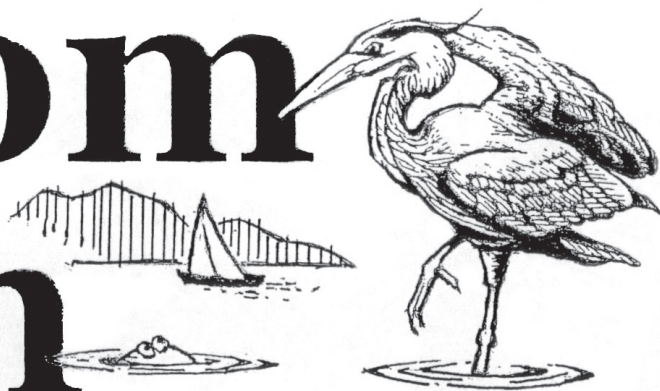


Whatcom Watch



a community forum on government, environmental issues and media • www.whatcomwatch.org

Volume 30, Number 1

January 2021

Giant Hornets Could Decimate Raspberry Pollinators

by Nate Sanford

Here's one bit of good news for the winter: murder hornets are taking a break from murdering (at least for now). As days turn colder, the Asian giant hornets that besieged Whatcom County and parts of British Columbia for much of 2020 are either dying off or entering winter hibernation, prompting the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) to temporarily take down their traps.

But it's not just giant hornets that are threatening bees; habitat loss, pollution, pesticides and other environmental factors continue to cause alarming declines in bee populations. The city of Bellingham is hoping to help combat this by creating sustainable habitats and pursuing designation as an official Bee City, but the challenge is far from over. And though scientists don't yet know exactly when, come springtime, the killer hornets will wake back up.

The Asian giant hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*) made headlines when it was spotted in Whatcom County last winter. The hornet is an invasive species that preys on honeybees and other pollinators. The insect's half-centimeter-long stinger, thumb-sized body, and alarming "murder hornet" nickname drew national attention and cemented the

Nate Sanford is a journalism student at Western Washington University. You can follow his work on Twitter @sanford_nate.



illustrator: Hilary Cole

hornets into the cultural ethos of a year that already felt apocalyptic. But, while the hornets can be dangerous to humans, they pose a much bigger threat to local honeybee populations.

The first female worker hornet specimen in North America was captured by Ruthie Danielsen, a local beekeeper and member of the Mount Baker Beekeeping association. She caught the hornet in a homemade trap

about half a mile from her house — and her hives.

"I was thrilled and then I was horrified," Danielsen said.

Danielsen's beehives have so far been spared from the Asian giant hornet's wrath, but she's not taking any chances. While the WSDA has removed most of its traps for the winter, Danielsen is leaving hers up until the weather gets colder and she can

be absolutely certain that the hornets are in hibernation.

Giant Hornets Decapitate Honeybees

Asian giant hornets can be devastating to local honeybee populations. The giant hornets need a massive amount of protein to survive and beehives are their main source of sustenance. When a hornet locates a honeybee hive, they will mark it with a pheromone and bring other hornets from their nest to finish the job. The hornet's preferred method of attack is decapitation — just 15 of them can destroy a beehive in a matter of hours.

"There's absolutely nothing you can do when they're in the middle of the attack," Danielsen said. "They will mark that hive and say, 'it's mine.' Once they mark it and they're actively trying to kill it, it's their hive now."

The wet, temperate climate of the Pacific Northwest is perfect for the Asian giant hornet. A recent study by researchers at Washington State University and the WSDA found that, if the hornets aren't eradicated soon, they could continue to multiply and spread down the West Coast — decimating local honeybee populations and wreaking havoc on the agricultural economy.

Beekeeping is already difficult, with hives regularly experiencing losses around 40 per-

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Drinking Water Harmed by Invasive Species and Pollution

by Karlee Deatherage

We all have a lot on our minds these days, and the quality of our water might not be at the top of the list. But Lake Whatcom, the drinking water source for 100,000 Whatcom County residents, including Bellingham, faces an onslaught of threats — from logging and development, to pesticides and invasive mussels hitching rides on uninspected boats.

Karlee Deatherage is the Land & Water Policy Manager for RE Sources. Founded in 1982, RE Sources is a nonprofit organization working to protect the health of northwest Washington's people and ecosystems through the application of science, education, advocacy, and action.

We're all acutely aware of the risks of traveling during the pandemic. A big risk to our drinking water, however, has slipped through the cracks as we adjusted to the year's challenges for travelers.

This year, many of us turned to spending time outside exploring parks, hiking, biking, or boating. A record number of people hauled their boats to visit Lake Whatcom this spring through early fall as documented by the Lake Whatcom Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Inspection Program.

This was quite surprising, since many Canadians own property or visit vacation homes near Lake Whatcom, and, as anyone who has visited Bellingham's Costco or Trader Joe's knows, the U.S.-Canadian border is closed. Despite this, AIS staff noted record numbers

of full boat decontaminations — a requirement for boats that last visited waterbodies infested with zebra or quagga mussels or

One single mussel from one boat could produce a million offspring.

other invasive species.

Invasive zebra and quagga mussels will cause irreparable harm to Lake Whatcom and cost hundreds of millions of dollars in damage to taxpayer-funded drinking water infrastructure. One single mussel from one boat is able to produce up to one million

offspring. While the mussels reproduce and grow, they attach to hard surfaces like docks and boats and clog water intakes. They also can live up to 30 days when out of water.

The coronavirus pandemic delayed the start of the invasive species' inspections for Lake Whatcom. AIS staff had to rethink how to appropriately conduct boat inspections with the public, understandably causing a delay from mid-April to the second week of May. As a result, people were launching their boats without inspections during some of the nice spring days in April, putting the lake at greater risk of a mussel infestation. We were lucky ... this time.

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Toward this end *Whatcom Watch* serves as a community forum. Editors reserve the right to edit all submissions, including letters, for accuracy, length and clarity of expression. While opinions expressed in articles need not reflect the views of editors, the newspaper strives to present material that is of value and concern to the community. When *Whatcom Watch* editors spend time editing a submission, it constitutes our commitment to publish the submission and the author's tacit agreement with us that the submission will be published in the newspaper. If an article is accepted for publication in *Whatcom Watch*, it must not appear in another publication (print or Internet) before the Watch has appeared on newsstands.

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Watch on Media

Washington Reporters Get Free Legal Help

Microsoft and Davis Wright Tremaine Protect Journalists

by Jennifer Karchmer

Freelance journalists and small newsrooms that lack funds to hire lawyers can get pro bono legal representation from Microsoft and Seattle law firm Davis Wright Tremaine.

The two companies joined forces in 2020 to launch the Protecting Journalists Pro Bono Program. Attorneys from Microsoft and DWT with media law training are offering pro bono assistance in three areas important to newsrooms and freelancers: 1) pre-publication review of articles, 2) Freedom of Information requests, and 3) quashing subpoenas that try to force a journalist to hand over their notes or confidential sources.

The partnership also relies on existing resources that three nonprofits known for their work defending press freedom offer: The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (RCFP), the First Amendment Coalition (FAC) and the Washington Coalition for Open Government (WCOG). Each of these maintains a helpline to field calls from reporters so they will make referrals to the program for pro bono work.

Sima Sarrafan, a Senior Attorney at Microsoft who had worked at DWT and was drawn to First Amendment issues, came up with the idea to collaborate after attending a DWT seminar on how to defend a journalist from a subpoena.

"I knew that there was an opportunity there to take the investment of time that we're all frankly making in pro bono work and add another way to channel that," she said on Nov. 23 during a phone interview. The idea to provide pro bono help percolated for her as she noticed an imbalance of power between those who try to use the law to silence and censor voices, and reporters and newsrooms that lack the ability to pay attorney fees. "The specter that [a journalist] may get sued and financially taken down by the threat of someone who doesn't want that story to be told I think is unfair," she added.

Most law firms offer pro bono assistance as the American Bar Association recommends in its Model Rules of Professional Conduct (Rule 6.1) that lawyers provide at least 50 volunteer hours a year. The term pro bono comes from the Latin *pro bono publico*, which means "for the public good."

The seminar Sarrafan attended was led by DWT Partner and longtime newsroom attorney Thomas Burke, who has defended journalists and the First Amendment for close to 30 years. He also chairs the firm's Pro Bono and Social Impact committee, so when the two spoke in January 2020, they formed the program as a pilot starting in Washington and California with the hope to expand nationwide.

Threats Against Journalism

Such an initiative comes at an appropriate time in the industry. Journalists and newsrooms are under threat, pressured to

produce more content with less resources — including legal advice, and there's an increase in libel threats, subpoena requests, and physical assaults on reporters while covering demonstrations. Since 2017, at least 82 journalists have been subpoenaed or had their records seized, and some have received multiple subpoenas, according to the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker, maintained by the Committee to Protect Journalists. The tracker monitors arrests, physical attacks, border stops, equipment damage, subpoenas, legal orders and other violations against reporters.

For a local case of a journalist subpoena, we can look to last summer when *The Seattle Times* and four Seattle TV stations were being forced by the Seattle Police Department to hand over unpublished images and video from the May 30 racial justice protests. The SPD wanted the footage to aid in solving crimes that occurred in downtown Seattle that weekend.

With DWT as their legal counsel, the media outlets fought the subpoena for months, trying to convince the judge that the media is not an arm of the government. They had appealed a judge's decision that the subpoena was enforceable, but eventually the SPD dropped their pursuit (see *Whatcom Watch*, Oct/Nov. 2020, "A Win For Press Freedom").

Of course, an established news company like *The Seattle Times* has the resources to retain a firm like DWT that specializes in defending the First Amendment.

However, a freelance reporter or a community newsroom would have their hands full with a subpoena — facing the threat of jail time if they don't comply, a mountain of attorney fees, and confusing legalese to sift through.

"The first one was scary, but after that, we knew what our rights were as reporters, and that [the subpoena] could be quashed," said Illinois journalist John Kraft in a Dec. 23 email. Kraft, who has been served four subpoenas for his reporting for Edgar County Watchdogs, contacted the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (RCFP) for pro bono assistance. He estimated attorney fees would be in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 range, effectively shutting down the nonprofit government watchdog blog he started with fellow muckraker Kirk Allen. "We would have faced financial ruin if we did not have support from nonprofits interested in assisting reporters with legal issues," Kraft added.

When Western Washington University Associate Professor of Journalism Carolyn Nielsen was subpoenaed years ago, she sought pro bono assistance from RCFP, which got her in contact with DWT attorneys. In 2010, the city of Chicago/Chicago Police Department were asking for her notes related to a story she wrote in 1994 while a graduate student at Northwestern University.

Nielsen, who has helped *The Western Front* student journalists fight subpoenas, was "outraged" about *The Seattle Times* subpoena case. "That this even happened showed the critical need for legal defense for journalists," she said in a Dec. 16 email.

For the Public Good

Journalists and newsrooms in Washington or California that seek pro bono assistance

in any of the three areas of the program: 1) pre-publication review, 2) FOI assistance, or 3) quashing a subpoena, can contact The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (RCFP), the First Amendment Coalition (FAC) and the Washington Coalition for Open Government (WCOG). Go to their websites and locate their reporter's hotline.

Washington, D.C.-based RCFP, for example, has a 24/7 reporter's hotline, which has experienced an increase in requests the past few years, according to staff attorney Sarah Matthews, who spoke via phone interview on Nov. 19. The RCFP hotline has been in existence since the 1970s, she said, and calls and email requests have increased by about 30 percent from 2013, the latest data show. She expects the number for 2020 to exceed the prior year, because as of September, there were 350 requests — about the same amount for all of 2019.

Matthews, who worked on her high school and college newspapers and interned at *Newsweek*, says journalists need support to pursue their work holding government accountable. In its 2019-2020 Report to Donors, the RCFP said journalists and newsrooms would more aggressively pursue investigative reporting, "if they had access to an attorney to review sensitive stories before they are published and provide defensive support when reporters are served with subpoenas or threatened with lawsuits."

First Amendment Coalition Executive Director David Snyder is thrilled to be on board with the program because FAC's mission is to assist news outlets that don't have a legal department or regular access to a team of media lawyers. "Because we have so many more fledgling news outlets, and so many fewer newspapers with the budget to hire lawyers, there are too many journalists going without legal help," he said on Dec. 10 in an email interview.

Like RCFP, FAC maintains a helpline, which addressed more than 750 requests in 2019. FAC fields queries from reporters and members of the public alike, ranging from issues related to public records and public meetings to subpoenas to the First Amendment, according to Snyder. FAC doesn't offer pre-publication review for reporters.

To combat the threat to journalistic freedom a subpoena can pose, FAC has its Subpoena Defense Initiative, a referral network of attorneys specially trained in protecting journalists.

"When someone enlists the power of the courts to compel journalists to testify or turn over unpublished materials, they undermine the ability of the press to operate independently of the government," according to the FAC website.

Many states, including Washington and California, have shield laws to protect a journalist's privilege, and federal circuit courts have recognized a journalist's right to refuse to disclose their notes. The Seattle Police Department subpoena from last summer, which tried to compel *The Seattle Times* and the four TV news stations to provide unpublished material, was the first significant appellate test of Washington's 2007 shield statute, RCW 5.68.010, according to Eric Stahl, a DWT attorney who defended *The Seattle Times* and the TV stations. Stahl served as one of Nielsen's lawyers in her

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Beaks and Bills

Birding in the New Year

by Joe Meche

After a tumultuous 2020, things can only get better in 2021 ... at least that's the hope of everyone on planet Earth. The Covid-19 pandemic dictated that we change our habits and canceled traditional gatherings for most of the big holidays. We were encouraged to wear masks and limit our activities away from home, so I wore a mask every day, as I have since March. My activities away from home are usually of the solo variety so I never felt that I was putting myself or anyone else at risk. The Bellingham Christmas Bird Count went on for another year, following guidelines set down by National Audubon to minimize spreader events and group activities.

Combining the state of the world with traditional winter weather in the Pacific Northwest, we have our hands full if we want to get out and see a few good birds. I've always said that the best cure for cabin fever is to get out of the cabin. For many of us winter, is the best time of year for birding. Understandably, the cabin is a very cozy place to be on the cold, wet days but the birds are waiting ... outside!

While most birds tend to go their separate ways during the nesting season, flocking is the preferred course for some species in winter. The old adage of *strength in numbers* is appropriate along with the concept of birds of a feather sticking together. Large flocks of shorebirds and waterfowl are exciting for birdwatchers, no matter the level of expertise or time of year. These numbers are compiled in winter by citizen science efforts like the Christmas Bird Count and serve as useful data when tracking bird populations during the colder months.

Whatcom County's reputation for winter birding is well founded, given the diversity of habitats and a moderate, mostly ice-free marine climate. Large concentrations of birds and highly accessible locations were instrumental in meeting the criteria established for the inclusion of several county sites in both the Important Bird Areas and Great Washington State Birding Trail programs. If you're a casual or serious birdwatcher, you would be challenged to find a better place to bird, or live for that matter. The birds prove my point, every day!

As I've said before in this column, as well as in real life, waterfowl continue to be the leading reason for me to leave the cozy cabin on



Bald eagle

photo: Joe Meche

cold winter days. Under this broad heading are many of our resident birds, as well as the winter migrants that literally flood our landscape in the colder months. Loons, grebes, scoters, mergansers, sea and bay ducks, geese, and swans are easy to find in the right habitats well into April and early May. It's somewhat miraculous to think of the distances these birds travel from their breeding grounds to winter with us. Long-tailed ducks remain one of the big attractions for birders to spend time at Semiahmoo. I know from first-hand experience.

Along with our most numerous and regular contingent of glaucous-winged gulls, we also have winter gulls that add to the ongoing gull ID challenge. Ring-billed and mew gulls are the most common visitors, along with the occasional herring, California, and Thayer's gulls. Winter is a great time of year to compare individual gulls and become familiar with their seasonal plumages. The great thing about these aerialists is their high visibility on shorelines and estuaries, as well as in open areas of parks and agricultural fields throughout the lowlands.

Our great blue herons are with

us year round and still provide excitement for all birdwatchers. They are familiar sightings everywhere and one of the most recognizable of all our birds. Part of their appeal, I believe, comes from the fact that they're one of the first birds that most of us learned to ID with confidence. Their broad appetites pretty much guarantee that you can find them anyplace you go. When winter takes away the cover of leaves, walk down to the Post Point heronry and count the nests from last year.

The Semiahmoo Spit and the tidal flats at Marine Park in Blaine are perfect locations to view winter shorebirds like dunlin, our most numerous species. It's not an exaggeration to estimate some of their flocks at between 10-15,000 individuals. Their synchronized flights are one of nature's true marvels and generally occur when birds of prey are in pursuit. While you're walking at Semiahmoo, scan the shorelines for sanderlings, black turnstones, and the inimitable black oystercatchers.

Given the dynamics of the individual species, birds of prey are the epitome of excitement wherever you find them. Bald eagle numbers

peak on the Nooksack River in perfect synchrony with the winter run of chum salmon. When the salmon buffet winds down, these same eagles will head down to sea level to join other raptors in the open areas of the county. Red-tailed hawks are year round residents and are joined in winter by the Arctic-breeding rough-legged hawks. Adding to the numbers of wintering raptors are peregrine falcons, merlins, and American kestrels, as well as Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks. And don't forget the owls! Be especially alert if you hear reports of snowy owls ... we're overdue for a visit from these magnificent Arctic owls.

Belted kingfishers and several species of woodpeckers make their homes here year round. Kingfishers are active birds in just about any watery habitat. Their distinctive, chattering calls never leave a doubt to their presence. Their calls are among the easiest for birders who practice birding by ear. Woodpeckers' colors and their unique behavior make them one of our more entertaining groups of watchable wildlife, especially at suet feeders. Their frequent visits to feeding stations make them easy entries for a good day's birding list. Anna's hummingbirds stay with us throughout the year and benefit from humans who keep their feeders ice free on colder days.

The small passerines, or perching birds, are the true, easy to find entertainers of backyards and woodlots. An easy walk around your neighborhood or one of our many parks will offer a wealth of sparrows, finches, nuthatches, bushtits, and numerous other species. In winter, our common American robin is joined in the lowlands by other members of the same family, the hermit and varied thrushes. Spotted towhees, Bewick's and Pacific wrens complement our resident black-capped and chestnut-backed chickadees in similar habitats.

If you plan to spend time in the field in the coming year, you might be wondering about where to go. As it turns out, there is a guide available for the entire county. Go to www.northcascadesaudubon.org and click on Locations under the Birding menu. The best sites are numbered and the attached list tells some of the species you might find at each one. The best idea is to print a copy and have it laminated to keep for future exploration. As we make our way into a new year, let's hope that 2021 offers better days. As we change our calendars, let's all resolve to start anew with a more sensible administration in the other Washington, and get a handle on our collective health.

