FINAL

Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
5:30 – 7:30 PM on October 6, 2026
Hybrid Meeting
Quilcene Community Center (US 101, Quilcene)
Meeting Minutes

Present:
Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC
Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
Sarah Fisken, District 3, NWSC Alt
Brenda Johnson, District 2, NWSC Rep
Rebecca Berger, District 2, Alt
Liz Cumming, District 1
Troy McKelvey, Recreation
Odhran Waggoner, Local Youth
Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder

Via Zoom
Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt
Tim Cross, District 3 Alt
Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv
Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
Frank Handler, District 2
Steve King, City of PT
Bella Ferland, Local Youth Alt
Dana Oster, Staff NWSC
Genni Brookshire, Office of the Governor
Teagan Dormody WA Sea Grant

Guest Speaker:
NWSC & MRC Derelict Vessel Program
Dana Oster, Marine Program Manager NWSC

Absent:
Neil Harrington, Tribal, Vice-Chair
Gordon King, Commercial
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 & INTERODUCTIONS	Heidi was the Chair since Emily & Neil were absent. Heidi called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM	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** Jon moved to add discussion of formation of ad-hoc subcommittee to discuss the DV program. Katie added to have a vote after a discussion. **Amendments to / Approval of Minutes** • Brenda noted multiple minor revisions to the Lisa Kaufman section of the 9/01/2026 minutes. Submitted as written comments.	Jon moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Troy. Motion passed. Jon moved to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Sarah. Motion passed.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	**Public Comments** Member of the public thanked the MRC for coming down to Quilcene. This was her first time attending an MRC meeting.		
GUEST SPEAKER Dana Oster, Marine Program Manager NWSC	**NWSC & MRC Derelict Vessel Program** The NWSC Derelict Vessel Program is fairly new, started in 2022-23. It is rooted in the efforts of the Snohomish and San Juan County MRCs, with interest from other MRCs, and started with 2023 congressionally directed spending funds. NWSC leads a workgroup of seven MRCs and Tribal partners that prioritizes removals based on available budget and criteria. **2023-2025 results:** • Removals: 29 vessels at a total cost of $1,281,492 (13 in 2023, 14 in 2024, 2 in 2025). Three more are tentatively planned for 2026. • Turn-in events: 92 vessels recycled or disposed of, 274.1 tons of debris, $212,000 total cost. The three events were San Juan County (Port of Friday Harbor, April 2024), Skagit County (Port of		

	Skagit, July 2024) and Whatcom County (Port of Bellingham, summer 2025). • 2026: An event hosted with the Makah Tribe and DNR starts mid-October (Neah Bay, next week). NWSC has set aside $50,000 plus staff coordination time. About $281,000 is available for 2026-27, and $201,000 of it must be spent by 12/31/26. • 2027: Next year's event involves the Jefferson and Clallam MRCs. **How a turn-in event works:** • Partners and roles: The idea is for the Ports of Port Townsend and Port Angeles to partner. Monthly meetings bring partners to the table. Past events involved DNR, the county, the local MRC, a tribe, the host port, a local marine service company, the Department of Ecology and NWSC. Logistics are settled in planning meetings ahead of time. • Advertising: The aim is to tell the public that derelict vessels can be removed rather than sold on Craigslist or similar sites. Knowing where to target advertising is tricky. Outreach also educates the public and promotes recycling. • Registration: These are free events run through DNR's Vessel Turn-In Program. Owners apply in advance with proof of ownership and photos. Prior approval is required; space is limited and filled in the order the applications are approved. • Date and location: These are called "events" rather than "days." Applicants are told the date and location after pre-approval. • Size limit: Vessels must be 34 ft or less. At Skagit, vessels 35 ft or larger were reviewed case by case. San Juan and Whatcom did not accept them but could refer owners to alternative DNR options. • Staging: Vessels are selected, brought to the site and staged. Sites differ in available space, and she showed how Skagit and San Juan each brought boats in. • Hazardous waste: Hazardous and household waste is removed first, with Ecology brought in if needed. • Deconstruction: Vessels are deconstructed and recycled, with material put into bins and sorted later. She showed a video of a deconstruction. • Media day: Elected officials and media are invited to share and celebrate accomplishments, which typically produces write-ups that keep the public informed. She showed photos from the San Juan and Skagit media days and coverage, including a Skagit Valley Herald story on the 49 boats turned in at the Skagit event **Q&A** Carol: • Why did removals drop from 13 (2023) and 14 (2024) to 2 (2025)? • What about recycling versus disposal? • How can the program advertise better, especially with $201K to spend by December? • She serves on the advisory board of the National Maritime Heritage Area on the Salish Sea, which works with heritage and classic vessels. Can the pieces be sorted so they go to a steward or museum? Dana: • Her presentation covers only the NWSC and its linked MRCs. • Drop in removals: Federal funding was plentiful in 2023 and 2024. The program has since focused on turn-in events and prevention, though NWSC would like to do some removals again. • Recycling versus disposal: Removals offer no chance to recycle deliberately, and recycling hasn't been a priority for derelict vessels. Turn-in events catch boats one step before derelict, so recycling is possible. • Advertising: Turn-in events already do a lot, and she prefers to focus there. DNR has done 23 turn-in events, and the Port of Port Townsend event is meant to broaden partners and outreach. • Heritage vessels: A great priority, but she is unsure how to address it and doesn't think a vessel can be repurposed. Carol asked how the Port can partner. • Dana said Heidi has shown a lot of enthusiasm. She will contact Heidi, Carol and Clallam County, then hold a large Zoom meeting so the ports understand what they are signing up for.		

