sarah absent OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay and Killisut Harbor Two successful surveys were done. Neil thanked Katie for organizing them. • 144 samples were taken over a couple of hours. • Group covered the power lines North and power lines South areas. • A lot of new spat was found on the beach. They finished 45 minutes before the tide came in. • PSRF sent four people to help. WDFW was there, represented by Wendell Raymond. Neil shared the numbers from the 15th: • NORTH Parcel: Avg 71 oysters per square meter. • Estimated population: 143,000. No surveys were done there in two years. The last count was about 125,000. • Since spring 2023, the team has added 3,700 bags of shell. • This round, they took 98 samples. • SOUTH Parcel: Avg 48 oysters per square meter. • Estimated population: 327,000 • The 2022 baseline count was about 45,000; an increase of about 280,000. • A lot of new spat set was seen on the shell. • Betsy asked if any water quality testing is being done alongside this work. Gordon said water test results take about two years to come back. • Neil noted that it's a hard spot to place monitoring equipment. Total survey area: a little over 2 acres. • Current estimate: about 470,000 oysters. MYSTERY BAY / NORDLAND The planned Mystery Bay survey was cancelled due to a thunderstorm, and instead held the following day. The group met at the Nordland store. Neil had no cell coverage on site, ended up using Tim's Wi-Fi to place survey markers. • Site size: 4.8 square meters. • Average oyster size: about 40mm. • Most oysters were about the same age — very few large, very few small. • Estimated 14,000 oysters at the site — enough to get brood stock. BULL KELP (Jon) Two survey events have been done to date. • The kelp bed showed very interesting shapes — a donut shape with a hole in the middle, and this year, a giant "C" shape. • The "C" shape had closed by the July survey, and the bed looked much better. • Next survey date: Saturday, August 15th (during the County Fair), 11:00–11:30 AM, at low tide. NO ANCHOR ZONE BUOYS (Troy & Gordon) • Bryan & Gordon, plan to order more gear. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Betsy) CRABBER 101 • Katie reported that it was good. She had a tri-fold poster and small crab molts set up for participants. 19 people attended. NO ANCHOR ZONE Running an ad in <i>Working Waterfront</i> magazine in <i>The PT Leader</i>. WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL SCHEDULE • Festival begins on Thursday, September 10th. • Shift schedule distributed.		
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	• Open positions were reviewed • Tent is 20 x 40 feet. Help is needed to set up the tent and table. MRC booth is part of Science Alley. • Strait ERN will share the MRC table. • SR3 Marine Mammal Research & Rehab may also join. Breakdown of booth Sunday. • Crews can't unload until 5:00 PM • The last speaker wraps up around 3:00 PM. SHORELINE LANDOWNER OUTREACH (Neil, Sarah absent) • Lisa Kaufman from NWSC will be speaking in September. RAIN GARDENS (Neil) • Neil & Gordon will lead a work party in October. Neil noted that most of the RGs in town look good. • Bridget Gregg, MG Coordinator will help to restore the Chetzemoka garden. She and Katie met with people from City of PT/Public Works about the garden. Very good meeting. • Bridget Gregg, MG Coordinator is helping facilitate work for the gardens. She'll help with work party in October, specifically the thistle garden. Other MRC Projects MYSTERY BAY MANAGEMENT PLAN (Brenda) • Chris Eardley was at the meeting (he was on the Jefferson County MRC in 2010. Brenda was one of fourteen people on the June Zoom meeting with the WA Department of Health about Shellfish safety in Mystery Bay. • Our MRC was involved in this work, and the result was the buoys being set up in the NAZ (No-Anchor Zone). The Department of Health is now in charge of either replacing the old plan with a new one or updating it. • Some of the groups involved in the original plan still have someone who can take this on. • There is another meeting on August 11th for anyone who wants to join by Zoom. Gordon and Bryan have already been sent the agenda. • The plan is so old that it needs to be looked at again. • Neil asked how well the Department of Health's current work is going — they do water sampling every other month and they do boats counts. • Some people want to expand the area with conditional approval in part of Mystery Bay. There's interest in moving the line between the conditionally approved zone and the fully approved zone. The southern part of the bay wants more of it to be fully approved. • Gordon thanked Brenda for taking this project on. • Some residents on the Mystery Bay shoreline were very interested in this project and volunteered to do a weekly count of where the boats in the water are moored • The MRC is supposed to be monitoring this area. Landowners are supposed to sign affidavits agreeing not to live on a boat in the bay or dump their holding tanks. Mooring is only for storing a boat, not for permanent housing • Betsy mentioned that PT Marine Science Center staff go out there every week to sample and could also count boats while they're out there. • Neil paused the conversation for now due to time. The group will need to look at the management plan more closely. • Brenda noted that people generally aren't focused on what wasn't done in the past — nobody really remembers.		
BoCC PORT of PT JOINT UPDATES	BoCC / Port of PT Joint Update (Carol absent) JOINT UPDATE NW Straits Commission (NWSC) has funding to help with a vessel turn-in event.		

	• \$140K total: half for vessel removal, half for the turn-in event. • <u>The most important role the MRC can play is to advertise and spread the word about boats being recycled.</u> Wooden Boat Festival would be a good place to promote it. • Neil asked if a date is needed. Heidi said the Port is ready to look at the calendar. • Dana will come out and give an overview of the Derelict Vessel Removal events and talk about MRC's role and confirm MRC's interest in being a co-host with the Port of PT. • Betsy noted that it would be helpful to have a rough date of the event by the WBF (even if it was just the month). • The group needs to meet with Dana soon. Heidi suggested she come to the September meeting. • The plan is to promote Derelict Vessel Removal in both Jefferson and Clallam counties at the same time. • Brenda thinks NWSC already has flyers from other turn-in events that could be reused. • Heidi noted that a big benefit of derelict vessel removal is the cost savings — it can be up to 100 times cheaper than other disposal methods, depending on the boat.		
MRC MEMBER ROUNDTABLE	MRC Roundtable Neil mentioned that as of two weeks ago, the Quilcene River has a new channel. The river was moved to a new channel on the other side of a dike. They pulled as many fish as they could. PSRF found that the monitoring buoy at North Beach was ripped out this week. It will be replaced tomorrow.		
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments None		
FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS	Future Agenda Topics None.		
ANNOUNCEMENTS	MRC Member Announcements • Jon noted that everyone should update their hours. • Stream Stewards Training in September; similar to Beach Naturalist Training. • Tim B noted that the camera on Pier is working so it can be used for the event.		
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm	Neil adjourned the meeting.	