Happy New Year from the crew at the Beaks and Bills HQ and stay healthy! 

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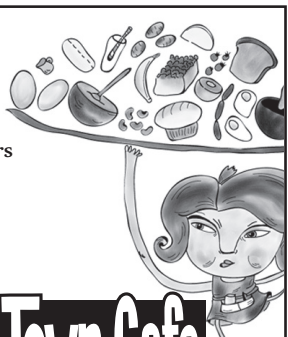
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Joe Meche is a past president of the North Cascades Audubon Society and was a member of the board of directors for 20 years. He has been watching birds for more than 60 years and photographing birds and landscapes for more than 40 years. He has written over 200 columns for Whatcom Watch.

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Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Three vacancies – two current members are eligible to reapply. The committee assists the county in the planning, funding, development and implementation of facilities and programs that will result in the increased safety and use of bicycle and pedestrian travel as a significant and beneficial mode of transportation and recreation. Members meet monthly and serve a four-year term. Executive-appointed.

Climate Impact Advisory Committee
Six Vacancies – current members are eligible to re-apply. Employment or educational experience required in climate change, renewable energy development, energy conservation, energy sector, waste reduction and recycling, farming, food security, land use planning, municipal government and flood mitigation and planning. The committee provides review and recommendations to the Whatcom County Council and executive on issues related to the preparation and adaptation for, and the prevention and mitigation of, impacts of climate change. Members serve three-year terms. Council-appointed.

Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District
Three vacancies, four-year terms. Members must have a direct interest in the shellfish protection district. Duties are to advise the County Council on the proposed actions and operations relating to the restoration of water quality in the Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District. Council-appointed.

Continued on page 6

Providing a Safe Haven for the Homeless

Editor's Note: There are over 100 organizations in Whatcom County working to provide supportive services to those experiencing chronic poverty and its associated effects: addiction, homelessness, incarceration, mental illness, and unemployment. Whatcom Watch believes these organizations often labor unnoticed by citizens — this column is designed to add daylight to their endeavors. We have contacted the organization appearing in this column and asked them to explain their mission. Because, in challenging times, being inspired and perhaps empowered by the acts of others is more important than ever.

by Doug Gustafson

The mission of HomesNOW is "Ending Homelessness One Person at a Time." Currently, HomesNOW is uniquely qualified to set up additional sites in partnership with the city of Bellingham for a multitude of reasons, including the low cost of the model, the

HomesNOW is an all-volunteer organization.

speed at which new sites can be set up, the qualifications of the management team of HomesNOW, the individualized approach and consistent innovation that our model implements, our constant engagement and clear and open lines of communication with the city and the community in general, as well as the results that we've been able to achieve in the time that HomesNOW has been in operation since June 2017.

HomesNOW is an all-volunteer organization, with no paid staff, and we do not take government money, but we have asked for spots/sites on which to build future villages.

Unity Village is the first tiny home community for formerly homeless individuals in Bellingham, and is managed by HomesNOW. Many of the residents of Unity Village were campers before they became residents, and most of them have been cleared on multiple occasions when they were stuck in the cold.

Because Unity Village was able to provide emergency/triage and transitional housing, we have not only prevented people from having to camp (reducing the cost of cleanups for the city), we have also provided better outcomes for individuals through an increased quality of life. On top of that, we have over a 40 percent rehousing rate, meaning 40 percent of our residents have found permanent housing. And, that rate is rising. Having the ability to quickly and efficiently provide even the most basic housing for people will result in seeing fewer camps in town, and thus fewer cleanups, allowing those funds to go toward something more meaningful.

Doug Gustafson is chairman of HomesNOW! Not Later, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization operating in Bellingham and Whatcom County. HomesNOW operates Unity Village, the first tiny home community for homeless individuals in Bellingham. Doug is also a small business owner providing community IT support and has lived in Bellingham since 2006.

to provide emergency/triage and transitional housing, we have not only prevented people from having to camp (reducing the cost of cleanups for the city), we have also provided better outcomes for individuals through an increased quality of life. On top of that, we have over a 40 percent rehousing rate, meaning 40 percent of our residents have found permanent housing. And, that rate is rising. Having the ability to quickly and efficiently provide even the most basic housing for people will result in seeing fewer camps in town, and thus fewer cleanups, allowing those funds to go toward something more meaningful.

Residents Run the Village

These results have been achieved through a model of self-sufficiency, and self-management — in other words, the villagers run the village together, working with the board/staff/volunteers to get the best results for daily life at the village, as well as helping people into permanent housing.

HomesNOW has no paid staff, and the whole village costs around \$1,500 per month to operate. Residents willingly donate monthly, based on ability to pay to cover the cost of utilities.

We have three on-site managers who are also residents, similar to an apartment complex where management often lives at the apartment. However, we encourage residents and staff to be upfront with each other and speak to each other directly when issues arise.

The reason why we go with a self-management approach, and why we avoid the paid staff model, is because we think that it's more effective for finding regular housing. When somebody is homeless and they are trying to get their own long-term place, if the environment is conducive to them



having to be independent, manage themselves, work with others, get their own paperwork, find their own services (with our support, of course), it is much more conducive to them getting out of survival mode, and being successful in finding housing, because, once they find that housing, that's what they're going to have to do on their own.

What HomesNOW mostly provides is a stable place to get things back together again, so you can move on with your life. We try as hard as possible to keep it simple, make sure people are freed up to do what they need to do and can maintain their independence. This means they spend time working to improve their own outcomes, without unneeded interference, or too many hoops to jump through internally.

I also want to make clear for those who don't know that the Unity Village and HomesNOW model is not a low-barrier shelter. We aren't high barrier, either. We can help those who still

have some serious issues, but people who are at least stable on a daily basis. We also don't have a segregated program (like only men, only women, only veterans or only families), although everybody who lives at the village has to be an adult. Children are allowed to visit as guests (such as family members), though.

The villagers take part in forming their own rules for the village, within the framework of what we're required to do under the law and agreements that have been made in our permit. This means each person who lives there has a say and a stake on being able to change policies and rules where it makes sense.

Screening Process

We also have a screening process for when we let new people in. A person who wants to live at the village has to apply on our website — if they don't have a computer or a phone, we will fill out their application with them. If an application looks promising, we do an interview over the phone. After the interview, we receive a picture of the applicant's driver's license or ID, and we send to Bellingham Police Chief David Doll to check for active warrants. We also do our own background checks as well.

Once that process is complete, the applicant is invited to a community meal and "meet and greet" with all of the residents. The residents, as well as the staff, each have one vote, and we all decide whether the person will be a good fit or not. Typically, we vote yes because we think people deserve a chance. This process has been smoother than what we had done in the past (during which the board would decide exclusively whether to let somebody in or not to live there).

Our goal is to build housing and get people housed as quickly as possible and end homelessness.

Continued on next page

A logo for "GOOD-TO-GO Meat Pies" featuring a pie and the text "Washington's Original Pastry Company".

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“When power leads man toward arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the area of man’s concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses.” — John F. Kennedy



illustrator: Hilary Cole



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- Mahatma Gandhi

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Boris Schleinkofer, poetrywatch editor

Subject matter is unlimited, but poetry featuring or specific to Whatcom County and issues addressed by *Whatcom Watch* (government, the environment and media) will likely get first preference.
Please keep it to around 25 lines; otherwise, we might have to edit your work to fit. Don’t make yourself unprintable.
Send poems and your short, two- or three-sentence bios as a word document attachment to poetry@whatcomwatch.org.
The deadline is the first day of the month.
Please understand that acceptance and final appearance of pieces are subject to space constraints and editorial requirements. By submitting, authors give *Whatcom Watch* permission for one-time publication rights in the paper and electronic editions.

Dear Firefighters,

by Betty Scott

When you trample through brush and weeds,
Ash and smoke, fire-quenching water gushing
From stretched-out arms of the fire hose;
When you hold the line, watch over the trunks
And arms of Evergreens, do you see their roots
As outstretched too, aligned and responding,
As you do, to calls of alarm? In the cacophony,
As fires blaze and winds flame the crack and thud

Of falling trees, the wild frenzy, the whip and whoosh,
Do you hear the last-breath gasps from micro-forest
Dwellers too? When you count casualties, the never
Casual-ties-to-the-dead, please count too your sleepless
Nights, your sacrifice, your willingness to tattoo our history
To the growth marks of trees, flags of our humanity.

Betty Scott is a poet, essayist, and short story writer who cherishes the forest, fauna and fungi of Whatcom County. Her book “Central Heating: Poems that Celebrate Love, Loss and Planet Earth” published by Cave Moon Press is available at Village Books.

ROCK

by Guna Moran

A rock can only be made smaller
By beating and hitting
Can never be made larger

The rocks are generally homeless
They lay everywhere

Run over by vehicles
Rock do not get flattened
Passers by stamp on it repeatedly
Not even the epidermis is damaged

Struck by hammer
Rocks turn smaller and tinier
Even after that we term it hard and ruthless

Rock for benevolence
Rocks are immortal-never ageing
Because it can turn itself smaller immediately
(benevolent never die)

Time-winning aesthetic is impossible sans sculpture
In every era the rock sculpture stands best
Still we find it hard to accept
The eternal rock is the ever spreading glory of the mankind

Original in Assamese
Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury


Guna Moran is an assamese poet and critic. His poems are published in various international magazines, journals, webzines and anthologies. He lives in Assam, India. gunagelakey85@gmail.com

Providing a Safe Haven for the Homeless


Continued from previous page
Homelessness will only continue to get worse if current policies regarding homeless camp sweeps/cleanups aren’t changed to provide options to those in need. There must be a way to prevent camps from forming in the first place. Put very simply, if most of these campers had housing, they would not be camping. Remember, when a camp is cleared, it doesn’t go away. Because the person has not been housed, they simply set up camp somewhere else. Then, eventually, they are moved along, once again, and the cycle repeats.
HomesNOW has been pushing for increased shelter capacity for years. As an organization, we have been eager to set up additional villages. A few weeks ago,

we submitted a proposal to the city of Bellingham to set up a second tiny home village at the former Safe Haven location at 620 Alabama Street in the Sunnyland neighborhood. The city denied our proposal and instead asked for an RFQ (request for qualifications). We are being asked to compete with other sheltering

agencies in order to prove we are qualified to manage city sites—sites like Unity Village, which we have been managing under the city’s watchful eye for the past two years. This requirement will only slow a cumbersome process even further.
Had this RFQ been in place two years ago, HomesNOW

would not exist and there would be no Unity Village, because one of the qualifications is two years experience with sheltering. The city is effectively eliminating new organizations, such as the collective/cooperative at city hall or a new nonprofit, from providing homeless shelters. These barriers and bureaucratic processes are counterproductive because they push the ability to help people further and further out of reach.
Ultimately, I hope the city and county will take swift action, get experimental, and embrace multiple sheltering agencies and community members in an effort to provide future shelters and villages for different segments of the homeless population. For the sake of the entire community, I hope it happens soon. 

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Whatcom County Board and Commission Vacancies

Continued from page 4

Ethics Commission

One Vacancy. The board receives complaints of ethics violations and otherwise administers the code of ethics as provided in the Whatcom County Code. Meets as needed and at least once annually; five members serve four-year terms. Executive-appointed.

Food System Committee

Five Vacancies - two current members are eligible to reapply. This committee is comprised of the following: local sales farming, export sales farming, fishing, food processing/distribution, food access, nutrition/public health, labor issues, natural resources, and the Whatcom Food Network. The committee is working to create a county-wide food system plan to strengthen our local and regional food system. The committee meets once a month. Executive-appointed.

Housing Advisory Committee

Three vacancies, three-year term. Positions are human services provider, social services provider, and urban housing. This advisory group is responsible for reviewing and evaluating proposed uses of SHB 2060 funds and charged with making recommendations to the County Council. The funding directly assists people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Meets every other month; three-year terms. Executive-appointed.

Marine Resources Committee

Three vacancies - two current members eligible to reapply. Guided by sound science and the needs of the Northwest Strait marine ecosystem, the committee will address local marine issues and recommend remedial action to local authorities. It will build awareness of issues, and gather support for remedies. Members meet monthly on the first Thursday and serve four-year terms. Executive-appointed.

Continued on page 8

Hornets Could Decimate Raspberry Pollinators

Continued from page 1

cent each year. If the Asian giant hornets continue to gain ground in North America, these numbers would likely increase, making it difficult for commercial beekeepers to stay in business.

“If the commercial beekeepers are having a problem staying in business, who’s going to pollinate all the raspberry fields in Lynden? In the agriculture that we have in Washington state? They all bring hives in by the truckload — are you going to bring your hives to an area that has an active Asian giant hornet count?” Danielsen said.

Raspberry Crops Need Honeybees

Whatcom County produces 85 percent of the nation’s red raspberries, and is one of the largest berry growing counties in the country. According to the Whatcom Conservation District, there is already a shortage of honeybees in Whatcom County, meaning farmers often need to bring in truckloads of hives to help with pollination each year. If the Asian giant hornet population continues to expand, it could significantly impact agricultural operations not just in Whatcom County, but the entire state.

Since the hornets first appeared in late 2019, the WSDA has been working with local beekeepers and citizen scientists to place thousands of traps and locate nests.

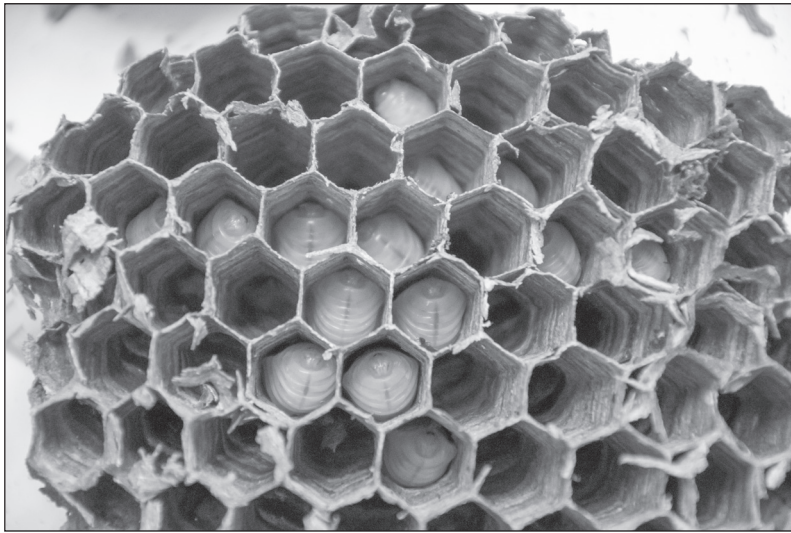
The first Asian giant hornet nest was eradicated in late October 2020. To locate the nest, entomologists from the WSDA trapped a live worker hornet and tied a radio tracking device to it. Once released back into the wild, the hornet led the team directly to its nest, in a wooded area on private property in Blaine, Washington.

After locating the nest, a team of entomologists donned astronaut-like protective suits and wrapped the tree in cellophane. The team then sucked the hornets out of the tree with a vacuum and pumped the nest full of carbon dioxide to kill any hornets that remained.

The nest itself was relatively small. Asian giant hornet nests in Asia have been found to contain upwards of 4,000 cells, and are capable of producing 700-800 queens. An analysis by entomologists at Washington State University found that the nest captured in Blaine only had 776 cells and about 200 queens total.

But, despite its smaller size, the discovery and destruction of the nest was still significant. In a November press conference, Sven-Erik Spichiger, managing entomologist at the WSDA, said that had the nest not been discovered, each of those 200 queens could have gone off and started nests of their own. “It really seems like we got there in the nick of time,” he said.

Spichiger said that a small number of queens likely escaped before the nest was eradicated, and, if they’ve mated with male hornets, they may go on to start



courtesy photo: Washington State Department of Agriculture

The above nest was captured in Blaine — it had 776 cells and about 200 queens total.

nests of their own. Other hornet specimens discovered near Blaine, Birch Bay and Custer also led the researchers to believe there are other, undiscovered hornet nests still out there.

Is Genie Out of the Bottle?

Spichiger is cautiously optimistic the hornet threat can still be contained. “If I had told you we have 17 different hits in 17 different counties, I’d tell you the genie is out of the bottle, but right now, it’s just us and British Columbia and it’s a fairly contained event at the moment, so it’s absolutely possible,” he said.

Because this is the hornets’ first time in North America, there are still a lot of unknowns. Winters in the Pacific Northwest are milder than the winters in Japan and South Korea where the hornets are typically found. Scientists are working to conduct more research, but a lot of the hornet’s behavior is still a mystery. Scientists know the hornets are entering their overwintering phase, but it’s unclear how many will survive, or when they’ll re-emerge.

“Every time we learn something new, we find out how much more we don’t know,” said Danielsen.

The WSDA is planning to spend the winter improving its trapping techniques and developing its public involvement program. The WSDA also plans to continue coordinating with authorities in British Columbia, where several Asian giant hornets have also been sighted. People are unlikely to find live hornets flying around during the winter months, but the WSDA is still encouraging citizens to be on the lookout and report any sightings, alive or dead, on the WSDA website.

The Asian giant hornets have captured the public’s attention, but they aren’t the only threat to honeybees. For decades, bee populations across the country have been steadily declining at an alarming rate. U.S. National Agricultural Statistics Service shows a 60 percent reduction in honeybee hives over the past 50 years. The causes are numerous, and experts believe climate change, habitat loss, pesticides, disease and other human factors all play a role.

Bee City USA

One way to combat this decline is by promoting habitats for pollinators. The city of Bellingham is attempting to do this by pursuing designation as an official “Bee

City” through the Bee City USA program.

The Bee City initiative was introduced by Mayor Seth Fleetwood, who said he has a special connection to bees and other pollinators. As a child, Fleetwood was a self-described lepidopterist, and he still has his butterfly collection from the early 70s. At the start of Fleetwood’s term, he was contacted by an old friend whom he hadn’t seen in almost 40 years. The friend told Fleetwood about Bee City USA, a program that encourages cities across the country to adopt policies that encourage sustainable habitats for bees and other pollinators.

“It was just right up my alley, I was really excited to want to promote this sort of thing,” said Fleetwood during a September Bellingham City Council meeting, during which he strongly encouraged council members to support the initiative.

“The object of it is to create basically a greening of the city and create pollinators and promote private creation of pollinator gardens throughout the city,” said Fleetwood.

The measure was passed unanimously. According to Clare Fogelsong, Environmental Policy Manager and lead on Bee City efforts, the city is on track to become officially certified within the next few months.

