

**Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
5:30 – 7:30 PM on March 3, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
Pavilion Bldg, Point Hudson (355 Hudson St.)
Meeting Minutes**

Present:

Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC
Troy McKelvey, Recreation
Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv
Frank Handler, District 2 Alt
Emily Buckner, Marine Science, Chair
Jeff Taylor, District 2
Neil Harrington, Tribal, Vice-Chair
Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
Roy Clark, Recreation Alt
Steve King, City of PT
Tim Cross, District 3 Alt
Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt
Odhran Waggoner, Local Youth

Absent:

Gordon King, Commercial

Public

3

Staff

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

Via Zoom

Sarah Fiskens, District 3, NWSC Alt
Bella Ferland, Youth Rep
Brenda Johnson, District 2, NWSC Rep
Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder
Sasha Horst, NWSC

No speaker this meeting

Topic	Update or Issue	Decisions/Follow-Up	Responsibility
CALL TO ORDER, MISSION & INTERDUCTIONS	Chair Emily Buckner called the meeting to order at 5:30PM Emily read the MRC mission and offered a new idea for introductions. Everyone shared three words about themselves and/or a brief statement of their interests.	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 Kelp: Jon W. mentioned a minor correction: that Emily is listed as the lead to present, but he presented last time/is the current project lead. Amendments to / Approval of Minutes Amendments to Jan 2026 minutes, Neil coordinated with Katie on the edits. Brenda emailed changes for Feb 2026 minutes.	Neil moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Jon. Motion passed. Neil moved to approve Jan 2026 minutes. Jon seconded. Motion passed. Betsy moved to approve Feb 2026 minutes. Jon seconded. Motion passed.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments No comments.		
ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES	Administrative Updates (Katie) ANNUAL BOCC PRESENTATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday, April 6 2:30 pm • Katie will update the MRC PowerPoint presentation. They need 2-3 MRC members to give a 20-30 min. presentation at the meeting. • Emily volunteered, Neil said he was also available WEBSITE UPDATES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E+O subcommittee will assist with project pages. • Katie built a spreadsheet for web site page feedback. Open for comments until 3/16 		