	• Each port needs one staff person on the monthly planning calls. Heidi told Carol she had already spoken with Eron Berg, who is very excited. Funds would be available on July 1, and the events need DNR to fund them. Frank said this is a great program and wondered if printed literature is available to hand out at the Wooden Boat Festival (WBF). Dana said DNR has handouts and she will contact them. Heidi noted that DNR's DV staff person has been a speaker spoken on the MRC stage. Katie: What is required of volunteers for the event/monthly meetings? Dana gave a rough schedule for a 2027 event: • January: Monthly one-hour meetings begin with MRC members and project partners. • Mid-May (at the latest): Advertising begins and runs at least two months. • Mid-July: Applications close, if deconstruction begins in mid-August. • August: Event. The MRC's biggest contribution is brainstorming advertising avenues, such as sharing the flyer on list serves and deciding where to post printed flyers (boatyards, etc.). Dana said this is where the MRC is critical. The biggest ask comes in early to mid-spring. Brenda: What is the logic behind the Port Angeles and Port Townsend events? Dana said it was her idea. She didn't want to prioritize one port over the other, and both were interested. The plan is one big, collective advertising push across Jefferson and Clallam Counties, with more resources behind it. Carol noted that Port Townsend has a great working relationship with Port Angeles and thinks coordinating the two ports is a good move. Katie asked Dana about next steps for our MRC: • MRC group discussion, identify members who wish to participate and then hold a vote on whether to officially participate. • Dana said that would be good timing. Aim for mid-to-late November for that meeting. Katie asked for verbal commitment, the following volunteered: • Carol • Sarah • Brenda • Heidi • Rebecca		
ADMINSTRATIVE UPDATES	**Administrative Updates** (Katie) NWSC CONFERENCE SIGNUPS There is no lodging reimbursement since it's in our county, however, there is mileage reimbursement. Katie will review process at November meeting. GOOGLE SHARE DRIVE Katie is organizing it soon. If you have something bookmarked, the link may move. The Volunteer Hours Form link will NOT move. Contact Katie if you can't find something. BUDGET REVIEW Katie reviewed the annual budget on the screen, along with current grant agreements. • Located on the Google Share Drive, everyone has access. • Updated every quarter after grant reporting • One budget for the Shorelines grant (Bull Kelp, Forage Fish, NAZ, Oly) • One budget is for the OTGP grant (E+O, Rain Gardens) MRC PROGRAM ASSISTANT The job announcement is out. Katie is hoping to review the first round of applications by the end of this week.		