Fogelsong said Bellingham already meets many of the requirements outlined by Bee City USA, but that additional steps are being taken to make the city more habitable for pollinators. The work will include planting more pollinator-friendly plants and implementing policy to improve the city’s pest management methods. The program will also result in the creation of a Bee Committee, made up of city staff and volunteers. The Bee Committee will be tasked with hosting educational events, raising awareness and exploring new strategies to improve bee habitats in Bellingham.

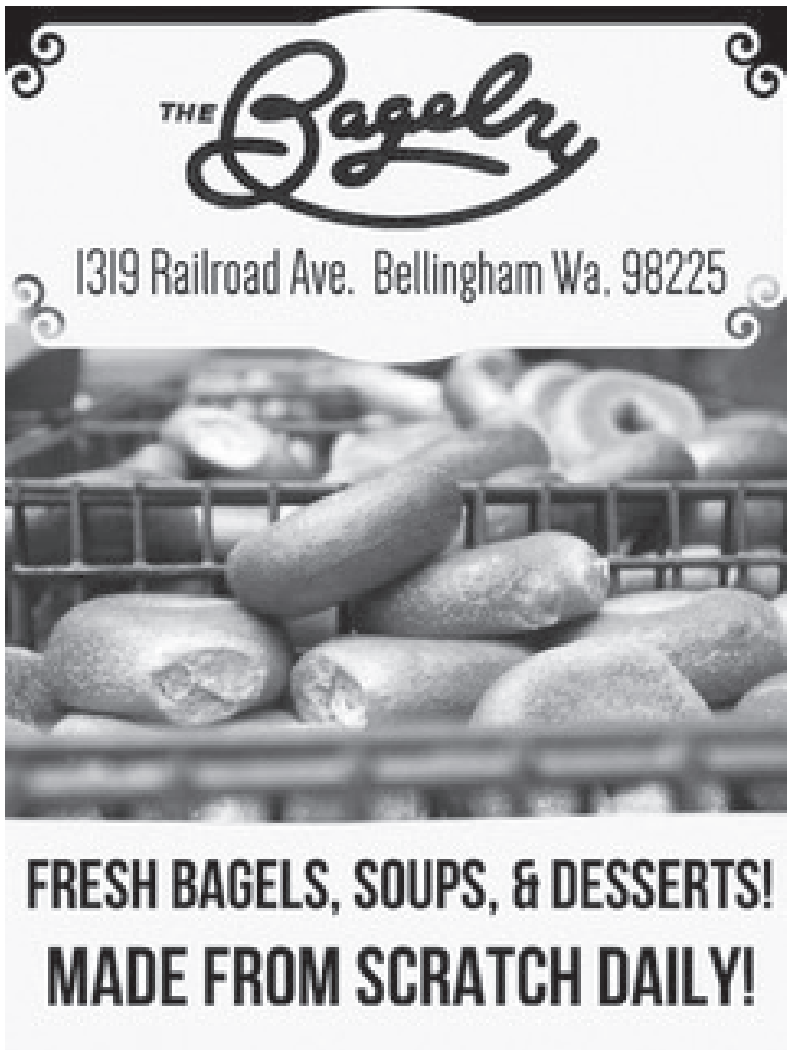
Along with working on habitat restoration projects, Fogelsong said his office has also been closely monitoring the Asian giant hornet threat. When the hornets were first discovered in Whatcom County, city staff met with the WSDA and distributed hornet traps to public parks in Bellingham. “We were very concerned about it, and I’m pleased that we haven’t trapped any so far in Bellingham,” Fogelsong said.

Controversial Nickname

The “murder hornet” nickname that some have used to describe the hornets is somewhat controversial. Some scientists, including Spichiger, think the name is too alarmist. The hornets do kill a small number of people in Asia each year, but so do a number of other stinging insects.

“These are not gonna hunt you

Continued on next page



Twenty Years Ago

Since January 2014, *Whatcom Watch* has been rerunning articles from issues printed 20 years ago. The below article appeared in the January 2001 issue of *Whatcom Watch*.

WWU Emerges as a National Leader in Innovative Car Design

Editor's Note: For a history on Viking series cars ,go to: <https://vri.wvu.edu/viking-series-cars-history>.

by Lori Spicher

The Vehicle Research Institute at Western Washington University has been dedicated to building a better car for over 20 years. It is generally considered one of the top schools for vehicle design in the country.

Director Dr. Michael Seal officially founded the Vehicle Research Institute in 1974. Since then he, his faculty, and students, have designed and built many cars that exceed the standards of their contemporary consumer counterparts.

Whether the goal is improved handling, fuel efficiency, crash safety or type of propulsion, the Viking cars consistently outperform any car available in the general consumer market.

Auto Industry Avoids Fuel-Efficient Cars

When a bunch of students on a shoestring budget can build from scratch a car that exceeds 100 miles to the gallon, why can't consumers buy a car that gets 50, 60 or even 70 miles per gallon? With all the industry's resources, why do auto makers fail where the Vehicle Research Institute succeeds? In Dr. Seal's opinion, the industry erroneously feels there is no market for fuel-efficient, low emissions cars.

Hiding behind so-called consumer desires is not a new position for the auto industry. When charged with the unnecessary degree of danger in their cars, Detroit responded by saying that consumers didn't want to buy a safer car. They did not relent until federal regulations forced safety issues upon them. Now, many auto makers use safety as a marketing

When this article was written Lori Spicher was a freelance writer living in Whatcom County.

tool.

Foreign Auto Makers Market New Hybrid

Fortunately, U.S. auto makers are no longer the last word in the industry. Honda and Toyota are trumping this emerging market with gas-electric hybrid production cars.

It is now possible to buy a fuel-efficient, low emissions, hybrid car. The battery sustaining generator is not the cleanest way to make an electric car. But until either battery technology improves dramatically or consumer requirements change, it may be the only marketable alternative to the internal combustion engine.

Most currently available batteries have a range of only about 50 miles before they need to be recharged. While this is more than enough for the average daily commute, it lacks the flexibility many consumers want.

High Efficiency, Low Emission Cars

The Vehicle Research Institute's most exciting and noteworthy accomplishments are in the areas of emissions, fuel economy, and alternative energy sources.

In 1975, Viking 2 achieved fuel efficiency of 58 miles per gallon on propane fuel. Safety considerations were addressed in 1978 with the Viking 6, which demonstrated that a fuel-efficient car could comply with federal crash safety standards. This car achieves 118 miles per gallon at 50 miles per hour.

With the Viking 7, the Vehicle Research Institute showed that high-performance cars could be made more efficient. Its highway rating is only 50 miles per gallon, but this rating leaves production sports cars far behind.

Several award-winning hybrid Viking cars prove that emissions and fuel consumption can be dramatically reduced, while still meeting consumer demands.

Running on Sun Power

The Vehicle Research Institute's work on solar car technology has, so far, fallen short of producing a marketable solar car, but their solar cars have won several honors.

Viking 20 won the two-person vehicle class and placed fifth overall in the World Solar Challenge. Viking 21 won its class in the 1992 Pikes Peak Solar Electric Challenge and the 1993 Tour de Sol.

Can this technology replace the internal combustion engine? Dr. Seal does not think a marketable solar powered car can be produced in the near future. The amount of energy reaching the earth from the sun is not enough to propel a car that weighs more than a few hundred pounds. An ultra lightweight car would be a radical leap for the American consumer.

The Sunless Alternative

Building on solar cell technology has lead to some truly innovative developments at the Vehicle Research Institute. Viking 29 is the world's first thermophotovoltaic (TPV) car.

A compressed natural gas burner produces infrared energy, which is collected by solar cells. This generator charges a battery, which runs the electric motor. It is sometimes called the "Midnight Sun" generator, because the burner is analogous to a tiny sun.

Compressed natural gas is burned in a ceramic tube which glows red-hot up to 1700 degrees Kelvin. The photovoltaic cells which surround the tube receive infrared photons from the emitter and convert them to electric power.

The infrared power intensities at the cell are 1,000 times higher than the sunlight on the roof of a car. The infrared photons generated activate the photovoltaic cells to produce electricity. The generator is very clean and quiet.

Though Dr. Seal says this is not quite as clean as a battery-depleting engine that is charged from the

power grid, it is even cleaner than a combustion natural gas battery-charging generator.

The internal combustion engine relies on periodic explosions, which produce greater emissions. The TPV generator, which burns continuously, produces complete and clean combustion. Because the thermophotovoltaic car has the greater range of the battery sustaining systems, it is likely to be more marketable than an electric-only car.

This technology is very new, however, and needs much improvement. Dr. Seal would like to see the generator's durability and efficiency fine-tuned. Unfortunately, further government funding has been held up because of the recent presidential election controversy.

Finding Funding for Research and Development

The Vehicle Research Institute has always needed to seek outside funding. Sponsors have included both government and private sources.

For example, The National Highway and Traffic Safety Authority funded much of the Viking 6 project. General Motors sponsored the Viking 20 World Solar Challenge entry after the car placed second in GM's Sunrayce.

JX Crystals, a photovoltaic cell production company in Issaquah Washington, helped fund the TPV development along with the Departments of Energy and Defense. Defense? Dr. Seal is quick to point out that the Department of Defense funding is for development of a field generator that is silent, clean and has a relatively low thermal output.

"We do not make weapons; we have no interest in making weapons, and we will not make weapons in the future," says Dr. Seal. The Defense Department is their best hope for further funding to perfect the thermophotovoltaic technology. Until more funding becomes available, the project is on hold. **WV**

the **Y**

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Hornets Could Decimate Raspberry Pollinators

Continued from previous page

down and murder you," said Spicher. "If you walk into a nest, your life is probably in danger. I mean that's the sheer realty, but your life is in danger if you walk into the nest of other stinging insects as well."

But some people think the more lurid "murder hornet" nickname is actually helpful. At the start of 2020, the issue wasn't getting much attention outside of beekeeping circles. It wasn't until *The New York Times* published

an article with the word "murder hornet" in the headline that public interest skyrocketed. Danielsen doesn't use the name herself, but she is glad it got people talking. She said that, while trapping and research are helpful, public awareness is the most important factor in combating the threat.

In May, lawmakers in Washington D.C. introduced H.R. 6761, the "Murder Hornet Eradication Act," which would set aside \$4 million a year to help fund eradication efforts. After more than six

months, the bill is still in limbo.

So far, only Democrats have signed on to the bill, something Danielsen said is both surprising and disappointing. Without additional funding, she said it will be difficult to monitor the thousands of traps and conduct the necessary research.

The arrival of the Asian giant hornet has frequently drawn comparisons with the onslaught of Covid-19: a mysterious new threat that originated in Asia arrives in Washington state. It starts

to get attention in early 2020, but there are signs that it was here before then. No one knows how it first arrived here, but at this point it doesn't really matter. The issue is mysterious, and yet to be fully understood. It starts with a few isolated incidents, but quickly grows into a serious threat. And, if more research isn't done soon, it could spread across the country, spiral out of control and cause irreversible damage.

"Why is this a goddamn partisan issue?" Danielsen said. **WV**



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**Whatcom
County
Board and
Commission
Vacancies**

Continued from page 6

**Noxious Weed
Control Board**

Two vacancies. Must reside in noxious weed council District 1 or District 4 and have 10 signatures from registered voters in that district. The board promotes education concerning management of listed noxious weeds such as tansy ragwort, knapweed, purple loosestrife, knotweed and their impacts on natural resources. Members generally meet every other month. Please call the weed board coordinator at 360-778-6234 for more information.

**Open Space
Advisory Committee**

Four vacancies, four-year term. This committee serves in an advisory capacity to the county assessor in implementing assessment guidelines as established by the department of revenue for the assessment of open space, farms and agricultural lands, and timber lands. Council-appointed.

**Parks & Recreation
Commission**

Six vacancies – two current members eligible to reapply. This commission serves in an advisory capacity to the county executive and the Parks and Recreation Department on matters relating to parks, recreation, and senior services. Executive-appointed.

Planning Commission

Three Vacancies. Applicants must be a resident of council District 1, District 3 or District 4. The commission shall assist the Planning & Development Services Department in carrying out its duties, including assistance in the preparation and execution of the comprehensive plan and recommendations to the department for the adoption of official controls and/or amendments. The commission meets on the second and fourth Thursday of every month in the evenings. Council-appointed.

Continued on next page

**Lummi Fishes Whatcom Creek
for First Time in a Century**

by Kari Neumeyer

Lummi tribal fishermen harvested salmon from Whatcom Creek in August, for the first time in at least 100 years.

The Chinook salmon were released as juveniles in 2017 from the Bellingham Technical College's Fisheries and Aquaculture Science program's hatchery, which works in partnership with tribal and state fisheries managers. When the Chinook returned as adults this summer, they congregated below the waterfalls in the creek beside the hatchery.

Whatcom Creek travels from Lake Whatcom through the city of Bellingham to Bellingham Bay, where a pulp and paper mill operated on the waterfront from 1926 to 2007.

"When they decided we could catch these fish for ceremonial and subsistence, my name came

Kari Neumeyer is a regional information officer for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

up and they asked if I'd go fishing," said Lummi fisherman Troy Olsen. "I said I'd love to do that."

Olsen remembers being on the Lummi Fish Commission years ago and wondering why they didn't fish in Whatcom Creek.

"A lot of our ancestors gathered there at that creek when Whatcom County was in its early stages of industry," Olsen said. "I thought, the colonizers really impacted Whatcom Creek in a bad way. The toxic waste from the Georgia-Pacific mill really degraded the salmon habitat."

Lost and degraded habitat is the main cause of declining salmon runs. To supplement populations until habitat can be restored, the Lummi Nation and state co-managers operate hatchery enhancement programs on the North and South Forks of the Nooksack River, Lummi Bay and the Samish River, as well as the new program at the Whatcom Creek Hatchery.

In 2017, some of the Chinook spawned at the Lummi Nation

hatchery on Skookum Creek were not suitable for release in the South Fork Nooksack River. Those fish were brought to the college's hatchery on Whatcom Creek where they were released.

"There wasn't any intention of having these fish spawn in the wild," said Ben Starkhouse, Lummi harvest manager. "It was intended that these would be caught."

A group of about 20 tribal members gathered by the creek in August, holding a small ceremony to pray for the safety of all fishermen, before setting a net in the creek.

"You may see a thriving community in this place you call Bellingham," said Steven Solomon, chairman of the Lummi Natural Resources Commission. "For us, it's Whatcom. Home of the Noisy Water. It wasn't just noisy over that fall, that water coming down. This creek was full of fish."

"Our great-grandfathers said there used to be upwards of 300,000 fish in this creek," Solo-

mon said. "They would make a set right here to feed the whole village. One set. Only took what they could use. That's our way today. We only take what we could use and not drive it to extinction."

After the Lummi fishermen harvested about 100 fish, an emergency rule change by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife provided a recreational fishing harvest opportunity until Sept. 13.

"People forget Whatcom is a Lummi word," Olsen said. "We need to remind them we're still here. We have children; they have a future. They need to have a relationship with that place as much as anybody else."

First published in the Fall 2020 issue of: *Northwest Treaty Tribes: Protecting Natural Resource for Everyone*. A publication of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

<https://nwtreatytribes.org/publications/magazine/>

Salmon Now Free to Swim Upstream

by Kari Neumeyer

Two fish-blocking dams were torn down in the North Sound region over the summer, opening up pristine habitat for threatened salmon populations.

The Tulalip Tribes worked with the city of Snohomish to remove a dam on the Pilchuck River, while the Nooksack Tribe and Lummi Nation finally saw the demolition of the Middle Fork Nooksack River dam that should have come down years ago.

Both dams were built to provide water to nearby cities.

The original Pilchuck dam was built in 1912 southeast of Granite Falls. The 60-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall dam became obsolete after the city of Snohomish found it more affordable to get its water from the city of Everett. The city approached the Tulalip Tribes to partner in the dam removal, because of the tribes' experience with permitting, funding and construction of salmon enhancement projects.

Removing the Pilchuck dam opened up salmon access to more than 37 miles upstream, which is one-third of the length of the mainstem.

"Upstream of the dam, the river is in a much more wild state," said Brett Shattuck, Tulalip restoration ecologist. "There's a lot better stream-adjacent conditions with trees, so it's in a really good state."

Stream-adjacent trees are an essential feature of healthy ripar-

Kari Neumeyer is a regional information officer for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

ian habitat because they keep water temperatures cool and create pools where salmon can rest. Unfortunately, the Pilchuck dam prevented some fish from reaching that habitat.

The river is used by Chinook salmon and steelhead, both listed species under the federal Endangered Species Act, as well as coho, chum and pink salmon, cutthroat and bull trout.

"For over 100 years, the waters of the Pilchuck were restricted by this dam, allowing only some fish to pass," said Tulalip Tribes Chairwoman Teri Gobin. "The removal of the dam is a great step toward the ultimate goal of recovering salmon and sustaining tribal fishing culture for future generations."

Meanwhile on the Nooksack River, the Nooksack Tribe and Lummi Nation have long advocated for the removal of the Middle Fork dam.

"Work began many years ago with Nooksack tribal members Peter Joseph, George Swanaset Sr., Paul Costello and the Nooksack Cultural Committee, and is still ongoing," said George Swanaset Jr., Nooksack natural and cultural resources director.

The 24-foot-tall dam was built southeast of Deming in 1961 to supplement the city of Bellingham's water supply, which mainly comes from Lake Whatcom. The state law at the time required that fish passage be built, but dam construction was permitted without it, according to the conservation group American Rivers.

In 2002, the Nooksack Tribe and Lummi Nation, along with state co-managers, signed a memo-



photo: Brett Shattuck, Tulalip Tribes

An excavator removes the Pilchuck dam piece by piece.

randum of understanding with the city of Bellingham to restore fish passage in the Middle Fork. However, design efforts and feasibility studies stalled until 2017 when American Rivers became a formal partner, with funding provided by the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation. (The foundation also helped fund the Pilchuck dam removal.)

Thanks to those partners, along with Long Live the Kings, NOAA Fisheries and the city of Bellingham, the dam finally came down over the summer. A couple of dramatic explosions in July broke it into small enough pieces to be removed from the site.

"The habitat in the Nooksack basin will take decades to recover because there are many limiting factors that impact Endangered Species Act-listed early Chinook," said Merle Jefferson, director of Lummi Natural Resources. "The

habitat above the Middle Fork has potential and we hope that this project will provide more spawning habitat for the salmon, which are integral to our heritage and cultural identity."

A free-flowing river allows Chinook salmon, steelhead and bull trout to access 16 miles of cold, pristine spawning and rearing habitat in the upper Middle Fork Nooksack River. The city of Bellingham moved its water intake upstream and installed a screen to keep fish from being drawn into it.

