



June 2025 Final Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, June 16, 2025

Time: 5:30 – 6:43pm

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

Minutes prepared by Amelia Kalagher

Member Roll

	Member	Present?	Alternate	Present?
Academic Community	Ed Bowlby	X	Ioana Bociu	
At Large	Alan Clark (<i>NWSC Rep, Vice Chair</i>)	excused	Mary Sue Brancato	
At Large	[vacant seat]	---	Ray Kirk	
Conservation & Environmental Interests	[vacant seat]	---	Nancy Stephanz	X
Development Community	[vacant seat]	---	[vacant seat]	---
District I	Jeff Ward	X	[vacant seat]	---
District II	Ann Soule	excused	Lyn Muench	X
District III	Mike Doherty	X	Dann May	X
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe	Christopher Burns	X	Robert Knapp	X
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	Allyce Miller		Chelsea Korbolic	X
Makah Tribe	[vacant seat]	---	[vacant seat]	---
Marine Related Recreation & Tourism	Alicia Amerson		Helle Andersen	
Port Angeles City Council	LaTrisha Suggs (<i>Chair</i>)	X	Navarra Carr	
Port of Port Angeles Commission	Jesse Waknitz		Katharine Frazier	X
Sequim City Council	Meggan Uecker		Kelly Burger	

Staff and Others Present

Amelia Kalagher (CCMRC Administrative Support), Bruce Emery (CC Director of Community Development), Sasha Horst (Northwest Straits Commission Staff), Amy Olsen (Seattle Aquarium Research Scientist, presenter), Brandon Sampson (Wet Dog Boats), John Worthington (Sequim resident), Jonathan Strivens (CC Environmental Health staff), Cathy Lear (retired CC Habitat Biologist)

Welcome / Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair LaTrisha Suggs called the meeting to order at 5:30. Roll was called, and others introduced themselves. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment

- John Worthington of Sequim made a comment related to the presentation “Identify, Investigate, Integrate, Inform” listed on the agenda. He mentioned that SERN and NODC are local organizations that focus on integration and have existing plans, and would have liked to see groups like the MRC interface with the public to provide input prior to the development of these plans.

Presentation

- Amy Olsen, Seattle Aquarium Research Scientist, presented “Northern Sea Otter Foraging Analysis in Washington State”. The presentation shared details of the Seattle Aquarium’s long term monitoring study of sea otter foraging in Washington State, especially recent sightings in the CCMRC’s local area. She briefly introduced sea otter diet, social behavior, function as a keystone species, range, history of being hunted by humans, and reintroduction to Washington waters. Studies dating back to approximately 1990 have shown an overall increase in population, and recent years have included additional sightings of otters during surveys 2-4 miles offshore. The range has expanded both southward along the Olympic coast and north/northeast into the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Otters have been sighted in Clallam Bay since 2024, with group sizes up to 20 in that year. Otter prey choices in Clallam Bay are quite varied because that area has been without otter predation for many years. She explained a model used to analyze foraging data, which showed there is a significant difference between the south, core and north ranges of the otters with the north and core ranges being more similar to each other than to the south. Potential next steps include conducting surveys with an aerial drone.
- Several MRC members asked questions regarding otters and Seattle Aquarium’s work.

Approval of Minutes - May

- ***Nancy Stephanz moved to approve May minutes; Mike Doherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.***

Announcements

- ***Recap, NWSC meeting in Clallam County May 30th:*** LaTrisha Suggs gave a presentation at that meeting summarizing the MRC’s development as an advisory group, which seemed to be well received. Nancy Stephanz added that there was a presentation about the [“Blue Model”, an initiative to educate K-12 students in the marine trades.](#)
- ***2025-2027 grant proposals submitted to Northwest Straits Commission:*** proposals for this cycle have been submitted to the Northwest Straits Commission. NODC funding which was under consideration for the Elwha Beach stewardship project must be spent by September rather than during the MRC’s next grant cycle. MRC leadership, staff and project lead Helle Andersen recently met to develop the protocol for the Elwha Stewardship project. The MRC will continue to interface with the Commission throughout the summer to refine proposals.

- *Letter of Support for Northwest Straits Foundation proposal for PA Harbor and Sequim Bay Derelict Crab Pot Removal Project:* [a letter was submitted, available as the last page of the agenda packet.](#)
- *Update on recruitment:* The MRC is still attempting to recruit for available member and alternate positions. Also, efforts continue to encourage existing members to attend and engage with meetings. *Members were asked to continue recruitment efforts in their communities.
- *Forever Streamfest and Dungeness River Festival tabling signups:* Enough people have signed up to fill each timeslot (2 per slot), but if any others would like to participate they can still add themselves to the signup. Festival supplies are ready in the MRC storage unit. Chelsea Korbolic added that she will likely be able to bring forage fish egg voucher collections with a dissecting microscope to add a hands-on activity. *Amelia will look into adding a small wagon to assist in transporting festival items.

Committee and Project Reports

- *Olympia Oysters:* Oyster populations are doing great, with lots of natural recruitment.
- *Sound Toxins (community project):* Today's sampling showed relatively few harmful phytoplankton for this time of year, but another monitoring site in Camano Island has experienced a major bloom of poison-producing *Pseudo-nitzschia*.
- *Pigeon Guillemot Monitoring:* The pigeon guillemot project is in its third week of monitoring, but still needs volunteers to fill in as substitutes when other monitors are unavailable. The [recruitment blurb for this project is currently posted on the MRC homepage.](#)
- *Kelp Monitoring:* The kelp monitoring team will be paddling at Freshwater Bay tomorrow 6/18 to check out the area and practice their process prior to the first official survey.
- *Advisory Subcommittee:* The subcommittee has not yet met formally, but several current topics were recommended for MRC members to check out on their own:
 - [City of Port Angeles Comp Plan Update](#)
 - [Rayonier Mill cleanup](#) – plan potentially coming forth in June
 - Port of Port Angeles, Cofferdam Facility Seawall
 - Barge facility, upland asphalt paving and stormwater treatment to their intermodal handling & transfer facility. Improvements include protecting existing sheet pile barge berth with a fiberglass sheet pile encasement, the asphalt of 12 acres of upland and the installation of a three stage biofiltration facility to treat stormwater from the facility.
 - Permits: NPDES, 401 WQC, Clean Air Act (CAA), Shoreline Substantial Development Permit; DOE Coastal Zone Management, USACE NWS-2025-170
 - Subcommittee plans to bring back the priorities list being developed for the County Commissioners.
 - Mike Doherty added: [comment period for the tug escort rulemaking has opened](#), and perhaps the MRC could collaborate with the Northwest Straits Commission or other MRCs to concur with comments they could be submitting. *Amelia will put this on the next agenda and inquire about others' existing comments.

Discussion of next meeting date and agenda

- *Next meeting:* [The meeting will take place on Monday, July 21st.](#)

- *Call for new agenda items:* Budget will be discussed as needed. The tug escort rule was suggested as an advisory item.

Public Comment

No additional public comment at this time.

Good of the Order

None at this time.

Adjourn

Chair LaTrisha Suggs adjourned the meeting at 6:43.

Action Items

- *Members were asked to continue recruitment efforts in their communities.
- *Amelia will look into adding a small wagon to assist in transporting festival items.
- *Amelia will put the tug escort rule on the next agenda and inquire about others' existing comments.