	<p>FALL/WINTER RETREAT Retreat timing for next project cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next grant cycle is 2028-2029 • Begin discussing potential projects in late 2026 – early 2027 • Katie suggested turning the Jan 2027 MRC meeting into a project retreat. Include 30 min for a short MRC meeting and spend rest of the time discussing potential projects. Suggested using the project development process used at the 2024 retreat • Doesn't need to be the first Tuesday, it could be during the weekend. • Nov / Dec are also options, but it needs to be completed by end of January. • General agreement was that it was a good idea, and Katie will begin work on that. <p>VOTE: NWSC FUNDING 2026 PROPOSAL UPDATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is no project for the funds, we return the money to NWSC and it will go to Derelict Vessel work. Fund cannot be forwarded to other groups. • There is no lead for the Rain Garden idea, Janette has resigned from the MRC. • Katie asked if there were other project ideas. <p>GENERAL DISCUSSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jon W. noted that the grant funds are not enough money for Shoreline Armoring, it wouldn't do the project justice. • Neil: Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe & NOAA paid for high definition LiDAR that should be able to pick up shoreline armor. He believes it could cover east of Jefferson County. Neil suggested that he and Jon W. meet to discuss further. • There was more in-depth discussion regarding this technology from various members. • Emily asked about passing back the funds to DV work. Sasha said it would be coordinated by Dana Oster and the work group. Work would be prioritized by the NWSC Derelict Vessel work group from several years ago. Sarah was the representative on that work group, but hasn't been involved lately, and not sure if the work group is still active. • Betsy noted that after looking for graphics for newspaper advertising, the MRC needs an update on their graphic/promotional materials. She suggested hiring a graphic person to create pieces for future use. Then materials would be ready for various projects in the future. She reached out to Jessica Plumb who did some video pieces for the MRC, but she hasn't heard back from her yet. <p>BUDGET & TIMELINE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily asked if the committee needs to decide now or has flexibility. Katie noted the proposal deadline is March 18th and they'll need to approve a specific amount. • The group discussed whether to return funds to the DV work group or allocate some for Education/Outreach materials. Brenda asked if the existing budget already covers Education/Outreach. <p>COSTS DISCUSSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4,000 — Wooden Boat Festival • \$2,500 — Advertising • Up to \$5,000 — Graphic design • Katie noted that \$5,000 for graphics seemed conservative; \$7,500 more realistic. All work must be completed by December 31st. <p>STORAGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim B. asked if the MRC could get a trailer with MRC graphics on it? Katie wasn't sure because of licensing, liability and long-term storage needs. • Discussion about the trailer & storage. Tim said there could be storage at his home. Heidi noted that there may be a small space for storage at the Port Hadlock shop. 	<p>Neil motioned to use up to \$8000, to update Edu/Outreach materials, signage &/or videos, with any remaining funds returned to the NWSC to go to the Derelict Vessel program. Jon W. seconded. Motion approved by MRC vote.</p>	
--	---	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah offered her space as an option, even though it's farther from town. <p>OIL SPILL EXPERTISE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email from Strait ERN noted their March 19th meeting will focus on oil spills. They asked if anyone on our MRC has oil spill expertise. Bryan C. said he had experience with Oil Spill response training. <p>SEA GRANT CRAB TEAM VOLUNTEER REQUEST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neil said that Jimmy-Come-Lately Creek is one of the sites being considered. The effort includes getting Green Crab into compost. Sarah & Neil mentioned that the Makah tribe is studying how much river otters are eating the Green Crab. 		
<p>RECENT MEETING REPORTS AND ISSUE SUPDATES</p>	<p>Recent Meeting Reports and Issue Updates</p> <p>NWSC MONTHLY MEETING UPDATE (Sarah attended on behalf of Brenda & is giving the update.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Science Advisory Committee is offering collaborative sessions with MRC's. Each MRC can request up to two sessions, intended to support MRC's across a wider phase of project life cycles. Contact Dana Oster if interested. Caitlyn Blair is leaving the NWSC. It's unclear if the search for her replacement has begun. All members of the NW Straits Initiative should have been emailed an "Awareness Survey" to inform development of a new NWSC communications plan. Please submit your response no later than Friday, March 6. (It only takes about 5 minutes to fill it out and automatically submit online.) Two sessions of "NW Straits Commission 101" will be offered as an orientation for new MRC members (and as a refresher for others), regarding NWSC structure and function, on the following dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 19, 2:00-3:30pm: Zoom Link, Meeting ID: 848 4786 4722, Passcode: 248150 April 8. 11:00am-12:30pm: Zoom Link, Meeting ID: 844 5765 9244, Passcode: 542246 NW Straits Commission welcomes new Science Advisory Committee member Dr. Jason Toff! To read more about Jason and his work, please visit the webpage https://depts.washington.edu/wetlab/about/ WA State Bull Kelp Day is April 16th 		
<p>5 MINUTE BREAK</p>	<p>Group recessed for 5 minutes.</p>		
<p>GRANT PROJECT UPDATES</p>	<p>Grant Project Updates</p> <p>Project leads gave brief updates this month covering big-picture goals, history of work to date, planned activities for 2026, and opportunities and challenges ahead.</p> <p>FORAGE FISH (Sarah) Dabob, Quilcene Marina Two sites on Hood Canal: Dabob Bay and Quilcene Bay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quilcene is a before-and-after project tied to the Port of Port Townsend's planned bulkhead removal. Dabob Bay is a WDFW Index site building a long-term data series (7 years of data, began 2023 — 4 more years needed). Activities remain consistent with previous years. Sarah noted no significant challenges, though bulkhead removal at Quilcene could affect forage fish spawning numbers. Troy asked about Fort Worden as a potential site. Betsy noted there had been a past issues with WDFW sample processing capacity. Katie added that there have been some movement on this project in the past several months. One to two sites may be removed from WDFW's sample list, but potentially still not enough capacity to for 		

