# Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting 6-8PM on October 7, 2025 Hybrid Meeting WSU Classroom (97 Oak Bay Rd) Meeting Minutes

Present:

Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
Neil Harrington, Tribal
Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv, Chair
Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
Emily Buckner, Marine Science, Vice Chair
Jeff Taylor, District 2, NWSC Rep
Gordon King, Commercial
Janette Mestre, District 1
Roy Clark, Recreation Alt
Sarah Fisken, District 2 Alt
Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt
Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder

Via Zoom

Angela Glore, NODC Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network Brenda Johnson, District 2 Troy McKelvey, Recreation

**Guest Speakers** 

Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Police: Officer Owen Barabasz Sergeant Matt Jewett Absent:

Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC Steve King, City of PT Tim Cross, District 3 Alt

**Public** None

Staff

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

#### Topic Update or Issue Decisions/Follow-Up Responsibility CALL TO ORDER Chair Betsy Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM A quorum was present. All members – Introductions were made. Betsy announced that they would try the new please send INTRODUCTIONS volunteer hours format at this meeting. to Katie. AMENDMENTS Amendments to / Approval of Agenda Neil moved to approve the TO/APPROVAL OF Emily: do we want to discuss letter of support? agenda. Seconded by Emily. AGENDA Putting on the next Agenda—DNR Dabob Bay interest. Motion passed. APPROVAL OF MINUTES Amendments to / Approval of Minutes Gordon moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by None Jon W. Motion passed. PUBLIC COMMENT None **GUEST SPEAKERS** Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Police: WDFW Police Officer Owen WDFW Mission: Barabasz "To protect our natural resources and the public we serve" Sergeant Matt Jewett Similar to the MRC's mission. WA State divided into six regions: we are region 6 (coastal region) Detachment 64 East of Lake Crescent to PT down to Mason County border Detachment 63 West of Lake Crescent to Neah Bay to Gray's Harbor County border There is a Sergeant and one officer for the entire area.

Fish and Wildlife Officers (FWOs) are general authority peace officers, responsible for enforcing a myriad of state & federal laws.

- Every officer has attended the police academy
- They have the capacity to enforce general law, but Fish & Wildlife related law is the primary concern.
  - Fishing/Shellfish harvesting Commercial & Recreational
  - Hunting
  - o Human Wildlife Conflict
  - o Aquatic Habitats
  - o Boating Safety
  - Search and Rescue

# Accomplishing the Mission:

#### Strategies

- Educate
- Enforce
- Assist

### **Tactics**

- Present/Deterrence
- Surveillance/Plain clothes
- Compliance inspections looking for licenses, what they're catching, etc...day-to-day operations
- Planned operations

### **FISHING**

- Recreational : Salmon, Halibut, Rockfish, Lingcod
- Commercial: Purse Seine, Beach Seine, Gillnets, Longline

### SHELLFISH

- Recreational: Hard Shell Clams, Razor Clams, Shrimp, Crab
- Commercial: Crab, Shrimp, Geoduck, Urchin, Sea Cucumbers, Clams/Oysters

# Wolfe/Shine 4/26/2025

- 800 harvesters arrived, caused traffic complications and resulted in an emergency closure within a week
- Effect on shellfish population was concerning; predictions don't take into account these massive spikes
- With great weather, and a perfect low tide, they usually expect up to 200 harvesters in a single day
- When it's that busy like that, they often do more parking enforcement than shellfish --- roads must be kept open for fire vehicles.

Bryan asked if they shut down the beaches when this happens.

 Officer Barabasz said that it wasn't shut it down that day, but they told the Shellfish Dept; they tried to calculate if the population could handle that much demand. It took a week, but the beach was shut down for the season.

# Katie asked about the closure process:

- They can close down with a WAC, don't need legislative approval
- Must pay attention emergency rules daily.
- Sergeant Jewett noted that social media has made a big difference. It's very different than twenty years ago when these beaches were open year-round. Now, beach openings are staggered.

# Aquatic Habitats

Displayed a slide of excavation/construction on the shoreline

- Damaging to Fish/Wildlife
- Destruction of Habitat
- Hydraulic projects
  - Permitted & not permitted
  - These projects can be "far more damaging than an individual taking too many clams in a day."

# Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW)

- Displayed a chart: 2018-2024 vessels in the vicinity of SRKW
  - Boats being too close has decreased markedly since 2018.

- Biggest violators are recreational boats.
- Commercial whale watching boats are good at self-policing.

Emily asked if they were the only ones enforcing this

 OB: NOAA can enforce, there, but it is extremely rare for them to be there. They are mostly research.

Betsy asked where to report sightings like this (boats too close to whales).

- OB: It works best if you can get a picture that demonstrates it. Otherwise, it's almost impossible to do anything. But they should still report it.
- Report it thru their dispatch (WILDCOMM or 911, see notes below)

### Marine Conservation Partners

- USCG: flight surveillance and boat patrols
- NOAA federally and joint patrols
- Local tribes joint patrols and communication
- DNR geoduck fishery
- DOH sanitary shellfish partnership

#### Dive Team

- Off tract geoduck harvest
- High grading/wastage of geoduck
  - o Over \$250 of product is a felony
- Underwater HPA violations
- AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species)
- Search and Recovery they helped when the astronaut crashed his plane in the San Juans last year.
- Assist biologists with surveys and sampling.

# Derelict Gear

- Gear left behind at end of season.
- Pots with ground lines...big problem with Canadian crabbers.

Sarah asked if it's legal for the tribes to use ground lines.

- He didn't know. Neil said he didn't think so.
- OB said that may happen with Shrimp.
- Jeff said he was told that he was supposed to tell DWFW that he had connected his pots with lines. He said that Jason mentioned that tribes weren't supposed to use lines either.

# Chart of traps removed by WDFW sweeps 2018-2024

 The data appears that there are less traps out there, but he noted that more buoys are being recovered without owner information—unidentifiable.

# Community outreach:

- Schools
- Festivals/fairs
- Community events

 $\mbox{Jon}\,\mbox{W}$  asked earlier about the best way to report missing gear.

- Best way is to call 911
- 911 Dispatch is accustomed to WDFW incident calls
  - "I wish to report a fish & wildlife incident"
- Then, State Patrol will dispatch a WDFW officer ASAP
- This method gets out to the most people

# WILDCOMM

360-902-2936 Opt 1 <u>WILDCOMM@dfw.wa.gov</u> Officer Owen Barabasz

Work cell: 206-376-7656

Tim B wondered about a ballpark estimate of recreational fishermen catching over their limit—essentially poaching.

 OB: It's a small percent, maybe 20%, depends on speciesshrimp is more like 40%. Overlimit is typically done by someone who knows what they're doing.

Tim asked if the penalties are harsh enough to stop people from doing it.

OB: They have a fair amount of discretion.

- One fish over the limit is technically a criminal violation, however, officers have the ability to make it an infraction or criminal--depending on the severity or the intentions of the individual.
- They try to make it as effective as possible.

Gordon mentioned the hatchery near the Quilcene river and people fishing there.

OB: Quilcene is a good example of that.

Sarah noted that one day she saw nearly 100 people fishing on the river. She asked if there is a limit for how many can be fishing at a time?

OB: No

Emily said that the MRC's focus has been more on derelict gear, education, etc... and hasn't focused on overfishing. Where do they see critical areas in Jefferson Co. for poaching? Are there specific spots that could use more focus from the MRC?

- OB: Areas like Wolfe/Shine, the beaches here get hit hard. Shellfish harvesting.
- The Quilcene river is far gone. People who are legitimately fishing don't go to Quilcene.
- Sergeant Matt Jewett: It's all hatchery fish in Quilcene, and not a high priority for enforcement.
- He also noted that the biggest enforcement items for them
  are habitat enforcement, bulkheads, crab pots. Cottoning is
  so important on these crab pot traps. There has been so
  much damage in done South Sound-- in the last ten years,
  there hasn't been a season. Port Townsend has a lot of crab,
  and they want to enforce the rules here to keep a season.

Jon W asked how many violation bulkheads are removed. If they're not removed, is there enforcement for mitigation?

