

**Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
5:30 – 7:30 PM on January 6, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
WSU Classroom (97 Oak Bay Rd)
Meeting Minutes**

Present:

Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC
Troy McKelvey, Recreation
Janette Mestre, District 1
Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv
Brenda Johnson, District 2, NWSC Rep
Frank Handler, District 2 Alt
Emily Buckner, Marine Science, Chair
Jeff Taylor, District 2,
Gordon King, Commercial
Tim Cross, District 3 Alt
Neil Harrington, Tribal, Vice-Chair
Sarah Fisken, District 3, NWSC Alt
Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder

Absent:

Steve King, City of PT
Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt

Public

7 attendees

Staff

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

Via Zoom

Roy Clark, Recreation Alt

Guest Speakers

Update from Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s Natural Resources Department on their projects and activities
Neil Harrington, Environmental Biologist, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe

Topic	Update or Issue	Decisions/Follow-Up	Responsibility
CALL TO ORDER GUEST INTRODUCTIONS	Chair Emily Buckner called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM Introductions were made. Emily read the MRC Mission Statement. She also thanked Betsy Carlson for being the Committee Chair last year and offered congratulations on her retirement.	A quorum was present.	All members – please send volunteer hours to Katie.
GUEST SPEAKER	<p>Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe Natural Resources Department Update Neil Harrington, Environmental Biologist, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe</p> <p>TREATY RIGHTS & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT Neil opened with historical details on tribal treaty rights in Washington State. The three S’Klallam tribes reserved rights to gather fish and shellfish under the Point No-Point treaty area – rights the Tribes never relinquished. The State of Washington and the Treaty Tribes now co-manage these resources for subsistence, commercial and ceremonial purposes.</p> <p>Jamestown S’Klallam is one of four tribes in the Point No Point treaty area. Treaty rights extend out to the Hoko River area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skokomish Tribe • Port Gamble S’Klallam • Jamestown S’Klallam • Lower Elwha Klallam (west of Port Angeles) <p>NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT Mission: Protect treaty rights and natural resources that benefit Jamestown S’Klallam citizens and their descendants.</p> <p>JST Managed Fisheries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shellfish: Multiple species (clams, oysters, geoduck, crab, shrimp) managed through stock assessments, beach surveys, test fisheries, season setting with state and other tribes, and dedicated geoduck monitoring. • Finfish: Salmon, halibut, and rockfish managed through state/federal negotiations, smolt traps on Dungeness and and 		

	<p>several smaller streams , spawning surveys, stock assessments, and forecasting. Helicopters were used to install log jams for habitat improvement (\$700/minute).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement: "Fish cops" monitor compliance, working with WDFW and Clallam County Sheriff. <p>All work uses science-driven decision making</p> <p>HABITAT RESTORATION HIGHLIGHTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dungeness Bay - Recertified for shellfish harvest • Caldero Property on the Dungeness River (2023) - New side channels upstream of Highway 101, filled with water by November 2025 . Completed February 2023; fish using immediately. One of the last side channels before the mountains. • Railroad Bridge Park (2015) - Removed ~1,200 creosoted pilings, installed side channels and new bridge. Salmon now spawning there. <p>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING Water quality monitoring, GIS services, permit review, Dungeness River Management Team coordination (30-year partnership with irrigators), and public health biotoxin monitoring.</p> <p>NEIL'S PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmful algae monitoring (Sound Toxins program) - weekly sampling, tracking organisms causing paralytic shellfish poisoning • Olympia oyster restoration in Discovery and Sequim Bay - robust population established • Dungeness River Nature Center Board • Dungeness crab larvae monitoring (light traps) • European Green Crab tracking and control <p>2025 HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE DUNGENESS SPIT AND PROTECTION ISLAND WILDLIFE REFUGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75,000+ visitors to tribal natural resource areas • 1,600+ European Green Crabs captured • Invasive mustard removal on Protection Island • Wetland and native prairie restoration • Working within a co-management agreement with USFWS <p>The presentation highlighted the tribe's comprehensive, science-driven approach to protecting and restoring natural resources while honoring treaty rights and cultural traditions.</p> <p>QUESTIONS</p> <p>Is there a hatchery involved in Jimmy-Come-Lately Creek or is it all native?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's all native. The creek runs near the tribal center. In 1999, only 7 summer chum remained. They operated a hatchery for 12 years (ending 2010). Now they get robust returns of 2-3,000 per year. JST works with the state on the Dungeness hatchery. <p>Finfish farming on west side of Dungeness Spit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neil doesn't think it would permit. Potential nitrogen regulations would likely preclude it. <p>What's a FLUPSY? Jamestown Seafood owns shellfish hatcheries locally and in Kona, Hawaii.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A FLUPSY (Floating Upweller System) is a barge-like system with a paddle wheel and metal trays that grow small shellfish to reduce mortality.. <p>How was Dungeness Bay cleaned up from E. coli?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microbial source tracking identified sources: septic systems, farm practices, animals. They sampled irrigation ditches and tailwater, finding issues like septic systems piped into ditches. They piped some irrigation systems, though some wells went dry. 		
<p>AMENDMENTS TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA</p>	<p>Amendments to / Approval of Agenda None</p> <p>Amendments to / Approval of Minutes</p>	<p>Jon W. moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Gordon. Motion passed.</p>	