First published in the Fall 2020 issue of: *Northwest Treaty Tribes: Protecting Natural Resource for Everyone*. A publication of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

<https://nwtreatytribes.org/publications/magazine/>

Salmon Habitat Restoration Completed in Nooksack River



photo: Lindsie Fratus-Thomas

Nooksack tribal staff rescue fish from an in-water construction area of the Farmhouse Reach. Fish exclusion minimizes construction impacts by isolating and temporarily diverting the channel before the fish are removed, identified, counted and safely released downstream.

by Kari Neumeyer

The last of 127 engineered logjams were placed in the Farmhouse Reach of the North Fork Nooksack River this summer, completing an extensive multiyear salmon habitat restoration project. The reach is between Maple Falls and Deming (closer to Maple Falls). The Nooksack Tribe installed large woody structures in the North and South forks of the Nooksack River nearly every year since 2008. This summer, the final 56 logjams were placed in the 3-mile-long reach of the North Fork located near Maple Falls, completing restoration that began in 2014.

Restoring river habitat is essential to recovering threatened salmon-

Kari Neumeyer is a regional information officer for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

on populations in the Nooksack watershed. Habitat in the North Fork Nooksack was degraded and

Large woody structures were installed in the North and South forks of the Nooksack River.

made unstable by years of in-stream wood removal, clearing of riparian forests and more frequent large floods. “The Farmhouse Reach is one of the most unstable and volatile reaches within the North Fork Nooksack with high channel turnover rates. It’s kind of like a

firehose,” said project manager Lindsie Fratus-Thomas, who has managed the project for the tribe through all five construction seasons. “This project is a process-based restoration project in which one of the goals is to stabilize the main channel and protect those nice side channels, which are the preferred habitat for salmon in this system.” Engineered logjams stabilize side channels for salmon to spawn and rear in, and form pools for them to rest in. Projects like these restore natural habitat processes. For example, logjams slow currents and create areas where gravel accumulates to form islands. “As trees colonize those islands and grow to maturity, the islands stabilize and grow, helping to form the side channels that are so productive for salmon,” said Treva Coe, Nooksack watershed restoration program manager.

Ambitious projects like these are only possible with the hard work and support of staff from many agencies and partners, including the expertise from several Nooksack Natural Resources tribal staff, engineering consultants, log supply and construction contractors, and funding and permitting agencies, Fratus-Thomas said. This year, for the first time, BNSF Railway partnered with the tribe to donate trees they had removed because they posed a hazard to railroad operations. The U.S. Forest Service provided a similar wood donation to the project in one of the previous phases in 2016.

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Continued from previous page

Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District
Eight vacancies – one current member eligible to reapply. Members must have a direct interest in the shellfish protection district. Duties are to advise the County Council on the proposed actions and operations relating to the restoration of water quality in the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District. Council-appointed.

Purchase of Development Rights Oversight Committee
One vacancy - farmer position. This committee provides oversight and evaluation of the Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights program for Whatcom County. The program enhances the protection of the county’s farmland, enhances the long-term viability of agricultural enterprises within the county and provides public benefit by retaining properties in permanent resource use. Meets on a quarterly basis, as needed; four-year term. Executive-appointed.

Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Four vacancies, three-year term. One vacancy representing agriculture, one representing public interest group, one representing waste recycling industry and one representing waste collection industry. The committee provides ongoing public input and advice to Whatcom County on solid waste management issues. Generally meets quarterly on Thursday evenings, but meeting schedule and frequency subject to change upon committee approval. Council-appointed.



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City of
Bellingham
Board and
Commission
Vacancies

Candidates must presently live within Bellingham city limits and have done so for at least one year, unless otherwise specified. Applications are available at the city's website: <http://www.cob.org/gov/public/bc/Pages/Boards-and-Commissions-Application-Process.aspx>.

Broadband
Advisory
Workgroup

Up to nine positions are available on the newly created Broadband Advisory Workgroup. The workgroup will be comprised of community members, broadband and fiber optic industry professionals, and individuals with business and financial backgrounds. While preference will be given to city residents, people residing outside the city are eligible to apply and may be considered as well. People interested in applying should submit a letter of interest and the boards' and commissions' application.

Design
Review Board

Two vacancies. The purpose of the board is to encourage quality building design and site planning that enhances the character of the city. It reviews new development and exterior alterations that are valued at over \$50,000 and do not involve buildings on a historic registry. Meets the third Tuesday of the month at 3:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall. City residency is not required.

Greenway
Advisory
Board

Two vacancies. The committee identifies, develops, reviews, and recommends selection criteria, general project priorities and specific actions relating to the expenditure and allocation of levy funds. Meets the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the mayor's board room, City Hall.

Continued on page 16

Being Frank

Time for Fish-Killing Dam to Go



by Lorraine Loomis

It's time to get rid of the Electron Hydroelectric Dam on the Puyallup River that has been killing salmon, steelhead, bull trout and other fish for more than a century. The dam is so old that it escapes most regulatory oversight and would never be allowed to be

Lorraine Loomis is chair of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, www.nwifc.org. This column represents the natural resources management interests and concerns of the treaty Indian tribes in western Washington.

built today.

A last straw came in July when the dam's owners, Electron Hydro, placed nearly 2,500 yards of old, degraded and unapproved artificial turf in the river to cushion the liner of a new diversion channel. The channel was part of a renovation project to remove the current dam and replace it with an inflatable rubber barrier.

High flows ripped open the liner and scattered the artificial turf downriver. Adding to the damage was crumb rubber in the material that came loose, dumping cubic yards of toxic plastic pellets into the river that have traveled far downstream, threatening human health, fish and wildlife. The spill could be especially damaging to threatened spring Chinook and harm the tribe's treaty protected fishing rights.

Making matters worse, dam operators killed hundreds of salmon, bull trout and other fish on July 29, when they dewatered the dam's forebay to remove accumulated silt. The Puyallup Tribe had advised Electron Hydro that

sediment needed to be removed more often. When that didn't happen, the tribe recommended additional steps to protect the fish, but was ignored.

These events were the most recent and clear-cut damages to salmon and other species caused by the dam that was built in 1904. It has a long history of poor fish passage, which puts threatened spring Chinook, bull trout and steelhead at risk.

The Puyallup Tribe objected in 2014 when Puget Sound Energy sold the dam to Electron Hydro, which has consistently demonstrated a poor record of complying with terms of the sale.

The Electron Dam isn't much to look at. It's only about 12 feet tall and it has no reservoir behind it like the huge dams on the Columbia River. The river is fed by rain, melting snow, glaciers and tributary creeks flowing from Mount Rainer.

The dam's headworks are 10 miles upriver from the Electron power plant. Water is diverted into a flume to the forebay of the

dam where it settles and drains into penstocks. The water then drops about 900 feet to the power plant's turbines.

Fish that make it to the forebay are supposed to be collected in a trap and hauled around the dam, but many are killed when they get sucked into the powerhouse. All to provide electricity to only about 20,000 homes.

Stop work orders have been issued requiring Electron Hydro to clean up the debris and stabilize the site for winter. In late November, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency filed a civil suit against the company for violating the federal Clean Water Act. Several other lawsuits are pending.

Given Electron Hydro's track record and no oversight by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that oversees most dam operations, it's difficult to have much confidence that a new dam would be a significant improvement or that its operation would not continue to harm the fish, wildlife and people who depend on the river. **WY**

Drinking Water Harmed by Invasive Species and Pollution

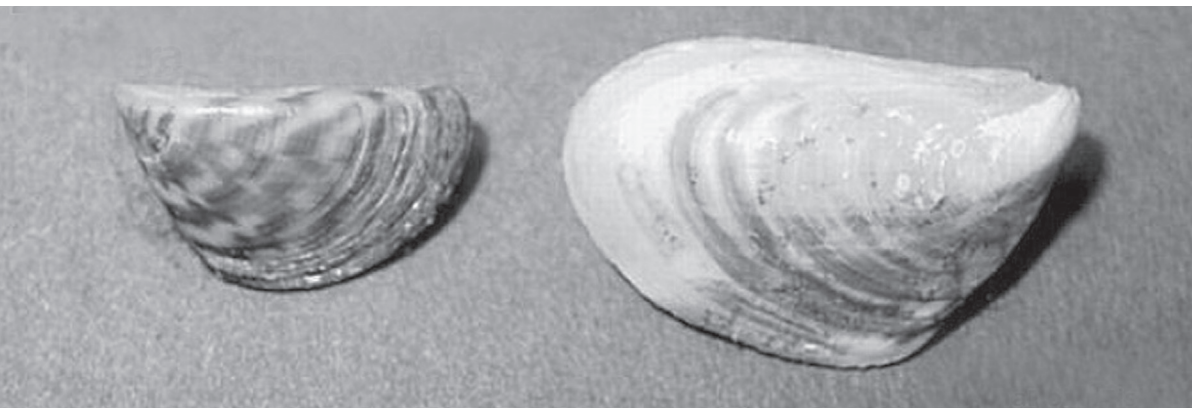
Continued from page 1

Although these boaters meant no harm, they can still unintentionally contaminate the lake. This is the very reason we have an AIS inspection program. It would be quite easy to prevent this. That's why RE Sources is calling on the city of Bellingham to install a gate at the Bloedel Donovan Park boat launch for when boat inspections can't happen on-site. It's vital that we close loopholes and improve boat inspection processes to prevent a costly, burdensome blight on our drinking water.

Pollution and Lake Whatcom

Invasive species aside, more work must be done to address the other threats Lake Whatcom faces to improve water quality. Pollution in the lake, especially from excess phosphorus, is not improving fast enough. Phosphorus pollution enters the lake from lawns, bare slopes from logging or clearing activities, and failing septic and sewage systems. Excessive phosphorus can cause algal blooms, which can kill fish in the lake when decaying algae sucks up oxygen in the water that fish need to breathe. It can add a foul taste to our tap water, which you might notice in the summer, and make water treatment more expensive over time.

We have a state mandate to reduce phosphorus entering the lake by 3,150 pounds by the year 2066,



courtesy: Dana Point Fish Company

Zebra mussel on the left and quagga mussel on the right.

Total Watercraft Inspections on Lake Whatcom

2013	—	2,909
2014	—	6,542
2015	—	6,891
2016	—	7,217
2017	—	9,193
2018	—	9,284
2019	—	9,548

or 63 pounds per year on average. Yet, according to the recent Lake Whatcom Management Work Plan for 2020-2024, we've only reduced an average of 33 pounds per year.

How do we recover the lake at the pace our drinking water needs? Start by allocating more funding to purchase land faster through the Lake Whatcom Land Acquisition program, limiting the amount of

pavement for new lots and removal of trees, and improving forest practice activities, on top of the city and county's existing programs. These existing programs have kept the lake's health from severely declining; however, additional policy changes are needed to turn up the dial on water quality protection and recovery.

You can join us in calling on our decision makers at the city, county, and state level to take action on Lake Whatcom by signing on to our online petition at re-sources.org/lakewhatcom.

We are asking decision makers to:

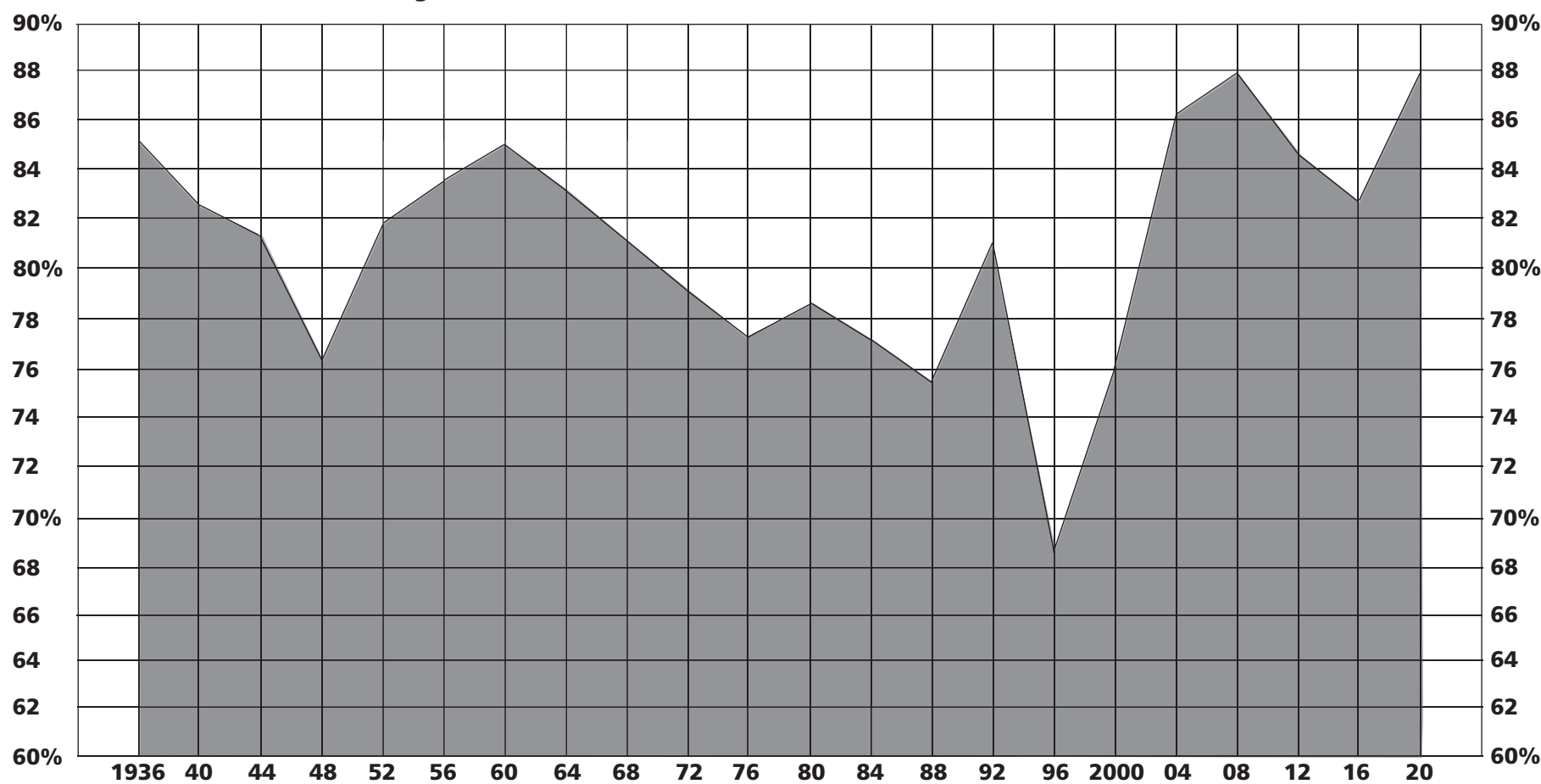
1. Reduce the risk of introducing destructive invasive species by closing public boat launch sites with a gate when the inspection program is not operating,
2. (Whatcom County only) contribute funds to the city of Bellingham's Land Acquisition

- program,
3. Strengthen Whatcom County's Lake Whatcom Watershed Overlay to reduce phosphorus pollution by requiring pervious pavement, limits on lawns for new development and some redevelopment, and no new septic systems,
4. Improve tree protection rules in the county and city land use codes, and
5. Reduce urban sprawl in the Lake Whatcom watershed.

While the coronavirus pandemic has resulted in many hardships and uncomfortable change, we are glad to see people spending more time outside closer to nature. It is our hope that people turning to Lake Whatcom for solace or recreation act as stewards of our drinking water and reach out to our policy makers to increase protections for us all. **WY**

General Election Results—2020

Whatcom County Voter Turnout: Presidential Elections 1936 – 2020



Voter Turnout: 1936 – 2020

	Registered	Voted	Turnout
1936	30,857	26,293	85.2%
1940	33,753	27,837	82.5%
1944	34,770	28,340	81.5%
1948	37,783	28,853	76.4%
1952	38,409	31,448	81.9%
1956	39,169	32,712	83.5%
1960	38,339	32,601	85.0%
1964	38,290	31,903	83.3%
1968	38,918	31,662	81.4%
1972	50,117	39,693	79.1%
1976	54,335	42,038	77.4%
1980	59,639	46,995	78.7%
1984	66,965	51,736	77.3%
1988	67,817	51,354	75.7%
1992	79,501	64,463	81.1%
1996	95,665	65,518	68.5%
2000	98,352	74,671	75.9%
2004	106,094	91,497	86.2%
2008	115,314	101,399	87.9%
2012	125,485	104,727	84.5%
2016	138,962	114,092	82.7%
2020	158,780	139,628	87.9%
Mean			81.1%

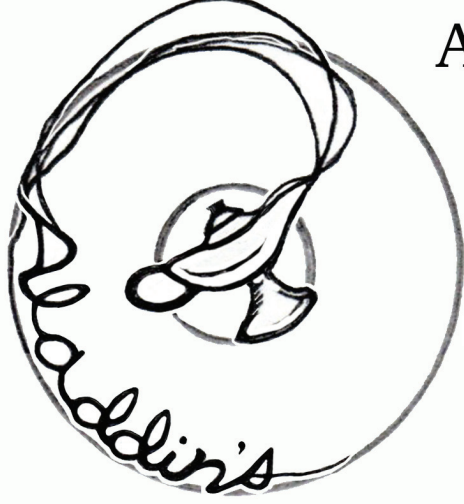
Voting Drop-Off Rate

The first column is the total number voting in the general election. The second column is the number voting on the executive, legislative or judicial position. The third column is the second column subtracted from the first column and reflected as a percent.

Whatcom County	Total Voting	Voted On	Not Voting
President/Vice President	139,628	138,620	0.71%
Governor	139,628	137,935	1.21%
1st Congressional District	72,183	70,281	2.63%
2nd Congressional District	67,445	65,511	2.87%
Secretary of State	139,628	135,491	3.00%
Referendum 90 (Require Sex Education)	139,628	135,222	3.16%
42nd District, Position #1	95,621	92,442	3.32%
42nd District, Position #2	95,621	92,296	3.48%
State Attorney General	139,628	134,582	3.61%
State Treasurer	139,628	134,014	4.02%
Commissioner of Public Lands	139,628	133,802	4.17%
State Auditor	139,628	133,664	4.27%
40th District, Senate	44,007	42,004	4.55%
40th District, Position #2	44,007	41,682	5.28%
Proposition 2020-14 (Transportation Levy)	55,260	51,729	6.40%
Advisory Vote 32 (Plastic Bag Tax)	139,628	130,624	6.45%
SJR 8212 (Allow Investment of Public Funds)	139,628	129,683	7.12%
Advisory Vote 33 (Equipment Rental Tax)	139,628	129,476	7.27%
Advisory Vote 35 (Aerospace Tax Increase)	139,628	128,904	7.68%
Insurance Commissioner	139,628	128,801	7.75%
Advisory Vote 34 (Business Tax Increase)	139,628	127,881	8.41%
Lieutenant Governor	139,628	127,443	8.73%
State Supreme Court, Position #3	139,628	125,687	9.98%
Supt. of Public Instruction	139,628	123,921	11.25%
County Superior Court Judge, Position 2	139,628	123,486	11.56%
County Superior Court Judge, Position 4	139,628	122,661	12.15%
PUD Commissioner, District 1	139,628	117,958	15.52%
State Supreme Court, Position #6	139,628	113,436	18.76%
40th District, Position #1*	44,007	34,898	20.70%
State Supreme Court, Position #4*	139,628	98,087	29.75%
State Supreme Court, Position #7*	139,628	97,649	30.06%
*Unopposed			

City of Bellingham		
Proposition 2020-14 (Transportation Levy)	55,260	51,729 6.39%

Proposition 2020-14 (Bellingham Transportation Sales Tax Levy)			
A continuation of the tax first passed at the 2010 general election.			
Yes	42,606	82.36%	✓
No	9,123	17.64%	



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Antiques and Records

Information compiled by Bill McCallum

A special thanks to the auditor’s office and Jessie Smiley for providing a lot of the basic information on these pages.

