

DRAFT

Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee Meeting
6-8PM on November 4, 2025
Hybrid Meeting
WSU Classroom (97 Oak Bay Rd)
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Timothy Behrenfeld, District 1
Betsy Carlson, Envir/Conserv, Chair
Brenda Johnson, District 2
Frank Handler, District 2 Alt
Heidi Eisenhour, ex officio, BoCC
Steve King, City of PT
Jon Waggoner, Marine Science Alt
Emily Buckner, Marine Science, Vice Chair
Jeff Taylor, District 2, NWSC Rep
Gordon King, Commercial
Bryan DeCaterina, Env/Conserv Alt
Tim Cross, District 3 Alt
Tonya Cole, Meeting Recorder

Absent:

Carol Hasse, ex officio, Port of Port Townsend
Roy Clark, Recreation Alt

Via Zoom

Troy McKelvey, Recreation
Neil Harrington, Tribal
Janette Mestre, District 1
Sarah Fiskien, District 3, NWSC Alt

Public

5 attendees

Guest Speakers

Peter Bahls, Executive Director
Northwest Watershed Institute

Staff

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

Topic	Update or Issue	Decisions/Follow-Up	Responsibility
CALL TO ORDER GUEST INTRODUCTIONS	Chair Betsy Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM Introductions were made. Betsy read the MRC Mission Stmt	A quorum was present.	All members – please send volunteer hours to Katie.
AMENDMENTS TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA	Amendments to / Approval of Agenda None	Bryan moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Brenda. Motion passed.	
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Amendments to / Approval of Minutes None	Gordon moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Jon W. Motion passed.	
PUBLIC COMMENT	Public Comments None		
LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST (DNR)	Letter of Support Request (DNR) Betsy The MRC has been asked to write a Letter of Support for the Trustland Transfer of some state forest lands. Betsy suggested that a small committee be formed to work on drafting the letter of support and presenting it to the MRC at the next meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Betsy & Jon W. volunteered.		
GUEST SPEAKER Peter Bahls, Executive Director, Northwest Watershed Institute	<i>In her introduction, Betsy explained that the MRC has been asked to write a Letter of Support for the Trustland Transfer of state forest lands in the Dabob Bay area. The MRC invited Peter from Northwest Watershed Institute to give background on the conservation project and help the MRC understand the trustland transfer better.</i> UPDATE ON CONSERVATION OF DABOB BAY Peter Bahls, Executive Director, Northwest Watershed Institute		

