# ecylogo-horiz-color.pngMeeting Minutes

**Resource Damage Assessment Committee (RDA)
Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, August 13, 2025
**Microsoft Teams and Ecology HQ Room R0A-36**

Call to Order: 9:01 AM

Introduction and Agenda Review

## Attendees

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Entity | Representative |
| RDA Committee, ChairWashington State Department of Ecology | Geoff Baran |
| RDA Committee, ChairWashington State Department of Ecology | Josh Weide |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Fish and Wildlife | Chelsey Buffington |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation | Rob Whitlam |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Department of Natural Resources | Shayne Cothern |
| RDA Committee Washington State Department of Health | Merita Trohimovich |
| RDA CommitteeWashington State Parks Department | Matt Niles |
| Yakama Nation Fisheries, Superfund Section | Natalie Swan |
| Winlock School District, Superintendent | Michelle Jeffries |
| United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Statewide Coordinator | Michael Carlson |
| Washington State Attorney General’s Office | Julian Beattie |
| Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation | Jessica Stone |
| Washington State Department of Ecology Spills Response | Greg Dunbar |
| Mills Black LLP, Representing Liberty Maritime Corporation | Allen Black |
| Liberty Maritime Corporation Executive VP – General Council | Brooke Shapiro |

## Minutes

### New Business

#### Preassessment Screenings

##### ERTS #740031 Winlock School District Diesel Spill to Olequa Creek

* Incident Summary:

On July 10, 2025, Ecology responded to a report of a diesel sheen on Olequa Creek in Winlock. The source of the spill was determined to be from an above ground diesel fuel storage tank at the Winlock School District Transportation Department. The school district hired Cowlitz Clean Sweep to pump out the remaining fuel from the 2,000-gallon tank as well as contain and collect diesel that had spilled to the creek. Sheen was observed about 1.5 miles downstream from the tank and the saturated soil below it. CCS continued to monitor and replace sorbent boom over the following weeks while Ecology monitored cleanup activities. Live fish were seen in the creek, but there were no observations of wildlife impacts. On July 22, CCS began low-pressure flushing of the bank to mobilize diesel remaining in the soil into containment. This was followed by the removal of the tank and demolition of its secondary containment concrete pad on July 25. A pinhole leak on the bottom of the tank was identified as the cause of the spill. Excavation of contaminated soil resulted in the recovery of contaminated groundwater over multiple days. Cleanup is now being verified through confirmation sampling and backfilling is expected to occur soon. The spill amount is under investigation, but Ecology currently estimates that over 300 gallons of diesel may have spilled to the creek.

*Geoff*: Michelle, do you have any updates to the status of the excavated area?

*Michelle*: Yes, the excavation has been tested and backfilled.

*Geoff*: We will continue to work to get a better estimate of what spilled. As we don’t know when the spill first started, it may not be possible to determine the amount of diesel collected within the first 24 hours.

* Preassessment Screening:
	+ Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 6 no.
	+ Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 6 no.
	+ Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

##### ERTS #739749 P/C *Great Escape* Fire and Gasoline Spill to Lake Union

* Incident Summary:

OOn Wednesday, June 25, 2025, the USCG Sector Puget Sound reported a boat explosion and fire at Boat World Marina on Lake Union resulting in a gasoline and motor oil spill which created a 400 by 200-yard rainbow sheen. Ecology Responders mobilized to the scene, arriving after the Seattle Fire Department had extinguished the fire. The 37-foot, fiberglass P/C *Great Escape* sank at its covered slip. Boat World Marina surrounded the *Great Escape* with sorbent material, and while there was fire debris and residual firefighting foam floating in the water, there was little remaining oil sheen. The marina also hired Towbridge Innovations to respond to the spilled oil and refloat the sunken vessel. By June 27, 2025, the remains of the *Great Escape* had been raised from the bottom and stored on shore in Ballard pending an insurance investigation by the owner’s insurers. Ecology estimates that approximately 28 gallons of unburned gasoline and lubricating oil spilled to Lake Union.

* Preassessment Screening:
	+ Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 6 no.
	+ Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 6 no.
	+ Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

##### ERTS #725817 M/V *Liberty Peace* Oil Spill to Yukon Harbor

##### (Pre-assessment Screening scheduled for 10:00)

* Incident Summary:

On September 29, 2023, the Roll on-Roll off vessel *Liberty Peace* was anchored in Yukon Harbor near Manchester, Washington. At 09:50, the first assistant engineer began an internal transfer of oil from the port oily bilge tank to the incinerator waste oil service tank. Around 10:55, the engineer arrived at the location of the incinerator waste oil tank and noticed that the transfer pump was still running. He immediately stopped the pump and took action to address the overflowing tank. At about the same time, a crewmember conducting rounds noticed a sheen off the vessel’s port side and alerted the first assistant engineer. After the first assistant engineer informed the Chief Engineer, the Chief reported the spill to the vessel's master, who then notified the Qualified Individual at Gallagher Marine, who made spill notification calls. The source of the spill was contained by the ship's crew and US Ecology was contracted to clean the vessel's hull. The Department of Ecology's investigation into the incident determined that an estimated 199 gallons of waste oil spilled to Yukon Harbor.

*Allen*: Oily bilge water was the product being transferred. The automatic stop didn’t work as it should have. The overflow pipe was also clogged, causing a spill to the containment which also overflowed. Most of the oil was trapped in the transfer piping. The ship’s crew had measured how much oil was in the tanks the day prior to the transfer and then measured the tanks again following the spill. They also weighed what was collected from the deck and containment, resulting in an estimate of 5 gallons spilled to water. The Qualified Individual was also activated and responded on another vessel to locate any oil on the water and did not observe any.

*Geoff*: Liberty Maritime has expressed a desire to identify a restoration project in lieu of damages. The RDA committee will continue to look for available restoration projects.

* Preassessment Screening:
	+ Are the damages quantifiable at a reasonable cost? 6 no.
	+ Is restoration or enhancement technically feasible? 6 no.
	+ Compensation schedule authorized to calculate damages.

### Other Business

#### Approval of Minutes

* Motion to approve meeting minutes for the July 9, 2025, RDA Committee. Motion passed.

#### Open Case Updates

* ERTS #727283 Olympic Pipeline Gasoline Spill – Skagit County, December 10, 2023
	+ Ecology is working on evaporation figures to determine an accurate spill amount.
	+ Progress has been delayed due to Ecology’s response to the PetroCard spill below.
* ERTS #740213 PetroCard Diesel Spill to Indian Creek – Elwha, July 18, 2025
	+ Cleanup operations have concluded. This included raking and sparging the creek to release gasoline so that it could easily evaporate. All containment and sorbent boom have been removed. The incident has now moved into the long-term monitoring and NRDA phase.
	+ Ecology continues to work closely with local Tribes and restoration partners to identify and develop studies focusing on three main impacts:
		- Salmon – Chinook and Pink Salmon spawning season is beginning.
		- Lamprey – mortality was high.
		- Macroinvertebrates – observed several macroinvertebrates such as Caddisfly.

### Announcements

* Next meeting: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 at 9:00 am via **Microsoft Teams** and in person at Ecology HQ, **Room R0A-36**.

Adjournment: 10:16 AM