Presidential Primary Election

Party Preference

- (C) Constitution
- (D) Democratic
- (G) Green
- (L) Libertarian
- (NP) Nonpartisan
- (R) Republican
- (SL) Socialism and Liberation
- (SW) Socialist Workers

2Incumbent

3The 1st Congressional District represents all of Whatcom County except for Bellingham, eastern Skagit and Snohom-ish counties and the northern portion of King County.

4The 2nd Congressional District represents San Juan and Island counties, Bellingham in Whatcom County, the western portions of Skagit and Snohomish counties.

5The 40th District represents San Juan county, northwestern Skagit and southwest-ern Whatcom coun-ties and the northern tip of Island County.

Washington State Whatcom County

President/Vice President

J. Biden/K. Harris	2,369,612 ... 57.97% ✓	83,660	60.35%
D. Trump/M. Pence (R)	1,584,651 ... 38.77%	50,489	36.42%
J. Jorgensen/J. Cohen (L)	80,500	2,490	1.80%
H. Hawkins/A. Walker (G)	18,289	726	0.52%
G. La Riva/S. Freeman (SL)	4,840	206	0.15%
A. Kennedy/O. Hart (SW)	2,487	89	0.06%
Write-In	27,252	960	0.69%
Total.....	4,087,631	138,620	

1st Congressional District3

Suzan DelBene2 (D)	249,944 ... 58.55% ✓	32,108	45.69%
Jeffrey Beeler, Sr. (R)	176,407 ... 41.33%	38,108	54.22%
Write-In	511	65	0.09%
Total.....	426,862	70,281	

2nd Congressional District4

Rick Larsen2 (D)	255,252 ... 63.09% ✓	51,025	77.89%
Timothy S. Hazelo (R)	148,384 ... 36.67%	14,291	21.81%
Write-In	962	195	0.30%
Total.....	404,598	65,511	

Referendum 90 (Require Age-Appropriate Sex Education)

Yes.....	2,283,630 ... 57.82% ✓	81,015	59.91%
No.....	1,665,906 ... 42.18%	54,207	40.09%
Total.....	3,949,536	135,222	

Advisory Vote 32 (Impose a Sales Tax on Plastic Bags)

Repeal	2,350,996 ... 61.23% ✓	71,589	54.81%
Maintain	1,488,767 ... 38.77%	59,035	45.19%
Total.....	3,839,763	130,624	

Advisory Vote 33 (Impose an Equipment Rental Sales Tax)

Repeal	2,262,993 ... 59.60% ✓	71,491	55.22%
Maintain	1,533,746 ... 40.40%	57,985	44.78%
Total.....	3,796,739	129,476	

Advisory Vote 34 (Impose a B/O Tax on Certain Businesses)

Repeal	2,334,609 ... 62.01% ✓	73,273	57.3%
Maintain	1,430,112 ... 37.99%	54,608	42.7%
Total.....	3,764,721	127,881	

Advisory Vote 35 (Impose an Aerospace B/O Tax Increase)

Repeal	2,064,701 ... 54.47% ✓	65,257	50.62%
Maintain	1,725,885 ... 45.53%	63,647	49.38%
Total.....	3,790,586	128,904	

SJR 8212 (Allow Investment of Public Funds)

Approved.....	1,738,080 ... 45.64%	75,543	58.25%
Rejected	2,069,809 ... 54.36% ✓	54,140	41.75%
Total.....	3,807,889	129,683	

Washington State Governor

Jay Inslee2 (D)	2,294,243 ... 56.56% ✓	81,992	59.44%
Loren Culp (R)	1,749,066 ... 43.12%	55,544	40.27%
Write-In	13,145	399	0.29%
Total.....	4,056,454	137,935	

Lieutenant Governor

Denny Heck (D)	1,658,405 ... 45.61% ✓	51,328	40.28%
Marko Lias (D)	1,218,548 ... 33.51%	42,318	33.21%
Write-In	759,076 ... 20.88%	33,797	26.52%
Total.....	3,636,029	127,443	

Secretary of State

Kim Wyman2 (R)	2,116,141 ... 53.61% ✓	65,592	48.41%
Gael Tarleton (D)	1,826,710 ... 46.27%	69,728	51.46%
Write-In	4,666	171	0.13%
Total.....	3,947,517	135,491	

State Treasurer

Mike Pellicciotti (D)	2,089,159 ... 53.41% ✓	77,149	57.57%
Duane Davidson2 (R)	1,818,895 ... 46.50%	56,794	42.38%
Write-In	3,339	71	0.05%
Total.....	3,911,393	134,014	

State Auditor

Pat McCarthy2 (D)	2,260,830 ... 58.00% ✓	80,874	60.51%
Chris Leyba (R)	1,633,956 ... 41.92%	52,729	39.45%
Write-In	3,316	61	0.05%
Total.....	3,898,102	133,664	

State Attorney General

Bob Ferguson (D)2	2,226,418 ... 56.43% ✓	79,975	59.42%
Matt Larkin (R)	1,714,927 ... 43.47%	54,518	40.51%
Write-In	3,968	89	0.07%
Total.....	3,945,313	134,582	

Washington State Whatcom County

Commissioner of Public Lands

Hilary Franz (D)2	2,212,158 ... 56.69% ✓	78,948.....	59.00%
Sue Kuehl Pederson (R)	1,686,320 ... 43.21%	54,775.....	40.94%
Write-In	3,799	79.....	0.06%
Total	3,902,277	133,802	

Superintendent of Public Instruction (Nonpartisan race)

Chris Reykdal2	1,955,365 ... 54.57% ✓	66,322.....	53.52%
Maia Espinoza	1,609,643 ... 44.92%	57,249.....	46.20%
Write-In	17,957	350.....	0.28%
Total	3,582,965	123,921	

Insurance Commissioner

Mike Kreidler2 (D).....	2,506,693 ... 65.39% ✓	88,999.....	69.10%
Chirayu Avinash Patel (R)	1,308,292 ... 34.13%	39,188.....	30.43%
Write-In	18,576	614.....	0.48%
Total	3,833,561	128,801	

State Supreme Court, Postion 3 (Nonpartisan race)

Raquel Montoya-Lewis2	2,057,623.....	58.22% ✓	74,542.....	59.31%
Dave Larson.....	1,462,764.....	41.39%	50,940.....	40.53%
Write-In	13,661.....	0.39%	205.....	0.16%
Total	3,534,048.....	125,687		

State Supreme Court, Postion 4 (Nonpartisan race)

Charles W. Johnson2	2,850,924.....	97.72% ✓	95,845.....	97.71%
Write-In	66,407.....	2.28%	2,242.....	2.29%
Total	2,917,331	98,087		

State Supreme Court, Postion 6 (Nonpartisan race)

G. Helen Whitener2	2,263,513.....	66.12% ✓	79,920.....	70.45%
Richard S. Serns.....	1,140,338.....	33.31%	32,799.....	28.91%
Write-In	19,416.....	0.57%	717.....	0.63%
Total	3,423,267	113,436		

State Supreme Court, Postion 6 (Nonpartisan race)

Debra L. Stephens2	2,852,879.....	97.91% ✓	95,773.....	98.08%
Write-In	60,808.....	2.09%	1,876.....	1.92%
Total	2,913,687	97,649		

40th District, Senator5

Elizabeth (Liz) Lovelett ² (D)	60,871 ... 69.50% ✓	32,220.....	76.71%
Charles Carrell (R)	26,638 ... 30.41%	9,764.....	23.25%
Write-In.....	78 0.09%	20.....	0.05%
Total	87,587	42,004	

40th District, Representative #15

Debra Lekanoff ² (D)	64,898 ... 95.70% ✓	33,830.....	96.94%
Write-in	2,9154.30%	1,068.....	3.06%
Total	67,813	34,898	

40th District, Representative #25

Alex Ramel ² (D).....	58,915 ...68.13%	✓	31,522.....	75.62%
Russ Dzialo (R).....	27,408 ...31.69%		10,086.....	24.20%
Write-In.....	1550.18%		74.....	0.18%
Total	86,478.....		41,682	

The following positions only appeared on Whatcom County ballots.

42th District, Representative #1

Alicia Rule (D)	47,260 ... 51.12% ✓		
Luanne Van Werven2 (R)	45,104 ... 48.79%		
Write-In	78	0.08%	
Total	92,442		

42th District, Representative #2

Sharon Shewmake2 (D)	47,702 ... 51.68% ✓		
Jennifer Sefzik (R)	44,501 ... 48.22%		
Write-In	93	0.10%	
Total	92,296		

Whatcom Superior Court Judge Position 2 (Nonpartisan race)

Evan Jones	62,694 ... 50.77% ✓		
James Erb.....	60,516 ..	49.01%	
Write-In	276	0.22%	
Total	123,486		

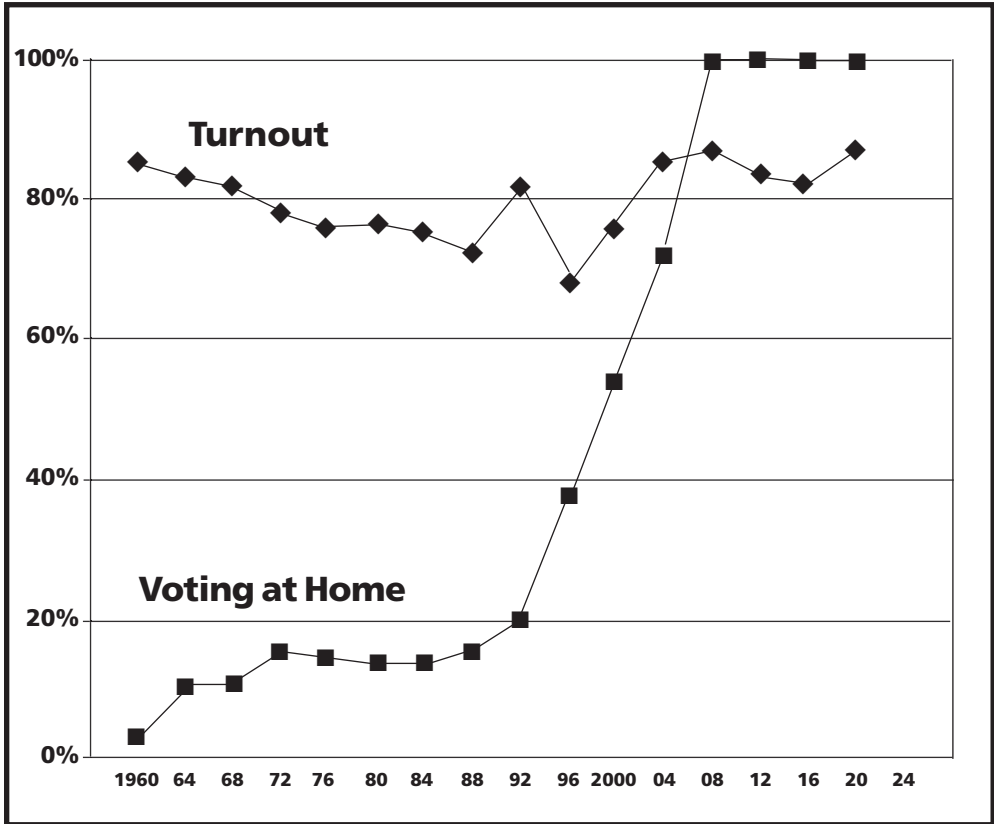
Whatcom Superior Court Judge Position 4 (Nonpartisan race)

David E. Freeman2	95,721 ..	78.04% ✓	
Jim Nelson.....	26,640 ...	21.72%	
Write-In	300	0.24%	
Total	122,661		

P.U.D. Commissioner (District 1) (Nonpartisan race)

Christine Grant.....	69,345 ...	58.79% ✓	
Jeffrey McClure2	48,321 ...	40.96%	
Write-In	292	0.25%	
Total	117,958		

Turnout and Voting at Home Percentages



Starting in 1915, Washington voters were allowed to vote at home if they were unable to be present at a polling site on Election Day. In 1974, the Legislature allowed voters to request a ballot for the next election without stating a particular need. Beginning in 1985, voters over the age of 65 and those with disabilities were eligible to receive all future ballots sent to their home. In 1993, the Legislature expanded it to all citizens. By 2002, five rural counties were conducting all elections by mail. Whatcom County adopted voting-at-home in 2005. All registered voters in the state are now mailed ballots to their homes.

General Election	Registered Voters	Ballots Cast	Turnout Percent	Voting at Home
1960.....	38,339.....	32,601.....	85.0%	3.5%
1964.....	38,290.....	31,903.....	83.3%	10.8%
1968.....	38,918.....	31,662.....	81.4%	11.5%
1972.....	50,117.....	39,693.....	79.1%	16.1%
1976.....	54,335.....	42,038.....	77.4%	15.2%
1980.....	59,639.....	46,995.....	78.7%	13.4%
1984.....	66,965.....	51,736.....	77.3%	14.7%
1988.....	67,817.....	51,354.....	75.7%	17.4%
1992.....	79,501.....	64,463.....	81.1%	20.3%
1996.....	95,665.....	65,518.....	68.5%	39.0%
2000	98,352.....	74,671.....	75.9%	56.9%
2004	106,094.....	91,497.....	86.2%	72.9%
2008	115,314.....	101,399.....	87.9%	100%
2012	125,485.....	104,727.....	84.5%	100%
2016	138,962.....	114,920.....	82.7%	100%
2020	158,780.....	139,628.....	87.9%	100%

Drop Box Count

Bellingham drop boxes		
Courthouse.....	37,792....	27.07%
Haggen Schome Village	14,450....	10.35%
Whatcom Community College	4,747.....	3.40%
WWU Recreation Center.....	2,107.....	1.51%
WWU Bond Hall (Red Square)	597.....	0.43%
WWU Student Engagement HUB.....	63.....	0.05%
Total	59,756.....	42.81%
Lynden drop box (library)	13,552.....	9.71%
Ferndale drop box (city hall).....	13,202.....	9.46%
Blaine drop box (library)	4,671.....	3.35%
Birch Bay drop box (fire and rescue station)	4,193.....	3.00%
Everson drop box (Whatcom Education Credit Union).....	4,114.....	2.95%
Sudden Valley drop box (security office turnaround)	2,866.....	2.05%
Deming drop box (library)	2,053.....	1.47%
Meridian drop box (Laurel Grange).....	1,724.....	1.23%
Kendall drop box (North Fork library)	1,502	1.08%
Custer drop box (elementary school)	1,221.....	0.87%
Lummi Nation drop box (administration building)	1,213	0.87%
Sumas drop box (behind post office)	1,048	0.75%
Point Robert drop box (International Marketplace).....	615.....	0.44%
Acme drop box (elemenaty school)	348.....	0.25%
Lummi Island (portable drop box)	24.....	0.02%
Nooksack drop box (Market Center)	21.....	0.02%
Drop box total.....	112,123.....	80.31%
U.S. Postal Service.....	25,967*.....	18.60%
Email	1,460	1.06%
Fax	41	0.03%
Confidential	38	0.00%
AVU (Vision impaired machine)	4	0.00%
Total ballots counted	139,628	

*does not include 2,593 undeliverable ballots.

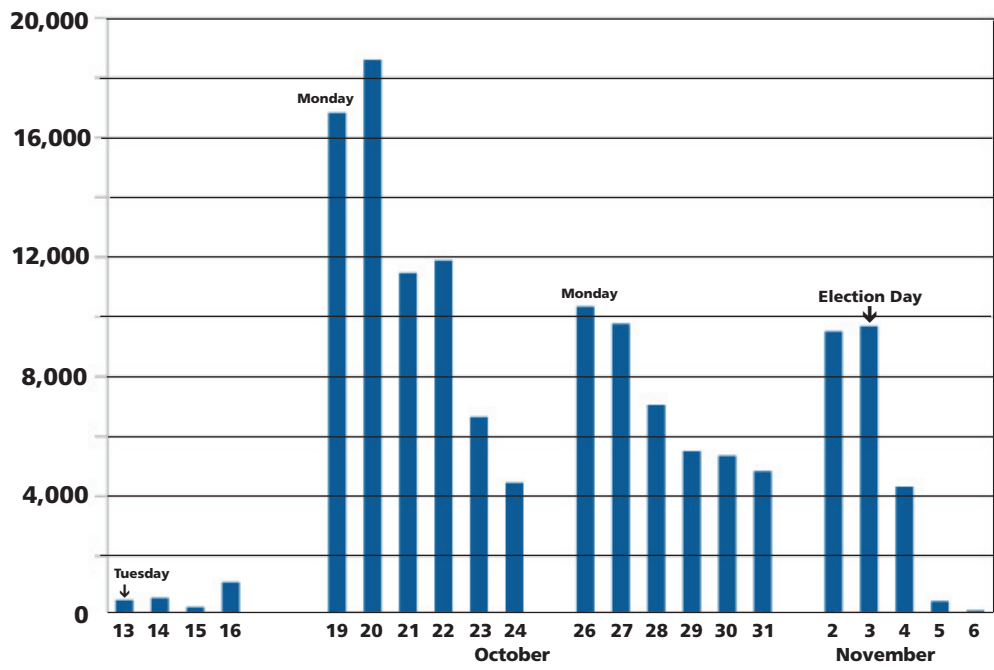
State and County Turnout

Of the 39 counties in the state, four had a higher general election turnout than Whatcom County. They were San Juan at 90.76 percent, Jefferson at 90.06 percent, Garfield at 88.97 percent and Columbia at 88.96 percent. The four counties had total ballots cast at 42,259. The four counties in the state with the lowest turnout were Yakima at 75.95 percent, Adams at 75.98 percent, Franklin at 78.29 percent and Grays Harbor at 79.15.

