



MRC Members

Glen Alexander ("Alex")
Citizen-at-Large
Term 2: 01/21/2027

Rick Beauregard (NWSC rep)
Scientific
Term 1: 01/31/2027

Jackie Dexter
Economic
Term 1: 01/31/2027

Mark Fairhart
Citizen-at-large
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Kaylee Galloway
Designated, County Council

Alexi Guddal
Conservation/Environmental
Partial: 01/31/2026

Joe Hoats
Economic
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Kathy Ketteridge (Vice-Chair)
Citizen-at-Large
Term 1: 01/31/2026

Elizabeth Lorence
Conservation/Environmental
Term 1: 01/31/2026

Mike MacKay (NWSC alt rep)
Scientific
Term 2: 01/31/2028

Paul Meyer
Conservation/Environmental
Term 1: 01/31/2029

Andrew Shelton
Economic
Term 1: 01/31/2028

Mary Lou Steward
City of Blaine, Mayor

Colin Wahl
Scientific
Term 2: 01/31/2029

Vacancies

Recreational Interest (2)
Nooksack Tribe Representative
Lummi Nation Representative

WHATCOM MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY | September 4, 2025 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Garden level conference room, Civic Annex Building, 322 N Commercial, Bellingham

ZOOM [LINK](#), Meeting ID: 829 8756 4534 | Passcode 868735

1-253-215-8782 US (Tacoma)

We acknowledge the lands we're on today are the ancestral and current homelands of Indigenous Nations who have stewarded them since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These Indigenous Nations include the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribe.

Time	Agenda Item	Lead	Action Y/N
1.	Introductions and Determine Quorum		
2.	September 4 Agenda <i>Modify and approve agenda as needed. New business can be added if necessary.</i>		Y
3.	Approval of June and August Meeting Summaries <i>Review and approve summary as final.</i>		
4.	Community Updates <i>Community members attending the meeting who wish to address or update the Committee on MRC related matters will be provided up to five (5) minutes to speak.</i>		
5.	The Woods at Viewcrest proposal update: Protect Mud Bay Cliffs (PMBC). Agenda brief #5	PMBC	
6.	Oil Spill Response Capacity in Whatcom County: Darcy Bird, Spill Preparedness, Prevention and Response Program (SPPR) , Washington Department of Ecology	Darcy	
7.	Staff updates: Vacancies, outreach events , FFY 2026-2028 funding, 2025/26 Mussel Watch , MRC Chair <i>Confirm MRC Chair</i>	Austin/Dana	Y
8.	MRC Officer Update <i>Discussion: member participation</i>	Mark	
9.	MRC Project Updates: - Olympia oyster - Bull Kelp Monitoring - Chuckanut PIC - Wildcat Cove Eelgrass Preservation	Jackie Dana Dana Intern?	
10	MRC Partner Committee Updates: - County Council - Port of Bellingham - City of Blaine - Northwest Straits Commission	Kaylee Kurt Mary Lou Rick	
11	Adjourn		

In Attendance: Dana Flerchinger (staff), Austin Rose (staff), Alexi Goodall, Mark Fairhart, Colin Wahl, Thomas Hoats "Joe", Rick Beauregard, Mike MacKay, Paul Meyer, Glen Alexander "Alex", Jackie Dexter

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Others: Laura Hanna, Jon Paul Shanahan (WCPW), Dave Mapes, Julie Hirsch, Larry Horowitz (PMBC), Janet Migaki (PMBC), Maggie Taylor (Nooksack Indian Tribe)