RECENT MEETING REPORTS AND ISSUE UPDATES	**Recent Meeting Reports and Issue Updates** NWSC MONTHLY MEETING UPDATE (Brenda) For this meeting, the group visited the longest-monitored kelp bed at Ebey's Landing on Whidbey Island. Carter Webb of the Island MRC gave a tour of the 30-acre site. It is the only kelp bed along that stretch of beach, located by looking west from Ebey's Landing and walking south. Two weeks ago, the bed looked lush, thick and green. Katie attached the NWSC meeting highlights to the JCMRC meeting agenda email, as other MRCs have been doing. The highlights contain a lot of useful information. MOLT SEARCH: PARTICIPATORY SCIENCE FOR EUROPEAN GREEN CRAB MOLT MONITORING Presentation by Dr. Lisa Watkins, Community Science Specialist, Washington Sea Grant The presentation covered training community members to search for green crab molts, which helps detect the crabs early enough to know where they are expanding. Her presentation is outlined on the NWSC website. Lisa was a good speaker. GREEN CRAB SEASON UPDATE • The Washington Conservation Corps crew wrapped up its green crab season in Samish Bay. The crew helped set almost 2,000 traps and captured almost 400 green crabs. • The crew also helped with outreach by writing a blog post on the Green Crab infestation in Puget Sound. • The crew collaborated to trap Samish Bay by airboat to reach hard-to-access sites. • WDFW continues these efforts in Drayton Harbor, with over 2,500 traps set and over 1,000 green crabs captured. REGISTRATION FOR MRC CONFERENCE ENDS ON NOV 19TH. The conference includes two special sessions. These virtual presentations are valuable for new members and useful for longtime members because they explain how the whole MRC structure works. NW STRAITS 101 • Wednesday Oct 14th 10 – 11am • Tuesday Oct 20th 10 – 11am EFFECTIVE ECOLOGICAL MONITORING WORKSHOP The Science Advisory Committee is offering a course ahead of the conference, in the first hour and a half. All MRCs can talk with the Science Advisors about study design, Dana Oster is the contact. Our MRC has not yet taken advantage of this, but other MRCs have. The advisors are willing to meet by Zoom or in person if we need their expertise. FUNDING REAUTHORIZATION ACT • The bill was expected to be approved by the end of September, but that did not happen. It is now in the Senate Commerce Committee and will most likely remain there through the end of November. • They anticipate that the Senate will approve the bill and NWSC is planning a regional press release. Each MRC is also planning its own press release on MRC accomplishments, what the bill means, etc. Brenda and Katie have been working with Jessica Owens on this. No NWSC meeting in October or November (due to conference) Next meeting is December 11th. More info here: https://nwstraits.org/upcoming-events Heidi recommended that members sign up for the conference. She added that the presentations from other MRCs and visits to their projects have informed her work on the Puget Sound Partnership's Ecosystem Coordination Board this past year.		
GRANT PROJECT UPDATES	**Grant Project Updates** DERELICT VESSEL EVENT (Heidi) • Heidi said there is a lot of enthusiasm about a DV Event. She is meeting with Eron Berg tomorrow with the feedback from tonight's meeting. The Port is excited to sponsor the event.	Jon moved to form an ad hoc subcommittee to coordinate with the NWSC, the Ports of Port Townsend and Port	