	Washington State	Whatcom County
General		
Total Registered	4,892,871	158,780
Ballots Cast	4,116,894	139,628
Turnout	84.14%	87.94%
Primary		
Total Registered	4,612,018	150,515
Ballots Cast	2,510,881	92,780
Turnout	54.44%	61.64%

Daily Ballot Return Count

The Whatcom County auditor’s office mailed 158,780 general election ballots to registered voters; 2,593 were undeliverable. Of the 139,628 envelopes returned, almost 90 percent — 124,388 or 89.03 percent — of the envelopes were returned before election day. Ballots rejected (725) were approximately one-half of 1 percent of the 140,353 ballots returned.



General Election	Ballots Returned	Percent of Total Returned
September 18	(Friday: military/overseas ballots mailed)	
October 13.....	(Tuesday)	501
October 14.....	(Wednesday: Whatcom County ballots mailed)	
October 14.....	(Wednesday)	572
October 15.....	(Thursday)	265
October 16.....	(Friday)	1,097
October 19.....	(Monday)	16,799
October 20.....	(Tuesday)	18,570
October 21.....	(Wednesday)	11,441
October 22.....	(Thursday)	11,859
October 23.....	(Friday)	6,626
October 24.....	Saturday	4,426
October 26.....	(Monday)	10,318
October 27.....	(Tuesday)	9,744
October 28.....	(Wednesday)	7,027
October 29.....	(Thursday)	5,481
October 30.....	(Friday)	5,327
October 31.....	(Saturday)	4,809
November 2	(Monday)	9,488
November 3	(Tuesday: Election Day).....	9,660
November 4	(Wednesday)	4,292
November 5	(Thursday)	461
November 6	(Friday)	152
November 9	(Monday)	223
November 10	(Tuesday)	304
November 11	(Wednesday: Veterans Day — Courthouse closed)	
November 16	(Monday)	133
November 17	(Tuesday)	9
November 18	(Wednesday)	1
November 20	(Friday)	2
November 23	(Monday)	3
Total	139,590*	

*does not include 38 confidential ballots

General Election Results—2020

Party Preference
(D) Democratic
(NP) Nonpartisan
(R) Republican

All candidates and write-in votes are not included for the primary election so the percentage total may be less than 100 percent.

¹This Federal Election Commission (<https://www.fec.gov>) information is through November 23, 2020.

²Incumbent

³This Public Disclosure Commission (<https://www.pdc.wa.gov/browse/campaign-explorer>) information is from the C4 disclosure report through November 30, 2020.

⁴Candidates that spend less than \$5,001 are not required to file disclosure reports.

General Election			Primary Election		Receipts	Expenditures	Surplus Deficit
1st Congressional District							
249,944	58.55%	Suzan DelBene ² (D)	147,666	55.39%	\$2,185,437 ¹	\$1,867,710 ¹	\$1,371,022 ¹
176,407	41.33%	Jeffrey Beeler, Sr. (R)	85,655	32.13%	\$60,714 ¹	\$59,434 ¹	\$6,079 ¹
511	0.12%	Write-In					
2nd Congressional District							
255,252	63.09%	Rick Larsen ² (D)	120,694	48.51%	\$1,282,225 ¹	\$1,160,909 ¹	\$393,476 ¹
148,384	36.67%	Timothy S. Hazelo (R)	37,104	14.91%	\$48,428 ¹	\$47,794 ¹	\$634 ¹
962	0.24%	Write-In					
Governor							
2,294,243	56.56%	Jay Inslee ² (D)	1,247,916	50.14%	\$8,561,093 ³	\$7,576,735 ³	\$964,577 ³
1,749,066	43.12%	Loren Culp (R)	433,238	17.41%	\$3,319,107 ³	\$3,217,121 ³	\$101,986 ³
13,145	0.32%	Write-In					
Commissioner of Public Lands							
2,212,158	56.69%	Hilary Franz ² (D)	1,211,310	51.13%	\$1,027,057 ³	\$976,616 ³	\$50,441 ³
1,686,320	43.21%	Sue Kuehl Pederson (R)	554,147	23.39%	\$85,720 ³	\$73,573 ³	\$6,147 ³
3,799	0.10%	Write-In					
40th District Senator							
60,871	69.50%	Elizabeth Lovelett ² (D)	40,569	69.31%	\$226,820 ³	\$186,939 ³	\$39,882 ³
26,638	30.41%	Charles Carrell (R)	17,890	30.57%	Under \$5,001 ⁴		
78	0.09%	Write-In					
Representative — Position 1							
64,898	95.70%	Debra Lekanoff ² (D)	41,704	94.24%	\$157,610 ³	\$101,504 ³	\$56,106 ³
2,915	4.30%	Write-In	2,549	5.76%			
Representative — Position 2							
58,915	68.13%	Alex Ramel ² (D)	39,524	68.42%	\$95,089 ³	\$81,252 ³	\$13,837 ³
27,408	31.69%	Russ Dzialo (R)	18,114	31.36%	\$11,463 ³	\$8,527 ³	\$2,896 ³
155	0.18%	Write-In					
42nd District Representative — Position 1							
47,260	51.12%	Alicia Rule (D)	30,167	48.06%	\$350,216 ³	\$344,479 ³	\$5,737 ³
45,104	48.79%	Luanne Van Werven ² (R)	32,535	51.48%	\$326,067 ³	\$323,589 ³	\$2,478 ³
78	0.08%	Write-In					
Representative — Position 2							
47,702	51.68%	Sharon Shewmake ² (D)	31,008	49.49%	\$416,583 ³	\$415,483 ³	(\$2,877) ³
44,501	48.22%	Jennifer Sefzik (R)	31,599	50.44%	\$395,048 ³	\$398,878 ³	(\$8,995) ³
93	0.10%	Write-In					
Whatcom County Superior Court, Position 2							
62,694	50.77%	Evan Jones (NP)	32,367	38.15%	\$26,466 ³	\$26,466 ³	(\$677) ³
60,516	49.01%	James Erb (NP)	29,106	34.30%	\$55,873 ³	\$51,493 ³	\$2,380 ³
276	0.22%	Write-In					
Whatcom County Superior Court, Position 4							
95,721	78.04%	David Freeman ² (NP)	47,881	59.74%	\$43,447 ³	\$41,356 ³	\$2,090 ³
26,640	21.72%	Jim Nelson (NP)	16,683	20.82%	\$66,908 ³	\$66,908 ³	\$0 ³
300	0.24%	Write-In					
P.U.D. Commissioner (District 1), Position 4							
69,345	58.79%	Christine Grant (NP)			\$60,028 ³	\$57,318 ³	(\$2,289) ³
48,321	40.96%	Jim McClure ² (NP)			\$17,207 ³	\$17,207 ³	\$0 ³
292	0.25%	Write-In					

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Independent Expenditures—2020

Independent expenditures are made by third parties without the candidate’s approval or collaboration. The expenditures on this page are independent of the expenses reported on page 14.

42nd District Representative — Position 1

Sharon Shewmake (D)

Evergreen Progress.....	Against.....	\$196,880
42nd Legislative District Committee - GOP	Against.....	\$711
New Directions PAC.....	For.....	\$167,055
Our Votes Count Washington	For.....	\$1,859
Fuse Votes	For.....	\$579
FOR: \$169,249		AGAINST: \$197,591

Jennifer Sefzik (R)

New Directions PAC.....	Against	\$206,796
Concerned Taxpayers of Washington State	For	\$7,434
42nd Legislative District Committee - GOP	For	\$6,512
Evergreen Progress.....	For	\$3,090
Whatcom County Republican Party.....	For	\$1,337
NRA Political Victory Fund	For	\$210
FOR: \$18,977		AGAINST: \$206,796

42nd District Representative — Position 2

Alicia Rule (D)

Evergreen Progress.....	Against	\$59,766
42nd Legislative District Committee - GOP	Against	\$711
New Directions PAC.....	For	\$266,968
Our Votes Count Washington	For	\$1,859
Fuse Votes	For	\$579
FOR: \$269,162		AGAINST: \$60,477

Luanne Van Werven (R)

New Directions PAC.....	Against	\$180,801
Evergreen Progress.....	For	\$17,705
Concerned Taxpayers of Washington State	For	\$7,434
42nd Legislative District Committee - GOP	For	\$6,512
Whatcom County Republican Party.....	For	\$1,337
NRA Political Victory Fund	For	\$210
FOR: \$33,593		AGAINST: \$180,801

Evergreen Progress (Washington State Republican Party)

218 Main Street PMB #412, Kirkland, WA 98033

Starting Balance: \$0.00 Contributions: \$925,000 Expenditures: \$917,052 Liabilities: \$0.00

Public Disclosure Commission Filing: https://www.pdc.wa.gov/browse/campaign-explorer/committee?filer_id=EVERP%20%20033&election_year=2020

New Directions PAC

401 2nd Avenue South, Suite 303, Seattle, WA 98104

Starting Balance: \$185,916 Contributions: \$6,320,912 Expenditures: \$6,250,831 Liabilities: \$0.00

Public Disclosure Commission Filing: https://www.pdc.wa.gov/browse/campaign-explorer/committee?filer_id=NEW%20DP%20103&election_year=2020

42nd Legislative District Committee – GOP

329 W. Hemmi Road, Bellingham, WA 98226

Starting Balance: \$6,652 Contributions: \$26,752 Expenditures: \$23,255 Liabilities: \$0.00

Public Disclosure Commission Filing: https://www.pdc.wa.gov/browse/campaign-explorer/committee?filer_id=42NDLR%20225&election_year=2020

Return Envelopes Challenged

Below are the reasons ballots were rejected and the number of rejections for the last five general elections. The most common reason for rejection, by far, was an envelope with a late postmark. The statistics are from the Canvassing Board Reconciliation Report. The statistics represent the difference between envelopes received and ballots counted.

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Canceled	0	0	33	3	20
Contained no ballot	12	5	9	8	6
Deceased	0	2	0	0	0
Electronic.....	0	0	0	2	30
ID Required.....	9	5	6	6	19
Late postmark/deposit.....	66	387	192	271	90
No signature	173	61	27	56	85
No signature match.....	463	229	218	170	443
Second ballot received.....	0	0	44	7	48
Wrong voter signature	0	0	1	13	13
Other.....	1	12	48	19	80
Ballots Challenged.....	724	689	578	555	834
Undeliverable	2,593	1,948	1,472	1,794	1,276
Total Challenged.....	3,317	2,637	2,050	2,349	2,110

Drop Box Return Rate			
	General	Primary	Drop Boxes
2020	80%*	66%*	22
2019	63%*	56%*	18
2018	59%*	55%*	18
2017	73%	67%	15
2016	77%	65%	15
2015	65%	49%	14
2014	53%	45%	9
2013	49%	35%	8
2012	41%	42%	8

*Elections with prepaid return envelopes.

City of Bellingham Board and Commission Vacancies

Continued from page 10

Historic Preservation Commission

Two vacancies. The commission determines whether nominated structures should be added to the Bellingham Register of Historic Places and make recommendations on state and national register nominations. Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m. and the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Planning and Development Commission

Two vacancies. The commission conducts hearings on the city Comprehensive Plan and its implementation. It reviews and makes recommendations to the City Council on the adoption and enforcement of plans and regulations for the physical development of the city. The commission also advises the council through the planning director. Meetings are typically held on the second and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Public Facilities District

Three vacancies. It was created in 2002 as a joint effort of the city of Bellingham and Whatcom County. The mission is to fund a regional center and cultural district located in downtown Bellingham. The initial component was renovations to the Mount Baker Theatre. An art and children’s museum was constructed in 2009/2010 at 216 Grand Avenue. Meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at 11:00 p.m. in the law library at City Hall.

Sehome Hill Arboretum Board of Governors

One vacancy. The purpose of the board is to develop and coordinate the Sehome Hill Arboretum program. The board works with the city and WWU in planning the use of such capital, operating and maintenance funds. Meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of every month (excluding June, July and August) at 4:00 p.m. at the WWU Physical Plant, 915 26th Street, Bellingham.

Continued on next page

How Cascadian Corporations Stack Up on Climate

Rating the Climate Claims and Actions of Albertsons Amazon, Boeing, Costco, Intel, Microsoft, Nike, Nordstrom, PACCAR and Starbucks

This article was first published at sightline.org. <https://www.sightline.org/2020/09/21/how-cascadian-corporations-stack-up-on-climate/>

Last month in Part I, the article gave an overview of the environmental aspirations (relating to climate) of Northwest-based Fortune 500 companies.

Part II







by Laura Feinstein and Eric de Place

Albertsons

Albertsons, a major U.S. grocer that owns Safeway and Haggen, has not made transformational climate commitments nor joined any of the major initiatives that we surveyed combatting climate change. Like Costco, the company has on-site solar generation prominently featured in its corporate sustainability report, although it amounts to less than one-half of one percent of its annual energy use. Albertsons has no published emissions reduction or renewable energy targets. While proactive on deploying money-saving energy efficiency upgrades in its stores, the company seems to be primarily following consumer interest in climate-friendly behavior, which has thus far been insufficient to spark meaningful change beyond trying to burnish its reputation.

Laura Feinstein focuses on energy policy, particularly natural gas infrastructure and energy decarbonization. She recently researched and wrote about innovative approaches to limiting natural gas pipeline expansion. Before joining Sightline, Feinstein worked as an engineer for Puget Sound Energy, modernizing the regional energy grid. She has a bachelor’s degree from Purdue University in electrical engineering and a master’s from the University of Washington in mathematics.

Eric de Place, director of Thin Green Line, spearheads Sightline’s work on energy policy. Known as a leading expert on coal, oil, and gas export plans in the Pacific Northwest, he is considered an authority on a range of issues connected to fossil fuel transport, including carbon emissions, local pollution, transportation system impacts, rail policy, and economics. He has a master’s degree in philosophy from the University of Notre Dame. Find his latest research here, email him at eric [at] sightline [dot] org.

Major Corporate Climate Initiative Membership		
	Mission Commitment to shift to 100% renewable energy before 2050.	Northwest Fortune 500 Microsoft, Nike, Starbucks
	Accountability to reduce emissions in line with limiting global warming to 1.5° C.	Amazon, Microsoft, Nike, Nordstrom, Starbucks
	Commitment to improve energy efficiency in a company's portfolio of buildings by 20% over 10 years.	Intel, Nike, Starbucks
	Agreement to meet intent of the 2015 Paris Climate Accord.	Amazon, Intel, Microsoft, Nike, Starbucks
	Amazon's call to action to contribute net-zero carbon across its businesses by 2040.	Amazon
	A principle-based framework to encourage businesses to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies.	Intel, Microsoft, Nike, Starbucks
Sources: there100.org, sciencebasedtargets.org, betterbuildingssolutioncenter.energy.gov, wearestillin.com, theclimatepledge.com, unglobalcompact.org		

Six major climate change initiatives and Northwest Fortune 500 membership.

Amazon

Amazon is launching a \$2 billion climate fund to pursue investments in clean energy and technologies to combat climate change. And, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos is donating another \$10 billion of his personal fortune to fight climate change. In addition to other admirable pursuits like powering Amazon with 100 percent clean energy by 2025 and becoming net zero by 2040, Amazon announced it is ordering 100,000 electric delivery vehicles (so that 50 percent of all shipments will use net zero carbon in their fulfillment, packaging, and transportation by 2030).

The company has also named the Seattle’s new professional hockey venue, “Climate Pledge Arena.” Unlike its peers who have signed onto third-party-led climate initiatives, Amazon is home-growing its own climate initiative, filling a space where other accepted programs already exist. Still, the company has had four other corporations join its pledge: Infosys, Mercedes Benz, Reckitt Benckiser, and Verizon.

Yet for all these positive actions, Amazon works against the climate as well. The company has very diverse business arms — cloud computing, online retailing, and grocery delivery just to name a few — including some highly carbon-intensive components. Most prominent is its global logistics network that depends heavily on fossil fuels for air and ground transportation, along with energy-intense server farms across the world.

Amazon generates around 50 million metric tons of carbon annually, comparable to the carbon footprint of entire countries like Switzerland or Norway. Worse, its artificial intelligence technology is used by oil and gas companies to improve drilling prospects, improving their profitability. Donations from Amazon have gone to climate-science-denying organizations. And, Amazon has threatened to fire employees who have been vocal about Amazon’s contribution to climate change. On that score, Amazon’s employees deserve a round of applause for

pushing the company toward faster climate action.

Boeing

Boeing sells airplanes around the globe, so its business success is linked to international protocols governing climate. The most prominent of these in the aviation sector is the United Nation’s market-based measurement system called Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) that has so far been adopted by 78 countries. In order to remain competitive, Boeing now engineers aircraft that meet the CORSIA fuel efficiency standards, which aim to halt carbon emission growth in aviation starting in 2020 and halve carbon emissions by 2050.

CORSIA’s 2050 goal would be achieved, in a large part, by using alternative jet fuels with a smaller carbon footprint, especially biofuels. Boeing has already experimented with these biofuels, flying around 1,600 miles in partnership with Alaska Air, and has shown that they are technologically viable. Commercializing these biofuels will prove to be a bigger challenge because of the difficulty of harvesting, processing, and distributing biofuels, not to mention making them cost-competitive with fossil fuels.

Internal to the company’s operations, Boeing set five environmental goals in 2018. By 2025, the company aims to: reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent, reduce water consumption by 20 percent, reduce waste to landfill by 20 percent, reduce energy consumption by 10 percent, and reduce hazardous waste by 5 percent. Many of these are a tall order.

According to its most recent scorecard, Boeing actually increased water consumption and hazardous waste production. It may also need to accelerate progress on greenhouse gas emissions and energy goals, both of which improved in 2018 — but neither of which appears to be on track. Boeing’s internal goals may appear less aggressive compared to peers in our evaluation who have found pathways to become carbon

neutral, have zero-waste facilities, or have reduced energy use in their facilities by 20 percent or more. **WW**

Costco

Costco, a multinational warehouse store, has not made transformational climate commitments, nor joined any of the major initiatives combatting climate change that we surveyed. The main efforts cited in its sustainability report address reducing energy intensity in its operations through efficiency projects, like switching to LED lighting and implementing energy management systems.

Costco’s corporate website mentions a focus on land stewardship, forestry, packaging, transportation, human rights, agriculture, and fisheries, although there are few specifics. Costco boasts about some renewable energy projects on its website, but these supply less than two percent of its annual energy consumption. Costco’s biggest identified risk related to climate change in its 2019 CDP disclosure is whether extreme weather will prevent customers from shopping.

