



August 2026 Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, August 17th, 2026

Time: 5:31-7:10pm

Location: Hybrid meeting, Zoom and Clallam County Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room

Minutes: prepared by Chase O'Neil

Member Roll

	Member	Present?	Alternate	Present?
Academic Community	Ed Bowlby	X	Ioana Bociu	
At Large	Alan Clark (<i>NWSC Rep, Vice Chair</i>)	X	Mary Sue Brancato	
At Large	Tim Cochnauer	X	Bev Burton	
Conservation & Environmental Interests	Nancy Stephanz	X	[vacant seat]	---
Development Community	Brian Hilderman	X	[vacant seat]	---
District I	Jeff Ward	X	[vacant seat]	---
District II	Ann Soule	X	Lyn Muench	
District III	[vacant seat]	---	Dann May	
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe	Jenna Ziogas	X	Robert Knapp	X
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	Allyce Miller		Chelsea Korbolic	X
Makah Tribe	[vacant seat]	---	[vacant seat]	---
Marine Related Recreation & Tourism	Rob Casey		[vacant seat]	---
Port Angeles City Council	LaTrisha Suggs (<i>Chair</i>)	X	Jon Hamilton	X
Port of Port Angeles Commission	Jesse Waknitz		Katharine Frazier	
Sequim City Council	Meggan Uecker		Kelly Burger	

Staff and Others Present

Chase O’Neil (Clallam County Habitat Biologist and MRC Project Coordinator), Rebecca Mahan (Clallam County Habitat Manager and MRC Coordinator), Mark Ozias (Clallam County Commissioner, District I), Dana Oster (Marine Program Manager at Northwest Straits Commission), John Worthington (member of the public), Howard Sprouse (member of the public), Lindsay Martinez (member of the public).

Welcome / Call to Order / Introductions

Chair LaTrisha Suggs called the meeting to order at 5:31pm. Committee members and others attending the meeting introduced themselves. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment

- John Worthington made public comment about an email he sent to the committee. He summarized some of his points including concerns about the a restoration project and current issues on the Dungeness.
- Howard Sprouse made public comment introducing himself to the committee. He explained he will be the new representative for District III.

Approval of Minutes

- ***Nancy Stephanz moved to approve the June 2026 minutes, Alan Clark seconded. The motion passed with unanimous consent and minutes were approved.***

Presentation

- *Dana Oster – Marine Program Manager at Northwest Straits Commission, Overview on Derelict Vessel Turn-In Events with NW Straits Commission and MRCs:*

Dana Oster gave a general overview of the derelict vessel program, Northwest Straits Commission and MRC involvement, congressional funding, a multi-MRC and Tribal partner workgroup, and vessel turn-in events. She showed an example of the removal of the Windjammer (60 feet long, concrete hull, and washed up on tribal tidelands for over 10 years) by Swinomish Indian Tribal Community and Skagit County and with help from the workgroup. While removals are very important, the program has shifted to focus on prevention and is sponsoring vessel turn-in events. There have been 29 vessels removed since 2023 and that has cost over \$1.2 million. In contrast, there have been 92 vessels turned in since 2024 at these events for a program cost of \$212,000. Turn-in events are also supported by other funds (NOAA and DNR). There is \$161,000 to use in 2026 and 2027. She described the vessel turn-in workflow: (1) connect with partners (monthly meetings); (2) advertise the event; (3) select vessels, bring to site, and stage; (4) remove hazardous and household waste, (5) deconstruct and recycle vessels (includes a media

day). Dana mentioned that MRC main activities are advertising and creating community comfortability. They usually need about six months ahead of time to get ready for the event. She suggested Jefferson MRC and Clallam MRC could collaborate on an event, which would work well logistically. Alan Clark asked about the continuation of the program with funding in the future to which Dana said was unknown. LaTrisha Suggs asked how we could advocate for continued support for this program, Dana said she would send information to Chase O'Neil to distribute to the Clallam MRC. Ann Soule asked if anything is recycled from these boat breakdowns and what is the cost for an owner. Dana replied that the turn-in events are free for people who can't bear the cost themselves and they also use a tiered cost breakdown program for those who are less economically burdened. Dana mentioned it's also helpful to have owners bring their boats to the site to cut down costs, but the program will also pay and transport the vessel if the owner can't. About 20% of the boat materials go to the landfill (not counting hazardous materials found in the boats such as gasoline) and the rest is taken to recycling. Nancy Stephanz asked what to do if we see a derelict vessel. Dana said you can use the [MyCoast App](#) or you can report on the [DNR webpage](#). Jon Hamilton asked about MRC time and commitment for these events. Dana explained that Clallam members would participate in monthly meetings mostly on how to advertise in the community and these members would give updates to the full MRC at committee meetings. LaTrisha asked when would Clallam MRC need to commit to these activities and Dana said there is not a rush as the program is waiting on the confirmation of DNR funds.