	<p>This is the largest conservation project in East Jefferson County by acreage.</p> <p>TARBOO WATERSHED PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS</p> <p>Project Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project focuses on landscape scale conservation to protect and restore Tarboo Creek Stream Corridor and Dabob Bay, while ensuring long-term forestry in the upland watershed. <p>Key Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project removed fish passage barriers and Coho salmon returned. The team restored valley wetlands and creek meandering, Involved 5 local schools in planting events. Tarboo Creek serves as the main freshwater source to Dabob Bay. <p>Ecological Significance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 2003 MRC-funded nearshore fish survey found juvenile summer chum salmon, a federally threatened species. In late January and February, non-natal summer chum move into Tarboo Bay, which was one of the first studies showing how these fish move through Hood Canal. Up to 150 eagles gather in Dabob Bay. This was the first US study of eagles feeding on midshipmen, which spawn under oyster beds and big rocks at Pt. Whitney Jackson Cove during spring. Area contains globally rare rhododendron forests, the largest in the world. Very little old-growth forest remains on Tawandos Peninsula. <p>Project Expansion Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2016, the project expanded the natural area and included Thorndyke Bay as an important designation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pope Resources owns this area as their private duck hunting area and has no plans to sell it. In 2020, the project expanded to include globally rare forests, adding 4,000 acres. <p>Current DNR Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DNR has two proposals, North and South, totaling approximately 2,000 acres of state trustland. \$21 million in timber value in this area. About 70% of the land is already encumbered and appraised as private land. The proposal requires state legislature funding to purchase replacement land for the trust. DNR doesn't want to log these areas because young plantation forest doesn't provide the same habitat. <p>QUESTIONS</p> <p>Betsy: How would we know if potential timber replacement land is available in our county?</p> <p>Heidi: Replacement land needs to be in the junior taxing district but doesn't have to be in our county. Ideally, replacement land would be in the same taxing district as the land being purchased. Opposition often comes from fire districts (smaller than county). DNR has other methods if this isn't possible.</p> <p>Peter's response: Ideally they would be in the same taxing district as the land being protected.</p> <p>Gordon: Expressed concerns about landslides and feeder bluffs. Very few places on Hood Canal where shoreline is secure; much of it is unstable.</p> <p>Peter's response: Taylor Shellfish helped by selling most of their land to DNR. Many other private landowners have made similar sales to DNR throughout the project. The Navy has also been a great funding source, they've been contributing up to 50% of the value of the acquisitions.</p>		
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	<p>Frank: He mentioned that he took the Watershed Steward Class through WSU and wanted to thank Peter for the the excellent work being done.</p> <p>Emily: Why does DNR want a letter of support from MRC? Who are they trying to convince?</p> <p>Response: Letters go to the Trust Land Transfer Advisory Committee and ranking committee, which assess level of community support before sending to state legislature. Heidi serves on the ranking committee. This is an opportunity to protect the whole watershed rather than smaller parcels.</p> <p>Gordon: Will the Commissioners have to approve any Letter of Support we write?</p> <p>Heidi: It goes on the Consent Agenda. She would not need to recuse herself from MRC vote, but the Commissioners do recuse themselves for projects with conflicts when serving on the ranking committee.</p>		
PORT of PT UPDATES	<p>Port of PT Updates (Carol Hasse)</p> <p>Absent</p>		
BoCC UPDATE	<p>BoCC Updates (Heidi)</p> <p>SHORELINE MASTER PLAN (SMP) Update They currently working on the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) now, since the CAO updates will affect the SMP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heidi explained that it makes sense to do things in this order so people don't have to go back and redo work. • The County Administrator says the goal is to have the CAO completed by Q1 of 2026 <p>Emily asked Heidi to explain what a CAO is: The Critical Areas Ordinance is part of the Comprehensive Plan process. It defines the critical areas in Jefferson county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly near shore environments, Streams, wetlands • At the state level, they create new regulations are created and these filter down to Counties and update their Ordinances. <p>Heidi has been appointed to be on the Ecosystem Coordination Board of Puget Sound Partnership and they are discussing SMP updates for 2030.</p> <p>Sarah thanked Gordon & Heidi for Joel Kawahara memorial. 300 people came. Heidi said how special Joel was and she had a big thank you for everyone that came and helped.</p> <p>Heidi was also appointed to the state's Forest Practices Board.</p>		
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS	<p>Reminder: Executive Committee elections at Dec. 2nd Meeting (Betsy)</p> <p>Betsy reminded every about the Executive Committee elections at the next meeting. Dec 2nd.</p> <p>Available positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair • Vice Chair • NW Straits Commission Rep • NW Straits Commission Rep Alternate <p>If you are interested in any of those positions, contact Betsy or Katie.</p>		
ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES	<p>Administrative Updates (Katie)</p> <p>Katie reviewed reimbursement process for conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and email the Reimb. form to her. She'll bring them to the Dec. 2nd meeting for everyone to sign. • Katie will arrive early & stay late at the Dec. meeting to allow time to sign forms. <p>Reimbursable expenses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mileage: home address to hotel address round trip (provide map) • Ferry, parking fees 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caitlyn at NWSC will send everyone parking passes for LaConnor • Katie needs original receipts <p>If the hotel is more than the government rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter government rate for the hotel on the form. • Funding for reimbursements is from the MRC grant. <p>Katie asked someone to coordinate a group photo at the conference.</p>		
GRANT PROJECT UPDATES	<p>Grant Project Updates</p> <p>FORAGE FISH (Sarah)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah, Tim C. & Troy sampled last month in Quilcene & Dabob. Wind was blowing around 30 mph, its was very difficult. • No update from WDFW if they got any eggs. <p>OLYMPIA OYSTERS (Neil) Discovery Bay & Killisut Harbor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect a meeting in December/January to get the work plan put for the next year together. <p>BULL KELP KAYAK MONITORING (Emily)</p> <p>Reminder to Kelp Subcommittee members of the Monitoring Data Review with Strait staff on Monday 11/12, 11-12pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is to review data collected from Kayak surveys last year. • If folks outside of the Kelp subcommittee are interested in coming, please contact Emily. • She expects a presentation of the 2025 Survey Data in January 2026. <p>EELGRASS BUOYS (Troy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordon gave an update on Port Hallock buoys. • A previous head of the MRC committee, noticed while kayaking that one of the buoys closest to the dock is very low in the water. • They were recently checked, but Gordon isn't sure what's happening. This time of year, they run out of low tide daylight. He will get his team and they will pick a calm day and get the ten buoys out, hopefully, before Christmas. <p>RAIN GARDENS (Janette)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have someone doing maintenance now on the gardens. They spent time on the Franklin & Adams garden...lots of thistle. She'll be ordering mulch for some gardens, there are bare spots after they clean things out. <p>EDUCATION & OUTREACH: (Brenda)</p> <p>Brenda had nothing to report.</p> <p>SHORELINE LANDOWNER OUTREACH WORKSHOP (Sarah) by NW Straits Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dec 8th • 4:00-6:00pm at Hadlock library • Betsy asked about advertising and Katie said it sounds like NWSF is coordinating the outreach. <p>MEETING AT QUILCENE MARINA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric & Dave from the Port came with Lisa Kaufman (NWSF) to Quilcene to look at removing the bulkhead in front of the Yacht Club. Lisa thinks it's possible. More information to come. • Sarah has a rendering of the Yacht Club without the bulkhead. • Jon W. worked on the REACH assessment for the project. The trade-off at the Yacht Club area is to remove the bulkhead and put in a vegetative backshore area, which will remove about half of the parking. Sarah will send out the rendering. 		
OTHER MRC PROJECTS	Other MRC Projects		