Intel

Intel, a leading semiconductor manufacturer, identified goals for clean energy, emissions, and energy efficiency. It is sourcing 100 percent renewable energy for its U.S. and European Union operations, which works out to 71 percent of its global energy demand. Intel was aiming to improve its notebook and server products’ energy efficiency by 25 times beyond 2010 levels by 2020, but it fell short, achieving instead a 14-times improvement for notebooks and an 8.5-times improvement for servers.

From 2018 to 2019, Intel reduced the intensity of its Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 13 percent — that is, it reduced emissions per unit of production — but its absolute emissions still increased by 8 percent because the company was producing more than ever. Intel’s story is actually a common

Continued on next page

one: companies are becoming more energy- (and carbon-) efficient but manufacturing more, which expands its overall carbon footprint. Perhaps it is for this reason that Intel is fighting Oregon’s new rules that would drive down emissions by participating in a lawsuit targeting Oregon Governor Brown’s executive order that caps greenhouse gas emissions.

Microsoft










Microsoft leads the Northwest in meaningful climate commitments as well as goals accomplished: the company is already carbon neutral and uses 100 percent renewable energy in its business, accomplished in part by buying carbon-free electricity on the open market instead of the carbon-rich electricity offered by Puget Sound Energy. In January 2020, Microsoft pledged go carbon negative — removing more carbon from the atmosphere than it puts in by 2030. And, to take it a step further, by 2050, Microsoft aims to erase its historical carbon footprint since the company’s founding in 1975. Like Amazon, Microsoft is backing its pledge with a major investment: \$1 billion toward decarbonization strategies that will help it and other emitters remove carbon from the atmosphere.

However, Microsoft does earn a demerit. Like Amazon, the software giant continues to form and maintain business partnerships with the oil and gas sector. In fact, Microsoft announced new deals in 2019 with Chevron and Schlumberger for cloud computer services. The company says it can work with the fossil fuel sector to help it “evolve.”

Nike

Nike claims to be motivated by the future of sports (because temperature changes may affect the duration of playing seasons, clothing options, and safety), and so the company has identified several initiatives to combat climate change. In fact, Nike has joined most of the major climate change initiatives we surveyed and has an active focus on climate But even with Nike’s highly publicized positions on sustainability, Nike is working against climate progress. The company sits on the executive committee of the industry group currently suing to stop the Oregon Governor Brown’s executive order mandating steep emissions reductions in Oregon. Despite its earlier support for Oregon’s failed cap and trade legislation, Nike’s role in this lawsuit cannot be ignored.

The company is making some baby steps in the right direction, however. Like the leaders on our list, Nike committed to sourcing 100 percent renewable energy for the facilities it owns and operates facilities by 2025. Yet, facility management is not really Nike’s core carbon problem. More than 90 percent of the firm’s carbon footprint is attributable to its global supply chain, which Nike does not own and operate, and which is not included in its renewable energy pledge. In 2016, Nike signed onto the Paris Climate Agreement, and, in doing so, has committed to reducing carbon emissions in its global supply chain by 30 percent by 2030, with a vision

Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions for Cascadia’s Fortune 500 Companies						
	Fortune 500 Rank	Industry	Headquarters Location	Annual Emissions (Millions of Metric Tons CO ₂ e)		
				Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
	2	Internet Services and Retailing	Seattle, WA	5.76*	5.50*	39.90*
	14	General Merchandisers	Issaquah, WA	1.11	1.39	Not evaluated
	21	Computer Software	Redmond, WA	0.10	4.00	12.00
	40	Aerospace & Defense	Chicago, IL	0.65	0.89	Not evaluated
	45	Semiconductors and Other Electronic Components	Santa Clara, CA	1.46	2.92	10.08
	55	Food and Drug Stores	Boise, ID	2.69	2.26	Not evaluated
	85	Apparel	Beaverton, OR	0.04	0.26	20.00
	114	Food Services	Seattle, WA	0.32	0.80	23.08
	118	Construction and Farm Machinery	Bellevue, WA	0.12	0.17	175.49
NORDSTROM	205	General Merchandisers	Seattle, WA	0.05	0.20	Not evaluated
Alaska Air Group	360	Airlines	Seattle, WA	7.75	0.01	Not evaluated

Annual greenhouse gas emissions by Northwest Fortune 500 companies.

(but not a commitment) to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Nike is also participating in the Better Buildings Challenge, with a goal to reduce energy use by 20 percent from 2015 levels by 2025 on its 10.8 million square feet of U.S.-based buildings. But, with so much of its carbon emissions in its supply chain, the company’s pledges feel lackluster until they extend beyond the Nike-owned footprint.

Nordstrom

Nordstrom, a luxury department store chain in North America, announced in April 2020 (the 50th anniversary of Earth Day) that the company would be setting a science-based target for reducing Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions. Details about this target are still forthcoming, but Nordstrom is already offsetting 100 percent of its emissions from its 13 Western Washington stores using Forterra’s Evergreen Carbon Capture Program.

In 2018, Nordstrom stores had improved energy efficiency by 17.1 percent over a 2014 baseline. By the conclusion of this year, Nordstrom aims to buy 30 percent of its total energy from renewable sources. In 2019, Nordstrom also joined the G7 Fashion Pact, in which signatories committed to greenhouse gas emission reductions, renewable energy, single-use plastic elimination, and other eco-goals.

PACCAR

PACCAR, a semitruck manufacturer, has made no formal climate commitments nor joined any of the major initiatives combatting climate change that we surveyed. Nonetheless, the truck manufacturer has notched a few meaningful environmental achievements and it is pursuing product designs that indicate it is taking some responsibility for climate change.

The challenge goes right to the heart of its business because PACCAR’s products run on fossil fuels. Demand for electric trucks is growing, however, and PACCAR is prototyping several zero-emission

trucks to meet emerging requirements across the globe (although none are yet commercially available). It also joined the U.S. Department of Energy’s Supertruck II initiative to improve the efficiency of 18-wheelers, the trucks that haul 80 percent of goods in the United States, and, in doing so, use about 28 billion gallons of fuel per year. But it could go much further.

By comparison, PACCAR’s major competitor, Daimler (maker of Freightliner, Western Star and Mercedes-Benz trucks), has pledged to make its entire commercial fleet carbon neutral by 2039.

Internal to the company’s operations, PACCAR spent \$160 million in the past 10 years on energy efficiency, as well as reducing emissions, water use, and waste. PACCAR has also sliced its greenhouse gas emissions by 29 percent on a per revenue basis between 2009 and 2018, although its actual emissions have increased overall as its revenue has grown. One positive sign is that 88 percent of its manufacturing locations achieve zero waste to landfills.

Starbucks

Starbucks announced in January 2020 that it was “striving” to become resource positive — that is, storing more carbon than it emits, eliminating garbage, and providing more water than it withdraws. The coffee giant has also made some hard commitments, include cutting carbon emissions by half for its direct operations and supply chain, replacing half of the water used for coffee production and operations, and eliminating half of its landfill-bound waste, all by 2030. For its 50th anniversary in 2021, Starbucks plans to formalize its goals and plan.


In 2018, Starbucks announced its plan to operate 10,000 LEED-certified stores, in conjunction with its pledge to reduce by 25 percent the energy intensity of 12 million square feet of stores in 70 countries by 2025. The company made progress. By the end of 2019, all U.S.,

Canadian and U.K. stores ran on renewable energy and 72 percent of its global operations were powered by renewable energy. In fact, Starbucks will be powering all global operations with renewable energy by the end of 2020.

Yet, for all its leadership on climate change, Starbucks has also been a leader in creating the to-go, disposable culture that pervades today. Previous efforts to meet a 2015 goal to reduce waste by encouraging a quarter of customers to use reusable cups fell drastically short, proving that getting consumers on board is a major hurdle to the success of goals like these. To achieve significant emissions reductions, consumers would also need to start opting for plant-based milks to lighten their java; dairy makes up 21 percent of Starbucks’ carbon footprint.

Corporate Outlook

There can be little doubt that the U.S. federal government has failed to address climate change in a meaningful way. Although the national policy response has been especially horrendous under the Trump Administration, it was never adequate under President Obama, and there is good reason for skepticism about the prospects for climate progress in a Biden administration. Still, as discouraging as the federal government’s failure may be, it is possible to find reasons for cautious optimism in climate action at other scales, including city and state leadership, and increasingly, in corporate America.

It is heartening then that some of these giants, like Microsoft and Amazon, have emerged as leaders willing to bankroll — and stake their reputation on — reversing the environmental damage where they have been contributors. Many others, like Costco and Albertsons, clearly have much more to do, but they may yet be responsive to customers who demand more meaningful action than the PR campaigns that may have worked in the past. 

City of Bellingham Board and Commission Vacancies

Continued from previous page

Transportation Commission

Four vacancies. The Transportation Commission helps shape the future of Bellingham by taking a long-range, strategic look at transportation issues and providing recommendations on policy choices and investment priorities. It absorbed the advisory responsibilities of the city’s Parking Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee at the end of 2009. Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. in the mayor’s board room.

Washington Is Threatened by Sea Level Rise

Increasing global temperatures will bring changes to our environment, economy, and society, but one of the most pronounced effects will be the impact on sea level rise. A 2019 report from the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated that global mean sea levels will most likely rise between 0.95 feet and 3.61 feet by 2100 due to thermal expansion of water, the melting of glacial ice, and disruption to major ocean currents. The IPCC estimates that worldwide, high seas could displace or affect 680 million people living in coastal areas.

The IPCC’s report projects possible outcomes over the rest of this century, but sea level rise is already an observable occurrence. Data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency shows that global mean sea level has risen nearly 9 inches since 1880, and the rate of increase has accelerated over time. Beginning in 1880, it took nearly 20 years for sea level to rise by one inch. More recently, the mean sea level rose by one inch just from 2010 to 2015.

As the ocean rises, coastal areas will be more prone to severe storm surges and inland tidal flooding. This means that one of the biggest impacts of sea level rise in the coming decades will be the threat to infrastructure. Around 40 percent of the U.S. population currently lives in coastal areas that may be vulnerable

Continued on page 19

Bellingham City Council

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Ward 4

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Committees

- (C) Committee Chair
1. Finance and Economic Development
 2. Public Works and Natural Resources
 3. Parks and Recreation
 4. Planning and Community Development
 5. Public Health, Safety and Justice
 6. Climate Action

Upcoming Meetings

January 11 and 25: 7 p.m.
February 8 and 22: 7 p.m.
March 8 and 22: 7 p.m.

Action Taken at November 9, 2020 Meeting

Mayor's Report

The mayor announced two appointments to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The board provides recommendations on plans and programs designed to enable the Department of Parks and Recreation to maintain and improve city parks and provide recreation programs for the general welfare of the people of the city. The mayor reappointed Neha Harle as the student representative for a one-year term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. At the 9/9/2019 meeting, vote #156, Neha Harle was appointed the student representative for a one-year term. A 16-year-old student at Sehome High School and a South Hill resident, she belongs to the Sehome High School environmental club and the Lake Padden kayak sprint team. The current term for Neha Harle will expire on 8/29/2021, at which time she may be reappointed. The mayor appointed Jeannie Gilbert to her first term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Jeannie Gilbert is a 20-plus-year resident of Bellingham and a retired scientific lab technician for WWU, and currently acts a part-time restoration tech primarily for wetlands. Jeannie also has a degree in biology with a background in ecology, restoration, marine science and fire ecology. The term for Jeannie will expire on 10/1/2023, at which time she may be reappointed. (AB22801) **These appointments do not require council confirmation.**

Shall the council:

194. **Amend the cost-sharing agreement with Whatcom County related to the Covid-19 health crisis?** At the 6/8/2020 meeting, vote #82, the city council approved addendum #1 with Whatcom County. This addendum outlines the roles and responsibilities and financial commitments of the city and Whatcom County to relocate the drop-in center (now referred to as Base Camp) from Bellingham High School to 1530 Cornwall Avenue to reduce the opportunities to spread Covid-19. Since the addendum was approved, Whatcom County has received additional funds for homeless services, including shelters. The primary purpose of the amendment is to reflect an increase in Whatcom County's financial commitment and a decrease in the city's financial commitments. The city's financial commitments have decreased from \$700,000 to \$500,000 for the interlocal cost-sharing agreement. (AB22650) **Approved 7-0**

195. **Approve the mayor's appointment of Annika Taylor to a partial term on the Greenway Advisory Committee?** The committee shall identify, develop, review, and recommend selection criteria, general project priorities, and specific actions relating to the expenditure and allocation of Greenway levy funds. The committee shall work in cooperation with the Parks and Recreation Department staff. Annika Taylor is currently a junior at WWU studying business and sustainability, has lived in Bellingham for the past two years, and is a member of the WWU varsity cross country and track and field teams. Appointments shall be for three-year terms and a member may be reappointed. Annika Taylor's term will expire on 7/9/2021, at which time she may be reappointed. (AB22802) **Approved 7-0**

196. **Execute technical and other budget adjustments requested by the administration prior to budget adoption?** The administration requests the council move to incorporate a number of technical and other minor changes that will improve the accuracy of the budget into the preliminary 2021-2022 biennial budget prior to adoption. This housekeeping vote will result in a net reduction in the general fund expenditure budget by \$18,000 over the biennium. (AB22803) **Approved 7-0**

197. **Appropriate \$3,647,610 for payroll checks issued from October 1 through October 15, 2020?** (AB22811) **Approved 7-0**

198. **Appropriate \$10,845,256 for goods and services checks issued from October 16 through October 29, 2020?** (AB22812/22813) **Approved 7-0**

199. **Authorize a retroactive payment of \$833.65 in employer contributions and interest to the Public Employees Retirement System for a former City Council member?** A council member who served on the City Council from 2016 through 2019 applied for service credit for the time period from when she was initially eligible (1/1/2016) until she actually joined in (4/16/2016). Council authorization is required because payment by the city is optional. Retroactive payment of employer contributions for council members was authorized previously in 2001, at the 10/23/2006 meeting, vote #268 and the 11/19/2012 meeting, vote #215. (AB22814) **Approved 7-0**

200. Authorize the mayor to **sign a \$65,000 financial assistance agreement with Whatcom County to address alcoholism and other**

addictions? Financial assistance is provided by the city to the county Health Department for crisis intervention services. The services include 16 beds to provide acute substance withdrawal management services to adults. Sixteen beds are dedicated to provide mental health stabilization services to adults and medication-assisted treatment to mitigate the symptoms of withdrawal and stabilize recovery. The city's share of liquor taxes and profits in the amount of \$22,000 is included in this total. The agreement terminates on 12/31/21. (AB22815) **Approved 7-0**

201. Authorize the mayor to **sign a \$25,200 agreement with Western Washington University to conduct a residential survey?** The city conducts periodic residential surveys to evaluate progress made towards the city's nine legacies and strategic commitments. The agreement is for professional services by the Center for Economic and Business Research at WWU to update and field the 2020 residential survey. The scope of work for the project includes a survey of 8,750 randomly selected residents, with online and telephone options, a report on findings, and a public presentation to the City Council. The council has previously authorized agreements for residential surveys at the 8/29/2016 meeting, vote #137 and the 8/27/2018 meeting, vote #126. (AB22816) **Approved 7-0**

202. Authorize the mayor to **sign a \$25,000 agreement with the Whatcom Council of Governments to help fund the 2021 Whatcom Smart Trips program?** Whatcom Smart Trips is an ongoing program between local governments, public agencies, employers and schools to promote transportation by walking, bicycling, sharing rides and riding the bus. The program expands the city's educational opportunities to increase use of nonmotorized transportation and transit options, helping the city meet mode shift goals identified in the Comprehensive Plan and Climate Action Plan. The 2021 budget is \$280,000 with the county contributing \$75,000; the federal government \$103,000; and the state \$77,000. (AB22817) **Approved 7-0**

203. Authorize the police chief to **sign an agreement with the state of Washington for increased traffic patrols?** This agreement awards \$57,000 from the Washington Traffic Safety Commission for a safety grant project. The emphasis patrols will be for impaired driving, distracted driving and motorcycle safety. This agreement will expire on 9/30/2021. (AB22818) **Approved 7-0**

204. **Authorize the partial relinquishment of a surplus utility easement encumbering real property at 614 and 622 11th Street?** (Public hearing held.) At the 5/6/2019 meeting, vote #88, the council passed an ordinance vacating 25 feet on the easterly side of South State Street and a 10-foot-wide portion of Easton Avenue, but retained easement rights. This was in response to a petition by the owners, the Kink Family LLC. There are no utilities in the subject portion of the retained easement corridor. The Public Works Department reviewed the request by the property owners and determined the easement is not needed. AB22797 (Resolution 2020-41) **Approved 7-0**

205. **Authorize an increase in the 2021 property tax levy?** State law limits annual increases of the property tax levy to the lessor of one percent or inflation, as measured by the implicit price deflator. If inflation is less than one percent, state law provides that the jurisdiction may still levy the full one percent if the legislative authority passes a resolution of substantial need. The 2020 implicit price deflator is 0.6 percent and a resolution of substantial need is required to increase the levy by one percent. This resolution must pass with a majority plus one to meet the statutory requirements. Without a resolution of substantial need, the property tax levy can be increased by only \$100,581; with this resolution the levy can be increased by an additional \$94,244. The property tax levy will be passed at the 11/23/2020 meeting. AB22676 (Resolution 2020-42) **Approved 7-0**

206. **Adopt a medical/prescription/dental/vision self-insurance program for city employees?** The city is already self-insured for vision benefits for most bargaining groups. The city's continued goal is to provide affordable, comprehensive benefit options for our employees. Self-insurance for medical and prescription benefits represents the best available path forward to provide a long-term strategy for cost containment, including effective prescription utilization. There are also additional premium savings by adding self-insured dental. The change to self-insurance does not come at an increased cost to the city and is currently budgeted appropriately. AB22809 (Resolution 2020-43) **Approved 7-0**

207. **Set the times and dates for 2021 regular council meetings?** Twenty-four meetings are scheduled, the same as 2020. Meeting time

Continued on next page

Bellingham City Council

Continued from previous page

Action Taken at November 9, 2020 Meeting

will be 7:00 p.m. Roberts Rules of Order are to be used unless otherwise provided by Charter. AB22810 (Resolution 2020-44) **Approved 6-1, Michael Lilliquist opposed.**

208. **Extend the moratorium on development applications and permits for redevelopment of existing mobile home or manufactured home parks?** (Public hearing held at June 8 meeting.) At the 6/3/2019 meeting, vote #114, the council adopted an emergency ordinance establishing a one-year moratorium on the acceptance or processing of development applications or permits relating to the redevelopment of any of the ten mobile home parks in Bellingham. These parks, and the units they contain totaling about 900 spaces, are some of the most affordable housing in the city. Therefore, it is appropriate to try to preserve all of them. Goals and policies identified in the amendment encourage the preservation of existing manufactured home parks to ensure their continued provision of affordable housing. A six-month extension of the moratorium is needed to allow staff to finalize recommendations

