



May 2026 Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, May 18, 2026

Time: 5:31-7:04pm

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	X
Conservation & Environmental Interests	Nancy Stephanz	X	[vacant seat]	---
Development Community	Brian Hilderman		[vacant seat]	---
District I	Jeff Ward	X	[vacant seat]	---
District II	Ann Soule	X	Lyn Muench	X
District III	[vacant seat]	---	Dann May	
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe	Christopher Burns	X	Robert Knapp	X
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	Allyce Miller	X	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), Bruce Emery (Director of Clallam County Community Development Department); Mark Ozias (Clallam County Commissioner, District I).

Welcome / Call to Order / Introductions

Chair LaTrisha Suggs called the meeting to order at 5:31pm. Roll was called. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment

- None at this time.

Approval of Minutes

- ***Nancy Stephanz moved to approve the May 2026 minutes, Ann Soule seconded. The motion passed with unanimous consent and minutes were approved.***

New or Special Business

- ***Election of officers:*** LaTrisha Suggs (current chair) and Alan Clark (current vice-chair and Northwest Straits Commission Representative) were nominated for their current positions. Alan Clark provided further explanation of what the NW Straits Commission Representative position entails. LaTrisha and Alan also suggested the possibility of a member or alternate shadowing Alan to learn more about the position and commitment. ***Anne Soule moved to elect LaTrisha and Alan, and Allyce Miller seconded. The motion passed with unanimous consent and LaTrisha Suggs and Alan Clark were approved to continue their roles.***

Announcements

- ***Application to City of PA for Float Plane and ramp:*** LaTrisha Suggs put this item on the agenda to share awareness of this application to the City of Port Angeles, although public comment had closed at this time. She touched on the mitigation process and mentioned she felt the application did a good job of focusing on the net gains.
- ***Northwest Straits Commission update:*** Alan Clark gave an update on the last Northwest Straits Commission meeting which included several items: committee elections, a European green crab potential working group, and additional funds:
 - European green crab potential working group: Northwest Straits is considering forming a European green crab working group and wondering about MRCs' interest. The idea is to coordinate 1-2 molt searches per year to evaluate where

green crab populations are (versus trapping). Jeff Ward asked how this project would integrate with WA Sea Grant's work and if the data could be consolidated. Nancy Stephanz echoed Jeff's comment on data consolidation and cited her experience doing surveys and using MyCoast. Chelsea Korbolic mentioned there is a bigger need for outreach as tribes and other agencies are currently collecting a lot of this data. She also mentioned issues with data sharing depending on landownership and advised Northwest Straits to reach out to those groups for access. Ed Bowlby added that WA Sea Grant did mostly trapping but still used molt searches. There was discussion about current efforts and understanding these in tandem with Northwest Straits efforts. Alan concluded that Clallam MRC is open to this but has questions and he would follow-up with Northwest Straits on these.

- Additional funds: Northwest Straits is considering asking for additional funds for the MRC program and wondered if MRCs could use more funds. For Clallam MRC, the first idea was to increase staff time. Then there was discussion on issues for previous projects such as the nature of funds and the idea of "pass through" funds (i.e., funds moving through the MRC to other partners) and projects needing to be MRC led, as well as cost, and member capacity. Members also discussed the idea of high visibility projects, educational work such as classroom teaching, recordings/films, outreach platforms, and internship programs such as Washington Conservation Corps (WCC). Commissioner Mark Ozias suggested potentially aligning projects with County planning documents.

Planning for the July NW Straits Commission – The Northwest Straits Commission would like a presentation (15-20 min) about a Clallam MRC project for their July meeting. Alan proposed the pigeon guillemot project, led by Ed Bowlby. Ed gave some background information on the project and said he would be willing to present.

- *Olympia oyster monitoring*: This is a reminder to sign up for Olympia Oyster monitoring surveys for our partner project with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. These will be June 1st-3rd. Contact Shellfish Biologist Annie Raymond, if interested.

Committee and Project Reports

- *Forage fish team update presentation (Chelsea Korbolic and Tim Cochnauer):*
 - After Tim brought up concerns about the viability of some of the forage fish project sites at a previous meeting, the team wanted to do a follow-up presentation. They discussed project status, goals and future ideas.

- Chelsea first gave background on the Ediz Hook site and the restoration projects there (e.g., eelgrass plantings, and beach nourishment, and revegetation). While forage fish data is valuable long-term, the Ediz Hook site can also be a good indicator of how the habitat may be recently changing and how these different restoration projects are potentially working together. Then she spoke on Elwha East and West beaches, which have the fewest egg samples found. These sites are extremely dynamic and constantly changing. One way the forage fish surveys capture these changes is through photos which capture a powerful story (e.g., dam removal) in addition to gathering data. Determining the best location on the beaches to sample for forage fish eggs is difficult because WA Department of Fish and Wildlife has low capacity and cannot usually take additional samples. Therefore, Chelsea is looking into how the team and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe (WCC crew potentially) could do some analyzing of the samples to better capture forage fish spawning areas on these beaches. Tim is investigating if sampling sites need to be dropped if eggs are not found in a 3-year period, something he had heard a few years ago. Chelsea is interested in coordinating with other agencies on their work and Chris Burns suggested getting data on timing for forage fish from these other agencies. Cline spit is a consistent egg producing site that is a great stable point for the forage fish team's work. Tim is interested in reducing the driving on the beach and doing outreach work to help with this. The team would love to hear other members thoughts, engagement, and help if interested!
- *Other project updates:* Nancy Stephanz gave an update on the species they've seen at Sound Toxins. Ed Bowlby mentioned that the pigeon guillemot project is starting their 10-week monitoring program in the first week of June. Alan Clark shared that the kelp project had a kayak kick-off day with Northwest Straits and that they have a lot of experienced kayak volunteers this year.
- *Advisory subcommittee:* LaTrisha Suggs gave an announcement that there is an open spot on the advisory subcommittee now that Mike Doherty has retired from the MRC and anyone from the MRC is welcome to join. LaTrisha also mentioned it would be valuable to appoint a lead for each of the subcommittees.
- *Education and outreach subcommittee:* the committee plans to meet Wednesday, May 20th.

Discussion of next meeting date and agenda

- *Next meeting:* The next meeting will take place on Monday, June 15th.

- *Call for new agenda items, speaker suggestions:* LaTrisha invited the Olympia Peninsula Audubon group to speak on their Lights Out Initiative but has not heard back. If others have speakers in mind, please forward them to LaTrisha and Chase O'Neil.

Good of the Order

- None at this time.

Public Comment

- None at this time.

Adjourn

Chair LaTrisha Suggs adjourned the meeting at 7:04pm.