	<p>the volume of samples needed; She was working with them on timeline, project is on pause without a project lead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah sampled both locations last month. • Emily asked Roy how MRC monitoring affects WDFW's forage fish work. • Roy noted that MRCs are monitoring more remote sites. Jon W. said that forage fish data is used by WDFW for permit requirements to avoid impact to spawning fish. • Bryan C. added that WDFW can view MRC data on GIS maps. <p>OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay and Kilisut Harbor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project's goal is to restore our only native oyster. Population was decimated mostly due to overharvest and sedimentation. • WDFW's 2012 Restoration Plan set a goal of 100 acres of Olympia Oysters in tidelands---that goal was met. • 19 core populations exist: Dabob Bay, Kilisut Harbor & Quilcene Bay <p>What hasn't worked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hatchery-produced seed in Quilcene Bay died after minimal growth. <p>Discovery Bay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A great place for Olympia Oyster restoration. MRC found a small core population in '02-'03, which was a good foundation. MRC did several studies of the area during this period. Spit restored, oysters were moved during this process. • 2014- shell was spread in middle of bay (~8 yards), it set successfully. • ¼ acre shell spread has grown into 120,000 oysters in recent surveys. Goal is to continue this type of growth. • Since 2023, 120 yards of shell has been spread in an adjacent parcel. • 2023 shell had ~100,000 oysters; with last year's survey counted upwards of 220,000. Neil noted there are additional populations outside of our survey areas. <p>Future goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neil and Katie completed a QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan) • Permits with the Army Corps of Engineers need to be renewed before more shell can be placed. <p>2026 Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population surveys; Look at Kilisut Harbor; maybe seed production to set out at Port Ludlow • Additional WDFW shell for placement (permit timing dependent) <p>Opportunities & Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main challenges are transporting bags of shell across tidelands and placing shell in the right locations. • Neil's goal is 1 million oysters — to have a robust, self-sustaining population. <p>Shell Recycling Pilot Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily shared a potential project: collecting shucked oyster shells from restaurants to use in restoration. • Shells must be properly cured to avoid spreading pathogens. This is not yet happening in Washington State due to those concerns, but is common practice in Atlantic states and could be a future MRC project. <p>Side Note — Oyster Settling Tanks (<i>not an MRC project</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe funded a partnership between the Puget Sound Restoration Fund and NW Maritime Center to set up oyster settling tanks. • The Manchester hatchery produces more larvae than it can handle. The Maritime Center tanks expand capacity to settle oysters on shell. • Currently producing seed for Whatcom MRC 		
--	--	--	--