New or special business

- *Derelict vessel turn-in events and Clallam MRC involvement:* Discussed this under Dana Oster's talk so LaTrisha Suggs moved forward.
- *Ed Bowlby pigeon guillemot project presentation for the WA Association of Counties leadership team:* Because Ed Bowlby was leaving the meeting early, this item was moved to this point in the meeting. Commissioner Mark Ozias summarized his experience with the leadership team on their field site tour at Port Williams beach. Everyone enjoyed and appreciated Ed and Rebecca Mahan's presentation on the MRC and the pigeon guillemot project. Rebecca also commented on the great job that Ed did.
- *Legislature outreach and MRC workgroup:* Alan Clark spoke about a legislature outreach event with Senator Patty Murray staff, U.S. State Representative Emily Randall staff, and representative Steve Tharinger. They did a tour showcasing the Marrowstone hatchery work on pinto abalone, a restored kelp bed habitat with Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, the Discovery Bay Olympia oyster project with Jefferson MRC, and the North Beach kelp habitat. Staffers were very interested and wanted to plan additional outreach events. Alan said that while events are positive, they can also be challenging to pin down legislators, especially during an election year. Alan plans to talk to project leads about potential site visits in the future. LaTrisha Suggs suggested collaborating with other local

agencies or education/outreach events to combine discussions and thus increase legislators' interest. Chase O'Neil asked about timelines for these visits and Alan answered this October. LaTrisha asked if the County would be interested in participating and Commissioner Mark Ozias said he would be happy to help where he can. Chelsea Korbolic suggested Orca recovery day as a good time to collaborate with the Conservation District. Rebecca Mahan suggested combining with the Floodplains by Design (grant program) legislator site visit day.

- *Potential collaboration with Jefferson MRC on derelict crab pot removal:* Chase O'Neil mentioned that Jefferson MRC is interested in collaborating in the future on derelict crab pot removal in the next round of funds. LaTrisha Suggs said this would need to be included in the strategic plan and that projects need to have a lead and co-lead. Rebecca mentioned that this project doesn't require a lot of work from an MRC member since it's mostly contracting with an outside company/group. Brian Hilderman said he was interested in being a lead and Rebecca said it would work well with outreach as well.

Announcements

- *Welcome: Jenna Ziogas, new representative for Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe:* Jenna Ziogas introduced herself. She is an Environmental Program Specialist for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. She's been in her position for about 4 years, starting around the time the Tribe received more climate planning funding. One of her big projects now is solid waste management.
- *Shore Friendly Workshop in Clallam – August 18th, 2026:* Chase O'Neil reminded the group of the workshop the next day. Ann Soule will be doing an introduction on the MRC.
- *Fall Festivals 2026:* LaTrisha Suggs reminded the group that the festivals are coming up next month. Chelsea Korbolic gave an update on the Education and Outreach subcommittee's activities. She mentioned a new game for the display booth involving seafood, harvest, and shells. Chelsea mentioned it should be pretty straightforward to use and adapt for different audiences. She also gave an update about contracting with an artist to work on a kelp forest display. Due to logistics and funding, this has been delayed. Instead, the subcommittee would like to host a workday to make a mockup of this potential art display and try it out for the festivals to experiment before contracting the project out. Chelsea will reach out with dates to see who is available on the MRC to help. Nancy Stephanz also asked that the shift schedules be sent out to remind everyone of the details and what time to show up.
- *Northwest Straits Commission update – Alan Clark:* Alan mentioned that Northwest Straits Commission really enjoyed Ed Bowlby's talk at the July meeting as well as Commissioner Mark Ozias's welcome. Alan also let the Commission know about HAZWOPER training dates and sent the flyer out. August 28th is the next Commission meeting, and it is available on Zoom.

Committee and Project Reports

- *Project leads report only if an update is needed:*
 - Sound Toxins: Nancy Stephanz shared there was a big change from last week, with a lot of *Alexandria* and *Dinophysis*.
 - Kelp: Chelsea Korbolic and Alan Clark shared they did two surveys at Freshwater Bay and the beds look good. There were tons of forage fish and Chinook salmon. They also did Clallam Bay in July, which matched the results of last year's survey (the track). They have new volunteers on this project (Joanne LaBaw recruited some great paddlers), which has helped the scheduling logistics by increasing the pool of people. They counted at least 24 otters while surveying.
- *Advisory subcommittee:* no update.

Discussion of next meeting date and agenda

- *Next meeting:* The next meeting will take place on Monday, September 21st.
- *Call for new agenda items:* Please reach out to executive team and Chase O'Neil for any suggestions.

Public Comment

- John Worthington made public comments about his concerns for salmon restoration and concerns about the Dungeness River.
- Brian Hilderman made public comment on the email the committee received from John Worthington and this year's low crabbing year. He has observed this trend for the past two years. LaTrisha Suggs commented that the email's subject was not in our strategic plan. Brian wondered who Mr. Worthington could reach out to. LaTrisha suggested Fish and Wildlife and also Clallam County. Ann Soule suggested getting a speaker to talk about what's going on with the crabs. Jenna Ziogas mentioned that Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe has observed low levels of Dungeness Crab larvae. Rebecca Mahan also stated that if you see someone directly polluting, you can report it to the Washington Department of Ecology.

Good of the Order

- Ann Soule mentioned that if you have concerns about marine issues on a policy level, the MRC advisory subcommittee is interested in thoughts and suggestions from the MRC and County Commissioners.
- Rebecca Mahan announced the County Critical Areas Ordinance update and that public comment dates will be coming up soon.
- Tim Cochnauer gave some population information about Eastern Pacific Gray whales. In 1967, populations were around 13,000. By 1987, the population was estimated at 27,000. In 2015, the estimate was around 27,000, but now the population is around 12,000. He also mentioned an article in Scientific American that reported on the

influence of politics in scientific research. Unfortunately, the United State of America has a heavy influence of politics, it was in the bottom third of the nations surveyed. This was a change from previous reports.

Adjourn

Chair LaTrisha Suggs adjourned the meeting at 7:10pm.