MJ said that there isn't a lot of support in the courts, they don't get much for bulkhead violations.

Bryan: He does so many beach surveys and people are in violation. It's all enforced by the neighbors calling it in.

- OB said their best tool is people reporting to them.
- They'll look on boat patrols, but are spread too thin to go out searching.

Janette M asked what they typically use the drones for.

- OB said there are lots of rules for them. Recently, they used them in a geoduck operation: watching geoduck divers, putting them in cages and hiding them on the boat.
- Going up and down rivers at night with thermals looking for people. People will be snagging or dip netting in total darkness, so using drones to use thermals to pick them up

Neil said that the MRC is an advisory body to the county, he asked how seriously does the Prosecutor take these cases.

- OB answered that it's hard when prosecutors have to choose between a violent crime and someone fishing over limit—that's frequently what happens.
- Many of them also don't understand the severity of violations.
- MJ said that King & Pierce Counties don't prosecute, and so
  if they make the violations into infractions, then they can
  make an impression at the time and give them a large fine, or
  suspend their license.
- MJ said there are also certain judges that will not prosecute.

Katie asked if it was public record—when violators appear before a prosecuting attorney.

OB said you have to request the record.

		<u> </u>
	10 min BREAK	
PORT of PT	Port of PT Updates (Carol Hasse)	
UPDATES	Carol is running for reelection to Port Commissioner	
	Ribbon cutting at Gardiner Boat Ramp	
	• Oct 15 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 pm	
	<ul> <li>Only ADA complaint public launch spot on Discovery Bay</li> <li>They raised the road up to the ramp, which should help</li> </ul>	
	make it sea level.	
	Stormwater system update  • Should be complete by end of October	
	Replacing Fuel Tanks at Jeff Co Int'l Airport (JCIA)	
	Small airplanes have to run on leaded fuel, it may even be illegal, but there is no alternative.	
	<ul> <li>illegal, but there is no alternative.</li> <li>Fuel tanks are underground, operated by Tailspin Tommy</li> </ul>	
	Port has dug them up, replaced with above ground fuel	
	tanks.	
	<ul> <li>Tanks will be bigger, which will make the airport fuel cheaper—because it doesn't have to be delivered as often.</li> </ul>	
	Mariner's Memorial	
	Port is taking the lead on this project.	
	'Kelp in Bronze' arch will be constructed at the entrance to	
	the walkway at the Jetty.	
	<ul> <li>Bronze plaques for people who have been lost at sea.</li> <li>There will be a big bell that will be used in ceremonies.</li> </ul>	
	New 300-Ton Variable Width Travel Lift	
	The variable width allows for boats to be tighter in the yard.	
	Expands the boatyard without physically expanding it.	
	Boatyard expansion	
	<ul> <li>Concern about the high voltage transmission lines ran through the poplars. The trees were planted at the boundary of the Port, so they couldn't expand to their full boatyard</li> </ul>	
	size.  New PUD Executive Director looked at the project and said	
	they cannot put the lines underground (like they previous thought). It would cost \$8 million. The whole project is on hold.	
	Quilcene Marina	
	Final stage permitting	
	Dredging	
	Point Hudson upgrades:	
	<ul> <li>All new roofs on buildings</li> <li>Creosote smell has been mitigated</li> </ul>	
	Duplexes will be available as vacation beach rentals.	
	These are the buildings that face the water behind the trailers, near the Cupola house.	
	Derelict Vessel Incident	
	A week ago Sunday, a derelict vessel sank	
	Two people and a dog were rescued	
	Anchored close to the city and the Port.      Fire department arrived first from the 011 cell.	
	<ul> <li>Fire department arrived first from the 911 call.</li> <li>Port's Environmental team were part of the response:</li> </ul>	
	Kimberly Weber and Kristen Ferraro	
	<ul> <li>DOE was involved; the Coast Guard came from Port Angeles</li> <li>DNR gave the Port custody of the boat to remove it from the</li> </ul>	
	water.  Coast Guard came back with a second boat and paid	
	Global to get the fuel off.	
	Boat was hauled out in the yard by 8:00 pm Monday night     and will be demolished.	
	<ul> <li>and will be demolished</li> <li>The city activated a trash task force. The Port picked up all</li> </ul>	
	the trash and took it to the dump.	
	Great coordinated effort.	