	• Brenda noted that a group of members worked on a turn-in event a couple of years ago, but the commission ran out of funds, so the project had to be put on hold. She said it's exciting to see it come to fruition. FORAGE FISH (Sarah) • She sampled last month in Dabob, but she could not sample in Quilcene due to a scheduling conflict. She will this month. • Katie said she was looking at Sarah's project summary report and the data. The Forage Fish data is processed by WDFW, which has a backlog. She added a section to the report comparing November-January results over the past four years. • Each year, from 2020-2024, between the months of November and January , roughly 30 surf smelt eggs showed up on the beach. Last year, in 2025, there were 328, a large spike. It was interesting to see such a large increase. • At Quilcene Marina, none of the sampling done to-date has found surf smelt or sand lance eggs on the beach. Sarah thinks this will change once the bulkhead is removed. OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay and Kilisut Harbor • Neil absent • Katie said they are working on permits. She is having trouble getting permit approval on a Fish Habitat Enhancement Project. Heidi will reach out to Camille Speck. Katie will send Heidi an email with more details. • Genni noted that she is the Environmental Permitting Coordinator for WA State. She handles complex environmental permitting where multiple agencies, organizations and jurisdictions are involved. There is no cost for the services, send her an email and she is happy to help coordinate. BULL KELP (Jon) • They are finished for the year. The final event was scheduled for 9/25, but it was cancelled due to a gale on the Strait. • He needs to finish getting the data to Jeff Whitty. • Jon noted that he wasn't sure if any review meetings were scheduled yet, but they usually occur at the end of the year after everything is processed. He will let everyone know when the meeting is scheduled. NO ANCHOR ZONE BUOYS (Troy) (Gordon absent) • They are up and standing. Katie said they will be up during the conference for the scavenger hunt. • MRC No Anchor Zone article in *Waggoner*. Katie, Troy and Gordon worked with Jessica and Allie at the NWSC on the article which highlighted the PT waterfront NAZ buoys. • Carol noted that the Waggoner is a popular cruising guide for mariners, so this is great publicity. • https://waggonerguide.com/protecting-eelgrass-meadows-at-port-townsend/ EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Betsy) MRC stage at the Wooden Boat Festival review • 1430 visitors over the 19 different sessions held. • Feedback forms included lots of positive feedback and comments asking for the screen to be raised (it was too low) to see over audience heads). • Barb Trailer, who runs the festival, thanked the MRC and asked if we wanted a bigger tent next year. Betsy thinks we're at capacity. • She thanked everyone for the great presentations. • 2027 is the 50th anniversary of the WBF, it will be important to have a strong showing. • Betsy asked if anyone was interested in taking over the lead on this project, and if so, they should email her. • The MRC has already met with WDFW to debrief on the "science alley" space. WDFW isn't sure who will be the lead next year, but Betsy said that we need to make sure that we are in communication with them as early in the year as possible. SCAVENGER HUNT at the NWSC Conference JCMRC is creating a paper scavenger hunt to be included in conference packets. The goal is for participants to learn about JCMRC's projects and its partners' projects.	Angeles, and other interested partners on a Derelict Vessel event to occur in 2027. Seconded by Sarah. Motion approved.	

	• Participants: Other MRCs. Local JCMRC members will check answers. • Format: Six sites, taking about an hour. A code word is spelled out by letters on oyster shells at the sites, and JCMRC members know the code word. There are no prizes at this point; it's "for the glory." • Roles: JCMRC provides the content. NWSC is helping print the hunt and create the map. Liz is scouting the sites in person. • Photos: Participants can upload photos. NWSC will host a landing site for photos and a landing page for the scavenger hunt. • Highlights: Pigeon Guillemot, Rain Gardens, The Whale, Storm Surge, and No Anchor Zone buoys SHORELINE LANDOWNER OUTREACH (Sarah) • None RAIN GARDENS • There will be an inquiry at next month's meeting from a community member who wants to install a Rain Garden. • Neil wants to address the request at the next meeting. • Frank noted that there is a work party tomorrow morning. NO ANCHOR ZONES – WBF OBSERVATIONS • Katie thanked everyone who took observations of the NAZs at the Wooden Boat Festival. Thirteen observations over six days, Including Bryan's drone video footage. • Katie showed the drone video of NAZ during WBF		
JEFFERSON CO. UPDATES AND POLICY MATTERS	**BoCC / Port of PT Joint Update** NAVY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS) Steve King, the City Manager, received an EIS during public comment period. The City asked if JCMRC could review since the purpose of MRC network is to advise Commissioners on policy matters related to the marine environment. The City would normally comment on Navy activities, but in this case they wanted insight and expertise from the MRC on what the Navy is proposing and its potential environmental impacts. "It's an effort to solicit community expertise on this response." Heidi said that historically, the MRC gives the policy advice in a letter to the BOCC for approval, and then it can be forwarded to the appropriate agency or person. It is very helpful for local elected officials who don't have the expertise to comment. Since Emily was absent, Heidi shared her response of potential concerns. • Acoustic stress • Ship strike for marine mammals • Bioaccumulation of contaminants and metals in shellfish in a region with significant commercial and recreational fisheries and shellfisheries. Brenda noticed they are already invoking partnerships with Federal & State agencies as people they're working with. Heidi commented on a table in the EIS regarding the number of munitions they intend to deploy: • Large caliber projectiles: 3000 in the existing EIS to a new estimate of 4200. • Small caliber projectiles:121,000 in the existing EIS to a preferred alternative of 240,000. • Heidi said that backs up Emily's comment on accumulation of metals and contaminants. The deadline for the letter is Oct 19th. Katie shared that it's difficult for the MRC to process this material with such short notice. There won't be time to put a letter together by October 19th, but she welcomed any informal comments. Carol said that although she's not a voting member, she noted that we're in a perilous time with our federal government, particularly the Department of Defense and its leaders. She's not comfortable with this increase in small and large caliber weaponry being deployed. She said we should speak against this: as citizens, as elected officials, and as part of this MRC. Any opportunity we have to speak against increased militarization here in the		