	<p>BULL KELP (Jon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking the Bull Kelp bed off North Beach since 2016. Kayak surveys with GPS, traveling around the bed to track size and shape, photography and minor data collection. Jefferson MRC has been doing this longer than other MRCs — the monitoring has since spread to other counties. NWSC takes the data, does analysis, and shares with WDFW and other organizations. Overall trend at North Beach has been relatively flat — gets bigger and smaller, changes shape, but usually donut-shaped. Strait: Bull Kelp doing well, robust populations. San Juans, Whatcom, Skagit: sort of holding its own. South Sound: have lost almost all of it, not sure why — water quality and predation are among the ideas. <p>2026 Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring 3–4 times, tide and weather dependent. Work group meeting tomorrow with Jeff Whitty at NWSC to compile data sheets. Kayak Safety Class — June 6th, North Beach. Volunteers — contact Jon W. Carol asked about the Kelp bed at Ebey's Landing on Whidbey. Island County MRC monitors portions of that bay; satellite imagery has been used with mixed results. <p>NO ANCHOR ZONE BUOYS (Troy, Gordon absent) Program established in 2012. Currently 13 buoys along the Port Townsend waterfront, 4 in Port Hadlock and 4 in Mystery Bay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular maintenance planned this year. A new buoy needs to be installed and new surveys are needed on existing sites. Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, and San Juan counties all now have eelgrass protection zones. BC Washington Seagrass: a roundtable organization. Troy asked if anyone is interested in joining—it would mean potential trips to the Gulf Islands. Bryan C. noted that hired staff have mapped eelgrass beds, and that a Dive Safety manual was produced in the past. Volunteers are a huge help to the program. Tim asked whether DNR survey data is available. Bryan confirmed the DNR eelgrass mapping tool is accessible and useful — MRC can examine and analyze the data. He also reported that one of the MRC buoys ended up in Point Hudson Marina. Troy thanked all volunteers on the committee, especially Bryan and Gordon <p>EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Betsy) Upcoming Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Connectivity Fair</i>, Fort Worden & Jefferson Co. Fairgrounds, March 27-29 . Looking for volunteers to work the table. <i>Blessing of the Fleet</i> - South County, Quilcene <i>Wooden Boat Festival</i> <p>Four Education Pieces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Digging for Dinner</i> — safe shellfish harvesting. WDFW cannot participate this year, and tides are challenging. Betsy asked whether the MRC group could take it on or crowdsource it. Further discussion needed. <i>Search for Seaweed</i> — ID'ing and harvesting seaweed safely <i>Crabbing 101</i> — crabbing season and biology overview <p>SHORELINE LANDOWNER OUTREACH (Sarah)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoreline Landowner Outreach program is in partnership with NW Straits Foundation, focusing on private landowners who live close to the beach. The Quilcene Yacht Club bulkhead removal project is moving forward. Removing the bulkhead would improve the beach and increase public use. Local landowners have concerns this will lead to the public accessing private beaches — ongoing issue. 		
--	---	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boat ramp at the marina is being rebuilt. Design expected soon. Betsy asked everyone to take photos when working on projects — needed for social media, publicity, and Wooden Boat Festival materials. Very important! <p>SPEAKERS for WBF (Betsy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wooden Boat Festival is Sept 11 – 13. We need a list of speakers, schedule, topics and registration by May. Need to contact them immediately They have already invited some of the popular speakers from last year. Volunteers needed to help with WBF events Speaker Topics to be brainstormed at end of meeting. <p>RAIN GARDENS (Katie)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current project lead — Janette has resigned. MRC is responsible for 15 gardens. Master Gardeners' ability to help is limited over the next two years. They can assist with volunteer work parties through the rest of this year but cannot coordinate them. MGs will assess three gardens in April with a longer-term goal of getting gardens adopted. Budget: \$10k this year, \$5k next year. Possibility of rehiring last year's landscaper, who knows the gardens, for maintenance. <p>City Supports Rain Gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steve King noted that due to the lack of a stormwater system, the City of PT is developing new standard details. The City supports rain gardens and would like to see rain gardens or vegetated bioswales at nearly every intersection. (Ref: 15709) Maintenance is a key concern. Residents need to be informed of maintenance requirements when a rain garden is in their frontage. Katie noted past public complaints about wrong plants and unmaintained gardens — something to keep in mind going forward. General consensus to keep the current landscaper working on the gardens for now. Discussion to be continued at April MRC meeting. <p>Other MRC Projects</p> <p>SATELLITE IMAGERY (Jeff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No update <p>STORM SURGE (Jeff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No update <p>ROV CRAB POTS (Tim)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No update 		
<p>PORT of PT UPDATES</p>	<p>Port of PT Updates (Carol Hasse)</p> <p>Clipper Around the World Race</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten 70-foot racing sailboats will arrive in Port Townsend during the last two weeks of April, having sailed non-stop from South Korea. PT is a stopover before the fleet continues to the next leg of the race. Clipper Around the World Race. 		
<p>BoCC UPDATE</p>	<p>BoCC Updates (Heidi)</p> <p>CAO (CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAO meeting next Monday as part of the regular agenda. Also next week: a meeting with DOE regarding Shoreline updates and proposed changes. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like many counties, Jefferson is 5–6 years behind. Hoping the DOE meeting will offer clarity, especially as they are in final review. <p>FOREST ADVOCACY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting tomorrow with the Commissioner of Public Lands to review agreements with DNR expansion and Climate Solutions funding. The state allocated \$2 million to Jefferson County to purchase lands around Dabob Bay. Many of these projects stalled with the current administration change — much to discuss at tomorrow's meeting. 		
MRC MEMBER ROUNDTABLE	<p>MRC Member Roundtable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bryan C. reported that WDFW is replacing the boat ramp at Port Whitney — breaking ground next week. Frank attended the Sound Toxins Conference virtually and was struck by the depth and breadth of the program and the public organizations involved. He was uplifted by the power of citizen science. Betsy added that Sound Toxins monitors water samples for things that can endanger human health. Neil highlighted a presentation by Kari Garrison-Blaney, who studies tsunamis and diatoms found in tsunami deposits. She was suggested as a potential speaker for an MRC meeting or Wooden Boat Festival. 		
SPEAKER IDEAS FOR WBF	<p>Speaker Ideas</p> <p>Betsy noted good topics fall into three buckets: things important to the MRC, marine conservation generally, and topics of interest to boaters.</p> <p>BRAINSTORM IDEAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buoys and No Anchor Zones / Eelgrass Earthquakes, Tsunamis, History of the NW Sound Toxins / Red Tides (<i>speaker name unclear — timestamp 21214</i>) Neil (<i>as a speaker</i>) Shipwrights Co-op Digging for Dinner Kelp Forage Fish — talk with microscope time (salmon, herring, smelt) Tides 		
PUBLIC COMMENT	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>None.</p>		
FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS	<p>Future Agenda Topics</p> <p>None.</p>		
ANNOUNCEMENTS	<p>Announcements</p> <p>None.</p>		
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm	Emily adjourned the meeting.	