<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</p>	<p>The Dec. 2, 2025 meeting contained an error.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under <u>Other Updates</u>, the minutes stated: "Steve King shared that the DOE Wastewater approved the Revised Engineering Report for the <u>Alcohol plant</u> - now seeking funding." <p><u>This should read</u>: "Steve King shared that the DOE Wastewater approved the Revised Engineering Report for the <u>North Beach Outfall</u> - now seeking funding."</p>	<p>Jon W. moved to approve the minutes as noted. Seconded by Sarah. Motion passed.</p>	
<p>PUBLIC COMMENT</p>	<p>Public Comments Emily asked if anyone wanted to share, no comments.</p>		
<p>PORT of PT UPDATES</p>	<p>Port of PT Updates (Carol Hasse)</p> <p>Port is now debt-free.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They received a grant to explore climate-friendly, energy upgrades—solar panels, battery storage. <p>Highlights from her trip to Haida Gwaii:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hasse helped teach traditional sail-making from cedar bark. The community is involved with Pacific Rim Indigenous peoples who preserve cultural skills including weaving and carving, while also raising awareness of sea level rise impacts on island communities. She noted the impressive work by GIS map maker John Broadhead, who created poster-sized maps of Haida Gwaii: one showing sea creatures and another displaying the watershed of both islands with color-coded salmon populations. She suggested similar mapping would be valuable for the Peninsula. She also met an 85-year-old adjunct professor of Haida culture and language who is completing her law doctorate to help the Haida people secure title to their islands. 		
<p>BoCC UPDATE</p>	<p>BoCC Updates (Heidi)</p> <p>BUDGET STATUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently in budget season with department heads submitting proposed budgets Initial budget showed \$5.2 million deficit Reduced to \$1.1-1.2 million deficit through cuts The updated Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) is expected to be delivered to the board in one month Total budget: \$32 million <p>PLANNING & REVIEW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisiting Shoreline Master Program (SMP) to update relative to CAO They're following the order of the process (<i>complete the CAO before SMP explained in the Nov 2, 2025 minutes</i>) Part of 10-year Comprehensive Plan review Team is working efficiently on these updates <p>STAFFING CHANGES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost the <i>Code Compliance Coordinator</i> position due to budget cuts. Heidi is now attending these meetings Most losses are due to retirements of critical positions Department heads working to maintain operations with reduced capacity Staff embracing spirit of collaboration, "leaning in" with additional work using LEAN working model <p>BUDGET SHORTFALL CAUSES: (in response to a question)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property taxes limited to 1% annual increase while inflation is running 3-5% per year They are doing more with less over a longer trajectory COVID-era funding influx (designated for one-time expenses) created a false sense of security Too many positions created in recent years Some revenue lines are slightly down All of these constraints are adding up. 		