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	Jon W asked what vessel it was.  • The vessel was an old polycraft, cabin cruiser, 30 ft.		
BoCC UPDATE	BoCC Updates (Heidi)		
	Absent		
RECENT MEETING	NWSC Meeting Update (Jeff)		
REPORTS AND ISSUE UPDATES	Meeting was in Friday Harbor  Opportunity to highlight some projects in person One was a restoration site in FH. A presentation given on the impacts of pleasure craft on eel grass, etc They've been collecting data since Covid Information is on their website		
	Discussion that MRC's can solicit grants.  Previously thought MRCs could apply for grants, but not solicit them. He noted there are many rules as to how it can be done.  He doesn't think Katie would be involved since she is a county employee.  If we're interested, there are guidelines/steps that NWSC has put together.  NWSC has a new Strategic Plan on their website.		
ADMINISTRATIVE	Administrative Updates (Katie)		
UPDATES	Membership Updates: Steve King is the new City of PT Rep Tim Behrenfeld has taken over the District 1 position  OPMA (Open Public Meetings Act) Training  • The training needs to be retaken every 4 years.  • Please complete any outstanding training before the MRC Conference  NWSC CONFERENCE REGISTRATION  • Jon W asked about hotel reimbursement  ○ Katie: MRC members book their own hotels and pay out of pocket. After conference, complete		
	paperwork and you'll be reimbursed.  • Katie showed the MRC Volunteer Travel Reimbursement form in the JCMRC shared folder  • She thanked everyone for carpooling. Contact Katie if anyone still needs a ride.  • Gordon pointed out that people should be reserving the PT- Coupeville ferry soon. Need to be on the 6:30 am ferry.  • 9:00 coffee, 10:30 is the first presentation  Creative Currents Art Show  • Info is at the bottom of the Conference registration email • If you want to submit art!		
	Gathering in Gratitude WSU Extension Volunteer Appreciation Night  Nov 20 <sup>th</sup> 5 - 8pm  Master Gardeners, Regional small farms, 4-H will be present Port Pavilion Building		
GRANT PROJECT UPDATES	Grant Project Updates  FORAGE FISH (Sarah)  Sampled last week in Quilcene & Dabob  Sarah explained that she takes samples to WDFW and they pick them up from Olympia. It can take a long time to get results.  The last result is from 2/17/25, Quilcene Yacht Club, one surf smelt egg  OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay & Killisut Harbor		
	No report this month  BULL KELP KAYAK MONITORING (Emily)		

No report this month

# EELGRASS BUOYS (Troy)

Gordon said that all of the buoys were still in Mystery Bay.

### RAIN GARDENS (Janette)

- She met with a gardener who will start next week doing maintenance between now & end of December.
- Gordon mentioned that the Quilcene RG looks bad. Many plants are missing, they may have been stolen. Katie said that plants have been stolen from the front of their office.
  - Katie asked if the soil should be sampled for contaminants.
  - Janette said they could, but she didn't think that was the problem.
  - Janette said the challenge is if they install new plant material, there is no irrigation for it.
- Frank asked if a Rain Garden was a high school project. She said yes there is a garden at the high school.

### STORM SURGE (Jeff)

- They are considering another site, possibly North Beach
- The concern is the boat ramp
- Starting to work storm surge data into the Salish Sea model.
- Jon W said they are working with USGS on some of that stuff.

#### EDUCATION & OUTREACH: (Sarah)

Sarah was contacted by the Northwest Straits Foundation and they want to do a Landowner Outreach workshop in December.

#### WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL - review

Carol mentioned that she returned in time for the Wooden Boat Festival and the booth was great. She thanked everyone for doing such a good job.