1. **Introductions and Determine Quorum:** Austin started the meeting with roundtable introductions. A quorum was present.
2. **September 4 Agenda:** The agenda was approved.
3. **Approval of June and August Meeting Summaries:** The meeting summaries were approved.
4. **Community Updates:** The Garden of the Salish Sea Curriculum is hosting a Family Beach Walk and Exploration as part of Whatcom Water Weeks on Monday, September 15th at 10 a.m. at Semiahmoo, County Park.
5. ***The Woods at Viewcrest* proposal update:** Protect Mud Bay Cliffs (PMBC) is a community group sponsored by Responsible Development and was formed in 2021 in response to growing public concern over the environmental risks posed by *The Woods at Viewcrest*. Larry Horowitz provided an update on *The Woods at Viewcrest* subdivision proposal and the mission of PMBC. PMBC is concerned that *The Woods at Viewcrest* stormwater management plan could impact the MRC's Olympia oyster plots in N. Chuckanut Bay. In addition, the project, which involves blasting and/or rock breaking very near landslide hazard areas (LHAs) is likely to increase the frequency and magnitude of landslides. PMBC is looking for experts that can speak to the potential impacts, adverse impacts, to the benthic community. Check out the PMBC website [HERE](#). This topic will likely be a standing agenda item.
6. **Oil Spill Response Capacity in Whatcom County:** Darcy Bird, WA Ecology Spills Program focused her presentation on oil spill preparedness action and spill response. The Trans Mountain Pipeline in Canada recently expanded, going from a capacity of about 300,000 gallons a day to about 890,000 gallons a day – almost triple the capacity. Vessels are carrying tar sands, diluted bitumen, and then going out through the Strait of Juan de Fuca. This is a major shift with serious implications for the Whatcom County region and the broader Salish Sea ecosystem. Tankers calling on the Westridge Marine Terminal are required to be escorted by specialized tugs and are subject to stringent safety and environmental regulations. The Western Canada Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC), as a part of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, has also deployed a new emergency response vessel to its base in Beecher Bay to ensure a rapid response to any potential spills. Darcy described the pyramid of response planning from cross-border planning, regional planning, area planning and Geographic Response Plans (GRPs). Ecology has worked with MRCs on pre-planning work. Snohomish MRC really informed the North Central Puget Sound GRP. MRC members expressed interest in playing a bigger role in oil spill response. Check out the Island Oil Spill Association (IOSA), to learn about what they are doing in San Juan County.
7. **Staff updates:**
 - **Vacancies:** There are two vacancies on the MRC, each representing a 'Recreational' Interest. Please share widely.
 - **Outreach events:** The MRC is scheduled to table at two upcoming outreach events, Run with the Chums and Bellingham SeaFeast. Sign-up sheets have been sent via e-mail. Dana will re-send.
 - **FFY 2026-2028 funding:** Staff will confirm funding outlook, as there was discrepancy presented at the meeting.
 - **2025/26 Mussel Watch:** WDFW will be doing another round of mussel monitoring in the greater Puget Sound this upcoming fall and winter. The MRC was invited to participate again. This study continues to support the Stormwater Action Monitoring (SAM) program efforts to measure stormwater impacts on

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the environment and evaluate the effectiveness of stormwater management actions. Members expressed interest in helping.

- **MRC Chair:** Mark Fairhart has stepped up to be the MRC Chair.

8. **MRC Officer Update:** Mark encouraged meeting participation – particularly in-person meetings, and expressed two immediate requests: 1) Review the MRC Mission Statement, which includes 9 goals and an additional 9 specific tasks on how to reach those goals, and 2) to prioritize meeting attendance.

9. **MRC Project Updates:**

- **Olympia oyster:** A map of the Drayton Harbor Olympia oyster test plots was shared. Jackie reminded members that the reconnaissance survey final report from the Puget Sound Restoration Fund is located in the MRC google drive – in the project folder.
- **Bull Kelp Monitoring:** Each of the four bull kelp monitoring sites has been surveyed once. All the bull kelp beds, as compared to the 2024 data, are about the same size. Additional kelp beds have been noted.
- **Chuckanut PIC:** September is the last official month for the MRC to collect water samples from N. Chuckanut Bay. The EPA data from the microbial source tracking, should be available in late September and may inform what pollution is entering the bay. Staff will be preparing a technical report over the next year.
- **Wildcat Cove Eelgrass Protection:** Interns with the Northwest Straits Foundation have been at the Wildcat Cove boat launch at low tides to inform boaters about the impacts to the eelgrass meadow when driven over to launch boats. There has been a decrease in tire tracks seen and an overall awareness to the general public about the issue.

10. **MRC Partner Committee Updates**

- **County Council:** County Council is still reviewing the Comprehensive plan. The Environment chapter is going before the Planning Commission in October. The MRC may keep an eye on that to ensure their feedback made it into the staff recommendation version. There is a joint Planning/Council meeting coming up in which the industrial lands capacity will be reviewed, and a discussion on the urban growth areas. Council will be receiving a budget update from the Executive's Office on the 9th.
- **Port of Bellingham:** Update shared via e-mail.
- **City of Blaine:** No report.
- **Northwest Straits Commission:** The Whatcom County Vessel Turn-In Event, held from late July through late August was a success. The event was a collaborative effort between the Port of Bellingham, Whatcom MRC, Whatcom County, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Lummi Nation, Whatcom Working Waterfront Coalition, Northwest Straits Commission, Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Washington Department of Ecology. 29 vessels were voluntarily turned in. The total cost was \$103,000 or roughly \$3500/boat. MRC staff will share the recent DRAFT Fundraising Policy for MRCs. Register for the annual MRC Conference.

11. **Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.