	Total budget is \$32 million		
RECENT MEETING REPORTS & ISSUE SUPDATES	<p>Recent Meeting Reports & Issue Updates</p> <p>NWSC MONTHLY MEETING UPDATE (JEFF)</p> <p>Anchor Out Program Presentation - Jessica Owens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social marketing campaign focused on educating boaters about eelgrass protection • Program has slowly expanded into Canada • Resources available at anchorout.org with links to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitch • Same speaker who presented at the recent conference <p>Program Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive approach combining eelgrass protection buoys with education • Instagram features interesting protection stories and content <p>General Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates shared on conference experiences 		
VOTES	<p>Votes</p> <p>BYLAWS SECTION 7 – VOTING UPDATE <i>(see meeting materials and last month's minutes)</i></p> <p>Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous discussion centered on changing from secret ballot to open ballot voting • Legal advised them to strike any kind of ballot voting • Going forward, all votes must be conducted by voice <p>New Voting Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard voice votes using "Yays & Nays" method • If confusion arises, Chair may call for roll call vote • Language changed from "consensus" to "simple majority" • If consensus cannot be reached, fall back to simple majority (per bylaws) <p>Clarification on December Vote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question raised whether last meeting's vote was secret or open. Katie clarified it was an open vote and paper ballots are public record • Members advised not to use paper ballots going forward to avoid impression of private voting • Katie had attempted to preserve MRC's ballot voting ability, but secret ballots are not allowed <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December, MRC voted on adopting <i>Robert's Rules of Order</i> and <i>Open Ballot</i> procedures <p>VOTES</p> <p>Amending of MRC Bylaws Motion to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the MRC amend the bylaws passed.</p> <p>2026 Annual Workplan Motion to approve the 2026 Annual Workplan as presented by Katie Kowal passed.</p> <p>NWSC Representative Election: Vote reopened due to a December tie. Chair Emily inquired if additional members wished to be nominated. No additional nominations were made. Two candidates remained: Jeff Taylor and Brenda Johnson.</p> <p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brenda Johnson: 6 votes • Jeff Taylor: 5 votes <p>Brenda Johnson elected as NWSC Representative. Chair thanked Jeff Taylor for his willingness to serve. Brenda expressed appreciation for Jeff's openness in this process and shared her hopes for his involvement in the NWSC in the future.</p>	<p>Gordon moved to send a recommendation to the BoCC that the MRC amends the bylaws. Betsy seconded.</p> <p>Neil motioned to approve the 2026 Annual Workplan as presented by Katie Kowal. Janette seconded it. Vote passed.</p>	

<p>LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST (DNR)</p>	<p>Letter of Support Request (DNR) Betsy Dabob Bay Natural Area Trust Land Transfer</p> <p>The MRC reviewed a draft letter of support for the DNR Trust Land Transfer of state forest lands to ensure conservation of lands around Dabob Bay. The letter was included in agenda materials for review. If approved, it will be submitted to the County Commissioners for their review before forwarding to the state to meet the March deadline.</p> <p>Discussion clarified edits to the signature line and the wording of Northwest Straits Commission vs NWS Initiative. Brenda suggested rewording to read the "Northwest Straits Initiative" rather than "Commission" for greater impact.</p>	<p>Neil made a motion to approve the letter as amended with removing Commission and replacing it with Initiative; and removing Council and replacing it with Committee. Emily seconded. Motion approved.</p>	
<p>GRANT PROJECT UPDATES</p>	<p>Grant Project Updates</p> <p>FORAGE FISH (Sarah) Dabob, Quilcene Marina</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They didn't survey last month. They will be sampling this month in Dabob & Quilcene. <p>OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay & Killisut Harbor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Army Corps permit completed; Katie forwarded final report to Neil <p>Oyster Nursery at Maritime Center Partnership established between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puget Sound Restoration Fund Maritime Center Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe High school students will work in the nursery First seed round allocated to Whatcom County MRC Data review scheduled for end of January and can be sent to those interested. <p>A question asked about why the first seed round is being allocated to Whatcom County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is currently a large queue for Olympia oyster hatchery seed, with two cohorts of brood stock produced annually. Killisut is one of the only producers of Olympia oysters and produces significantly more larvae than their available space can accommodate. The Maritime Center nursery program is an effort to scale up oyster operations. This is the second high school participating in this type of educational program. <p>NO ANCHOR ZONE BUOYS (Troy & Gordon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gordon checked the buoys near the dock and they didn't look too low. He plans to get out there in better light, possibly taking a boat out for a closer look and begin pulling the NABs. Needs to check the wind first. No real updates. <p>RAIN GARDENS (Janette)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance work is happening over the next couple of months. They've put in mulch, and the next step is to survey and determine what plant material is needed for spring. Some signs need replacement. <p>EDUCATION & OUTREACH (Brenda)</p> <p>New name badges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used for tabling events, etc... She showed the mockups. They will refine more. If they have enough funding, they hope to have metal or wood name tags. Logo looks better on the metal. <p>Shoreline Landowners' Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah, Jon, and Brenda attended the workshop in December at Jefferson Co. Library. Three staff members from NWSF/Shore Friendly were present and Peninsula Environmental in Port Angeles gave a very good presentation on various plans on the shoreline. The 30-35 people in the audience were primarily from Jefferson County. Several attendees mentioned it was their second time coming to the 		