Betsy also thanked everyone for chipping in and making it work. The numbers:

- 1,404 people, more than last year.
- 19 presentations over 3 days
- Average number per presentation: 74 people
- Rec'd good feedback, people really liked it
  - Betsy joked that if you put "Puffins" and
     "Shoreline Monitoring," people will show up.
  - Jon W. had 115 people at his presentation.
  - Betsy said that the MRC is a vendor and didn't have to pay extra for the tent spaces.
  - \$4000 for the tent. Many table & chairs were donated...a value of about \$1500
  - Barb from WBF gave passes to everyone, it really helps to bring people to the festival.
  - Betsy read a positive review from an attendee
  - Tim said he thought there were more people who stayed longer. WDFW really helped, and DOH with the toxic algae...great information.
  - Emily relayed a story of a boy who really liked the microscope. The next day, his parents bought him one.
     Then they went to the Marine Science center to look for things for it.

# RADIO FEATURE

Neil noted that MRC was on KPTZ on 9/19 with Heidi

- Neil said it went well--30 min. long. It was great for Heidi to feature the MRC, they were able to mention every program.
- They didn't talk much about Derelict Vessels, but Heidi wants to do a whole program on that.
- Gordon said that it may be available on the KPTZ website. Jon said they keep things online for two weeks, unless they podcast it.

# SHORELINE LANDOWNER OUTREACH

Potential meeting with Lisa and the Port to look at the Quilcene breakwater.

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	<ul> <li>Carol asked if it was about the dredge spoils         <ul> <li>Sarah thinks it's more about the bulkhead in front of the dock, she's not sure. But it may morph into that.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
OTHER MRC	Other MRC Projects	
PROJECTS	DEI UPDATES (Emily) Passed around the final report.  Included the history, conversations, and thoughts of the subcommittee  Ends with suggested next steps for deepening inclusion and engagement.  The last page is a guide/template to MRC meetings. It would be a helpful guide for new MRC members.  This is the last report of the DEI subcommittee.  Still thinking about advertising our meetings.  Continue to make small tweaks to meeting format.  Neil said it was good to have a pair of fresh eyes on things.  Still looking for a Youth Rep. A couple of people asked about it at the Wooden Boat Festival. We need to get them on	
	soon.  Gordon had an idea to get the Leader to do a piece on Akeyla to generate interest for getting a Youth Rep.	
	SATELLITE IMAGERY (Jeff)	
	Working with Clallam County-their bed is getting fuzzy and less defined.	
	ROV CRAB POTS (Tim & Jeff)	
	<ul> <li>Tim noted that school started today (9/02)</li> <li>Students are still deciding what they want to do for their final project. They should know this week. There are students interested in Community ROV.</li> </ul>	
	Jeff received an email from Ella Ashford (from Sea Dragons)     She went through the careers of people who had gone through this a couple of years ago.     What inspired them, what they learned, what doors it opened.     She's talking with Jessica Owens at the Commission, about putting it into an article, with a bio of each of the students.     He's also been contacting by Phil Pareesi who has an ROV.     In some ways they broke some barriers, going forward, some people want to clear out whole beds, etc., but there are a lot of issues there.     Or is there room for a project that is a community outreach? May pick up less pots.	
	Jeff rec'd an email from Jessica. She is looking for pictures from projects.  • Katie says she has everyone's photos, please only email photos if not already submitted.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments None	
MRC ROUND TABLE/ ANNOUNCEMENTS	MRC Round Table / Announcements  FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS Gordon – James Losee works for salmon conservation in Portland. Used to be here He has a big project on tracking Cutthroat salmon  • Neil said they are doing Chinook right now.  Emily is wondering about the November speaker and if they should highlight it.  • It'll be one of the engineers from the Port giving a Port update -about the wetlands in the proposed boatyard.  • Carol says everything is on hold for permits. They're consulting with the Tribes. Exciting mitigations in the	
	works.	

# **FINAL**

	Upcoming Events		
	Harbor Porpoises Talk October 19 <sup>th</sup> , 3:00 pm Chapel at Fort Worden Dr. Cindy Elliser w/ Pacific Mammal Research Free event		
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 7:54  Next meeting will be November 4 <sup>th</sup> .	Neil moved to adjourn, seconded by Janette. Motion passed.	