	<p>SATELLITE IMAGERY (Jeff)</p> <p>They had a meeting about Kayaks, Kelp surveys and tides and currents. He gave a small presentation on how he works with them. It was well received. He is planning a zoom class on how to download images and data.</p> <p>STORM SURGE</p> <p>Tomorrow afternoon storm surge is expected. (11/5)</p> <p>ROV CRAB POTS (Tim & Jeff)</p> <p>Tim said it continues to be a long process, they are restructuring everything.</p>		
PUBLIC COMMENT	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>None</p>		
MRC ROUND TABLE/ ANNOUNCEMENTS	<p>MRC Round Table / Announcements</p> <p>FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS</p> <p>Emily suggested inviting the Sustainability Club from PT High School (could also tie in with the Youth Rep position). She's not sure what the status is on the club.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do they care about? • What are their priorities? • Tim B. confirmed that the club is still going, and he will check on it. • Gordon mentioned that it's important not to let this slide, he has another contact he will check in with at Chimacum High School. <p>UPCOMING EVENTS</p> <p>The Future of Oceans</p> <p>Nov 16th</p> <p>Fort Worden Wheeler Theater</p> <p>3:00 pm – 4:00 pm</p> <p>By donation</p> <p>Fred Sharp is giving a talk on Humpback whales, communication in marine mammals</p>		
ADJOURNMENT	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 7:37</p> <p>Next meeting will be December 2nd</p>	Brenda moved to adjourn, seconded by Betsy. Motion passed.	