	<p>workshop. Jon noted that even though he does this type of work professionally, he still learned new information from the presenters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brenda noted that the presenters emphasized their information was science-based, not opinion, using well-founded and well-respected data. <p>Carol asked about getting this information for the Port.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah mentioned brochures are available. Jon noted that the presentation was primarily focused on individual landowners with single-family properties, covering topics like appropriate plants for bluff properties, managing drainage, and providing soil stability. Sarah said that Shore Friendly has conducted similar workshops for realtors and other groups, so they might be able to do one specifically for the Port. They also offer site visits. 		
OTHER MRC PROJECTS	<p>Other MRC Projects</p> <p>SATELLITE IMAGERY (Jeff) Nothing to report.</p> <p>STORM SURGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foot of storm surge was predicted for 5 days in a row. He's never seen that before. Jeff noted that we're in an unusual pattern right now. <p>ROV CRAB POTS (Tim)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No meetings with students due to the holidays. 		
PUBLIC COMMENT	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Heidi commented that the County has a number of derelict vessels this season and they're receiving requests from DNR, authorizing them to remove the boats from private tidelands, which is the County's responsibility as the local government. Kitsap County is developing a legislative proposal to change the period of custody required from 30 to 15 days—the boat is in "limbo" during this time. Heidi will be the legislative rep for Jefferson County and will be proposing this idea.</p>		
FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS	<p>Future Agenda Topics</p> <p>SPEAKERS UPDATE (Emily)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emily will be responsible for inviting speakers and advertising speaker events, working with Katie to ensure presenters have everything they need for their presentations. Otherwise, the process remains the same. The group suggestions will be added to a list on Google Drive. There's a short list of potential speakers to invite over the next couple of months. The plan is to stack things up and have speakers most months moving forward. 		
MRC ROUND TABLE/ ANNOUNCEMENTS	<p>MRC Round Table / Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This roundtable time is for anyone to share topics, concerns, observations, or announcements from their district or the group they represent. Gordon shared a story about Kelp that broke free from a Kelp farm on Vashon Island, and how DNR was getting very "antsy". Discussion followed on the current intense scrutiny on Kelp farms. Jon shared that there is a lot of concern for potentials of contamination of local brood stock, spreading diseases. Roy brought up the presentation with WDFW enforcement, and how Wolf and Shine beaches were inundated with people after the social media exposure. This year, Shine beach will be closed three weeks earlier as a result of that massive harvest. WDFW is moving to Mobile Fishing Licenses. You can download an app on your phone. <p>TWO POTENTIAL SUBCOMMITTEE IDEAS:</p> <p>Shoreline Armoring Subcommittee - Similar to what Clallam County does, mapping the county's shoreline armoring and tracking increases/decreases over time.</p> <p>BoCC Advisory Subcommittee - Focused on policy issues and advisory actions to the Board of County Commissioners.</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was discussion about whether a dedicated advisory subcommittee is needed since a Commissioner already attends meetings and is open to input. The point was raised that the advisory role isn't being emphasized as much as it could be. The Letter of Support subcommittee was mentioned as an example - it was formed for a specific task, an ad hoc subcommittee got it done, and then wrapped up. • Heidi expressed interest in receiving more proactive input from the MRC on County issues. The Black Point Resort was mentioned as an example of the kind of specific issue where MRC feedback would be helpful. The conversation shifted toward making advisory input a regular agenda item with ad hoc subcommittees formed as needed, rather than creating a permanent subcommittee. • The Executive Committee will figure out how to make more room on the agenda for these discussions with the BoCC. 		
ADJOURNMENT	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm</p> <p>February 3, 6pm-8pm – Hybrid MRC monthly meeting at Pavilion Building (355 Hudson Rd, Port Townsend, WA)</p>	Emily adjourned the meeting.	