	Northwest is important. She would fully support the MRC in speaking against it. Heidi shared a concern that there isn't time before the 19th for this to get on agendas with the City Council and Commissioner, however, the individual commissioners can write a letter on the commissioner letterhead without the other two signatories. Heidi pointed out how specifically the EIS relates to Jefferson County: • Replacements of in-water array towers • Installation of cables and hydrophones in Dabob Bay • That activity has the most impact on soft unvegetated habitats (she noted that is Eelgrass). • She will write a letter on her letterhead since there isn't time to write a formal letter from the City Council or the BoCC. Steve said if a letter is drafted for the mayor, it could be presented to the Council on Oct 19th. If they get City Council to approve, they will send it that night. He needs substance for the letter-- what he's already heard may be enough to go on record already. He noted that pointing out how the region's economy is based on its natural environment, both from a fisheries and recreation standpoint and that mitigation measures are necessary. Carol noted that Sarah would be an expert in this area. Tim B: What type of projectiles and what are they made of? • Depleted Uranium? • Lead? • Jacketed? Katie found the map and brought it up on the screen. Steve asked how the state has responded in the past. Sarah asked if the Tribes were aware of this. Heidi will send Steve a copy of her letter. Steve appreciated learning about the history of the MRC's purpose. Heidi said it's a good reminder on MRC policy matters to bring these things up as early as possible. She said she'll ask the other commissioners, Greg & Heather, if they would like to sign. Carol added that anything we can do to slow down the militarization of our area is a good idea. Heidi reminded everyone that Dabob Bay is used for submarine exercises. It is the main training ground for subs since it's so quiet. Rebecca mentioned there is a transient Orca pod that spends a lot of time there in spring & summer. She said the Navy acknowledged knowing where the southern resident's range is. Heidi said there wasn't enough collective knowledge in the room to write a letter tonight, but she wanted the MRC to know that both Boards appreciate getting insight from the MRC on matters like this. Heidi and Katie both thanked Steve for sending this. PORT UPDATES (Carol) Carol thanked everyone who attended the Boatyard Bash and said how much she enjoyed the MRC tent at the WBF. PORT ACTIVITIES Junior Officers Quarters (duplex) • Available for people to rent soon. VRBO for gatherings, etc. • Beautifully restored • New roofs & HVAC • They're in budget season now and looking at rates, commitment to community is to not raise rates higher than the CPI. STRAIT ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION NETWORK LOCAL INTEGRATING ORGANIZATION quarterly meeting • Thursday, Oct 8th • Dungeness River Center, Sequim • 10:00 am – 2:00pm • Everyone is invited. The Local Integrating Organization is one of the projects under the Puget Sound Partnership. Many good conversations.		

MRC MEMBER ROUNDTABLE	**MRC Roundtable** • Brenda: noted that the next "can of worms" that the MRC should be thinking about is the paper mill and the health of PT bay. What contaminants are in PT bay? She hears only speculation in the news. It could be worthwhile for the MRC to develop a project for this upcoming grant season. Add to the agenda as discussion topic for next meeting. • Katie said that a NPDES permit is required for the mill (and anyone who has an outfall/discharges into a stormwater system/water body), which is public information. A good place to start. They have an in-house environmental team for sampling, but that data should have outside monitoring. • More info: https://www.epa.gov/npdes/npdes-permit-basics • Heidi said this was brought up at the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting. She thinks it would be interesting to have a conversation about that since there is a lot of concern in the community. • Brenda noted that it isn't only the PT Paper Mill, it's the marinas, the outfalls--everything that we know a tiny bit about. It would be good to develop a whole record of what's in PT bay.		
PUBLIC COMMENT	**Public Comments** Member of the public noted the meeting was very informative for them. They look forward to more.		
FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS	**Future Agenda Topics** PT Paper Mill and the health of PT Bay (see MRC Roundtable)		
ANNOUNCEMENTS	**MRC Member Announcements**		
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 7:33pm	Heidi adjourned the meeting.	