Action Taken at November 23, 2020 Meeting

Shall the council:

209. Authorize the mayor to **sign a memorandum of understanding with the Bellingham School District #501 for a property trade?** As part of the Sunnyland Elementary School remodel, the Bellingham School District has requested a small strip of unimproved land in the King Street right of way be vacated. In exchange, they would transfer property adjacent to Shuksan Middle School, located at 2806 W. Maplewood Avenue and known as Shuksan Meadows Park to the city. The city is currently maintaining the property and has an active playground improvement project that should be completed in June of 2021. The parties agree upon the location and plans for a pedestrian trail to replace the current Memorial Park trail partially located on the eastern half of vacated King Street. The district would, as part of its construction activities for the new Sunnyland Elementary School, construct such trail for Memorial Park. (AB22822) **Approved 7-0**

210. **Approve the 2021 joint legislative objectives?** The city partners with Whatcom County and the Port of Bellingham on a shared legislative agenda. The joint legislative agenda outlines and defines the shared objectives of the three entities and the commitment to work cooperatively with the Legislature, to strengthen the partnership between state and local governments, and to ensure that we have the full resources to implement the policies and goals as adopted by the state of Washington. In anticipation of the upcoming 2021 Session, the following are presented as the legislative objectives that have been identified as priorities by the three entities: Covid-19 relief, capital budget priorities, transportation budget priorities, clean energy, housing affordability, fiscal sustainability, criminal justice and social services funding and water resources. (AB22823) **Approved 7-0**

211. **Appropriate \$3,878,966 for payroll checks issued from October 16 through October 31, 2020?** (AB22824) **Approved 7-0**

212. **Appropriate \$3,387,684 for goods and services checks issued**



from September 18, 2020 through October 1, 2020? (AB22825/22826) **Approved 7-0**

213. Authorize the mayor to **sign a \$200,000 agreement with Whatcom County for the Lake Whatcom Homeowner Incentive Program?** The agreement with Whatcom County was initially approved at the 1/23/2017 meeting, vote #13. Whatcom County will also contribute \$200,000 to the program. Homeowners within the sub-basin are eligible to apply for \$1,000 to \$6,000 reimbursement for the installation of landscape features on their property to improve water quality, including impervious surface and lawn removal, infiltration trenches, native plantings, porous paving and rain gardens. (AB22827) **Approved 7-0**

214. Authorize the mayor to **accept a \$653,215 state grant for the Donald Avenue water quality treatment facility within the Lake Whatcom Watershed?** The city's match is \$217,738; the total estimated cost is \$870,953. This project will address a portion of the watershed which currently drains to the lake without treatment for phosphorus by retrofitting an existing stormwater treatment facility in the 2000 block of Northshore Drive — within the city — for treatment and infiltration systems designed specifically for phosphorus removal. This project will reduce total suspended solids, dissolved copper and zinc, and total phosphorus by replacing the existing sand filter with media designed to maximize phosphorus removal. It will treat runoff from 27 acres of residential development and remove about 24 pounds of phosphorus annually. (AB22828) **Approved 7-0**

215. **Amend the authorization for two Washington Conservation Crews?** At the 8/24/2020 meeting, vote # 145, the council authorized the expenditure of \$451,000 for two crews. This amendment increases the contract amount by \$37,125 for a total of \$488,125. The crews serve the city though an interagency agreement with the Department of Ecology. They will perform habitat restoration and maintenance work throughout Bellingham, including Juilanna Park and the Lake Whatcom Watershed. Specific tasks could include invasive weed control, native species installation, plant nursery care, scientific monitoring, and fence installation or repair.(AB22829) **Approved 7-0**

216. **Amend the Climate Protection Action Plan?** An important first step toward achieving 100 percent renewable energy is to set a public long-term renewable energy target to demonstrate political commitment, and to provide both stakeholders and the community with an understanding of the long-term vision for the city of Bellingham. At the 5/7/2018 meeting, vote #65, the council approved the 2018 Climate Action Plan and established the Climate Action Task Force. The task force presented their final report at 12/9/2019 meeting, vote #210. This amendment includes measures to electrify new buildings, which allows for development of an implementation plan for requiring the electrification for all new buildings built in Bellingham while supporting a just transition with labor and our utility on electric capacity, and evaluate community-wide renewable energy programs, which allows for further discussions to develop new partnerships to provide low-carbon renewable electricity for all Bellingham residents. AB22505 (Resolution 2020-45) **Approved 7-0**

217. **Vacate an alley generally located south of West Chestnut Street and between Cornwall and Commercial streets?** (Closed record hearing.) David Hovde, on behalf of Chestnut Flats LLC, requested the vacation of a 10- by 25-foot portion of an alley southwest of Chestnut Street, adjacent to 107 W. Chestnut Street. The subject right-of-way abuts a building he owns and seeks to legitimize existing private parking and an existing ADA accessible ramp that provides ingress and egress to petitioner's building. The Bellingham Hearing Examiner held a public hearing on 6/27/2018 and recommended approval of the street vacation. AB22804 (Ordinance 2020-11-029) **Approved 7-0**

218. **Vacate a portion of Pasco Street between the West Line of Samish Way and the north line of Abbott Street?** (Closed record hearing.) The Bellingham Housing Authority seeks the city to vacate the portion of Pasco Street abutting the redevelopment project at the former Aloha Motel site in the Samish Way Urban Village. The authority desires to use the proposed vacation area for the purposes of stormwater management and potentially a building entrance and plaza for a project currently under construction. At the 7/6/2020 meeting, vote #112, the City Council directed staff to waive all fees and compensation costs associated with vacating the subject right-of-way pursuant to the Housing Cooperation Law. The Bellingham Hearing Examiner held a virtual public hearing on 8/26/2020 and recommended approval. AB22805 (Ordinance 2020-11-030) **Approved 7-0**

219. **Establish surface and stormwater utility rate fees?** Bellingham's

Washington Is Threatened by Sea Level Rise

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to sea level rise. Because the rate of sea level rise is linked to climate change, the potential damage to these areas depends on how effectively the world can curb human contributions to warming. According to research from Climate Central and Zillow, a worst-case scenario of unchecked emissions could expose 3.4 million existing homes to high risk of flooding by 2100. Those homes are currently worth \$1.75 trillion — roughly 9 percent of the U.S. economy.

Despite these possibilities, construction and development continue in many areas with high-risk flood zones. In fact, the rate of development in high-risk flood zones exceeds the rate of development in lower-risk areas in eight states since 2010. At the top of the list are Mid-Atlantic states including Delaware, Connecticut, and New Jersey, which are seeing development in high-risk flood zones at a rate more than twice as fast as lower-risk areas. Those states are also among the most densely-populated in the United States, which means that hundreds of thousands of existing homes could be at risk as well.

Another state especially susceptible to the risks of sea level rise is Florida. The state's geographic features, including 1,200 miles of coastline and a large number of bays and estuaries, bring natural flood risks. With 21.1 percent of its housing units in risk zones, the potential consequences of flooding for property and infrastructure are enormous. Already, low-lying cities like Miami are experiencing frequent "sunny day flooding," when high tides spill onto streets or bubble up from storm drains. Events like these will only become more common and more damaging as sea level rise continues.

Unsurprisingly, Florida is home to many of the U.S. cities likely to be most impacted by sea level rise, but other coastal communities throughout the country are vulnerable too. Using data from Ocean at the Door: New Homes and the Rising Sea, a research report conducted by Climate Central and Zillow,

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Whatcom County Council

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(C) Committee Chair

1. Criminal Justice/Public Safety
2. Finance/Administrative Services
3. Planning/Development
4. Public Works/Health
5. Natural Resources
6. Lake Whatcom Policy Group

January 12 and 26: 7 p.m.
February 9 and 23: 7 p.m.
March 9 and 23: 7 p.m.

Action Taken at November 10, 2020 Meeting

211. Authorize the executive to **sign four contracts — totaling \$418,010 — with local school districts?** The contracts are with the: Mt. Baker (\$94,325); Nooksack Valley (\$82,755); Lynden (\$146,025); and Blaine (\$94,325) school districts and will reimburse them for expenses related to cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment. The contracts expire on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-499/505/506/507) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

213. Authorize the executive to **sign a contract with Securus Technologies of Dallas, TX to provide inmate communication and services at the main jail and work center?** The contract includes a provision for the county to earn a commission based on percentage of service charges; commission rates collected by the county would be: 30 percent during months 1-36, 47 percent during months 37-48; and 55 percent during months 49 and beyond. The contract expires on 12/31/2021. (AB2020-488) **Approved 5-2, Tyler Byrd and Todd Donovan opposed.**

215. Adopt a salary schedule and policies for unrepresented Whatcom County employees? The schedule and policies cover county employees not represented by a union. It does not include County Council members and includes: a transition from self-insured medical and dental plans to plans operated by the Washington Teamsters Welfare Trust; wage adjustments to deputies participating in duty staff rotations at the sheriff's department; the permitting of sick or vacation leave donation to eligible colleagues. The schedule runs from 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021. AB2020-503 (Resolution 2020-046) **Approved 7-0**

216. Transition Whatcom County government from paper to digital operations? It will support the development of a plan to reduce paper usage by county government by 90 percent of 2019 levels by 2023. This vote will have a positive impact on the environment by decreasing the amount of waste send to landfills and help reduce the amount of carbon generated. AB2020-526 (Resolution 2020-047) **Approved 7-0**

217. Distribute surplus computers and similar devices to the community? Whatcom County replaces an average of 200 still functioning desktop and laptop computers per year, at a cost of 25 cents per pound for disposal. This vote establishes a program to distribute surplus computers to community members in need of technology resources. AB2020-527 (Resolution 2020-048) **Approved 7-0**

218. Amend the Point Roberts Special District? The amendments address business operations in the commercial district and will: permit businesses to have up to two on-site storage containers; allow hotels, motels, and timeshare condominiums within the district; allow kenneling of up to six animals when associated with an animal grooming establishment; allow RV parks; repeal the 40-foot setback along Roosevelt Road; allow a 10-foot setback in the district; establish a maximum building height of 45 feet; and address standards for parking, utilities, and trash storage areas. AB2020-445 (Ordinance 2020-056) **Adopted 7-0**

219. Grant a non-exclusive 25-year franchise for the provision of sewer services to Gordon Montgomery and John Milobar? The franchise will grant access (26-lot plat) to county rights of way to install and maintain sewer lines from the city of Blaine to the Ridge at Semiahmoo. AB2020-310 (Ordinance 2020-057) **Substitute adopted 7-0**

220. **Amend the Civic Center Improvement Fund project budget (request #1) in the amount of \$4,350,000?** At the 11/12/2013 meeting, vote #206, council established a \$2.5 million project budget to renovate the Civic Center building. This amendment will fund additional improvements to the building, including; the replacement of the fire suppression and alarm systems; energy efficiency upgrades to the HVAC system; electrical system upgrades; the installation of energy efficient LED lighting; and accessibility upgrades to the main entrance and garden level conference room. The total amended contract amount is \$6,850,000. AB2020-449 (Ordinance 2020-058) **Adopted 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

221. **Amend the 2020 budget (request #20) in the amount of \$4,476,128?** Appropriated: \$4,350,000 to fund safety, energy efficiency, and accessibility upgrades at the Civic Center building; \$126,128 to fund planning and operations for the 2020 general election. AB2020-450 (Ordinance 2020-059) **Adopted 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

Action Taken at November 24, 2020 Meeting

Shall the council:
222. Authorize the executive to **sign a \$157,721 contract with Compass Health of Everett?** The contract will provide reimbursement from federal grant funding for Covid-19 related operations and prevention expenditures. These include: the installation of touchless faucets and drinking fountains; purchase of personal protective equipment and other sanitation supplies; and updates to air filtration systems. The contract expires on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-530) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

223. Authorize the executive to **sign a \$51,543 contract (amendment #3) with Lighthouse Mission Ministries?** The amendment will extend oversight and operation services at the Whatcom County Covid-19 temporary housing facility for two months. The facility is currently used to house community members in need of isolation in quarantine but who have no other option for shelter. The total amended contract is \$347,443; it expires on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-531) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

224. Authorize the executive to **sign a \$238,650 contract with SeaMar Community Health Centers of Seattle?** SeaMar currently operates the GRACE (Ground-level Response and Coordinated Engagement) program. The contract will provide operational support to the Lighthouse Mission Ministries for temporary housing facility, including: laundry exchange; meal and sundries delivery; and phone access. The contract expires on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-533) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

225. Authorize the executive to **sign a \$160,000 public health marketing contract with Sustainable Connections?** The contract will support the development and implementation of a mixed-media campaign to promote the importance of local shopping to mitigate the negative impacts of Covid-19 on small businesses in Whatcom County. The contract expires on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-534) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

226. Authorize the executive to **sign a \$35,000 contract (amendment #1) with the Opportunity Council**? The contract will provide ongoing

Continued on next page

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Whatcom County Council

Continued from previous page

Action Taken at November 24, 2020 Meeting

ing reimbursement for Covid-19 related operations and prevention expenditures, including communications technology and equipment for remote work, personal protective equipment, and sanitation supplies. Funding for the contract comes from federal CARES Act dollars. The total amended contract is \$308,500; it expires on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-537) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

227. Authorize the executive to **sign a transfer option agreement with the Opportunity Council?** The agreement will permit the transfer of county-owned property to the Opportunity Council, located at 100 North Forest Street (Forest Street Annex), at the corner of North Forest and Laurel streets. It will be re-developed to provide 60 permanently affordable homes for low-income seniors, as well as a childcare center. The contract expires on 12/31/2025. (AB2020-545) **Substitute approved 7-0**

228. Authorize the executive to **sign contracts with two school districts – totaling \$635,185 – for reimbursement of eligible Covid-related prevention and technology expenses?** The contracts are with the Bellingham School District (\$449,185) and the Ferndale School District (\$186,000) and both expire on 12/30/2020. (AB2020-547/548) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

229. Authorize the executive to **sign a \$506,546 contract (amendment #3) with SeaMar Community Health Services of Seattle?** The contract for \$660,160 was originally approved at the 9/11/2018 meeting, vote #133. This amendment will renew the contract for the GRACE program facilitation services for one year. The program is intended to reduce over-use of emergency response, law enforcement, and other public resources by providing intensive care coordination services for individuals with complex needs. The total amended contract is \$1,619,708; it expires on 12/31/2021. (AB2020-550) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

230. **Adopt the 2021-2022 budget for the Point Roberts Transportation Benefit District?** (Public hearing held – council acting as the governing body of the Point Roberts Transportation Benefit District.) The \$40,000 budget will support the district’s plan to spend \$20,000 each year of the biennium. AB2020-491 (Resolution 2020-049) **Approved 5-2, Tyler Byrd and Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

231. **Adopt the 2021 budget for the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District and subzones?** (Public hearing held – council acting as the flood control district board of supervisors.) The funds will be used for flood control and stormwater construction and improvements in the subzones, which include: Acme/Van Zandt; Lynden/Everson; Sumas/Nooksack/Everson; Birch Bay Watershed and Samish Watershed. Revenues for 2021 are projected at \$9,221,401 and expenditures at \$12,173,669. AB2020-493 (Resolution 2020-050) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

232. **Authorize the board of supervisors of the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District to levy a 2021 property tax?** (Public hearing held – council acting as the flood control district board of supervisors.) The levy will be up to 50 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value upon real property, the same as 2020 except for new construction and improvements. AB2020-514 (Resolution 2020-051) **Approved 7-0**

233. **Certify amounts of property taxes to be levied by Whatcom County taxing districts?** State law requires the council to certify to the county assessor the amounts of taxes to be levied upon properties by each city, town, and taxing district in the county each year. AB2020-472 (Resolution 2020-052) **Substitute approved 6-1, Tyler Byrd opposed.**

234. **Order the cancellation of uncashed checks issued prior to 7/1/2019?** Washington state law allows for the cancellation of checks unredeemed within one year of their issue. There are 166 uncashed checks (warrants) totaling \$9,566. The uncashed checks were written to various businesses, groups, or individuals. Whatcom County has 135 uncashed checks totaling \$6,059. The largest uncashed check is for \$1,300. There are seven checks for \$100 or more. The smallest check is for 27 cents. The other 16 cemetery, fire, park, rural library and water districts have 31 uncashed checks totaling \$3,507. The largest uncashed check is for \$458. There are 11 other checks for more than \$100. The smallest check is for \$10.00. The money will be held for one year and then transferred to the state of Washington as abandoned property, where it will be available to the payee indefinitely AB2020-529 (Resolution 2020-053) **Approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

235. **Affirm racism as a public health crisis?** The resolution proposes actions to address systemic racism, including: implementing implicit bias and trauma-informed practice training for elected officials, county staff, and members of boards, commissions, and committees; assessing and revising county department policies, procedures, and ordinances to ensure racial equity and transparency; ensuring equitable hiring practices; promoting diversity in county boards and commissions; supporting community efforts to address racism and bias; and building and strengthening partnerships with community organizations addressing racism. AB2020-431 (Resolution 2020-054) **Substitute approved 6-1, Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

236. **Adjust precinct boundary lines and precinct maps?** (Public hearing held.) The city of Nooksack annexed voting precinct 147 requiring it be changed to voting precinct 702. The changes will be recorded in the book of election precinct maps, available at the council office or online at the county auditor’s homepage. AB2020-466 (Ordinance 2020-060) **Adopted 7-0**

237. **Adopt the six-year (2021-2026) capital improvement program?** (Public hearing held.) The program addresses county parks, trails, activity centers, maintenance and operations, general government buildings and sites, sheriff’s office, emergency management, adult corrections, juvenile detention, transportation, and stormwater facilities. The program requires updating every two years and was last updated in 2018. AB2020-447 (Ordinance 2020-061) **Adopted 7-0**

238. **Adopt the 2021 Whatcom County unified fee schedule?** (Public hearing held.) The schedule lists fees charged by the county to provide services such as building permits, parking, filing and licensing, animal control and charges for park equipment and facilities. The fees shall not exceed reimbursement costs to the providing department and the executive may add or adjust fees with sufficient justification. AB2020-490 (Ordinance 2020-062) **Substitute adopted 5-2, Tyler Byrd and Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

239. **Authorize the levy of 2021 taxes for county and state purposes?** (Public hearing held.) The levy will not change from the 2020 level except for new construction and improvements. AB2020-509 (Ordinance 2020-063) **Adopted 6-1, Tyler Byrd abstained.**

240. **Authorize the levy of taxes in 2021 for countywide emergency medical purposes?** (Public hearing held.) The levy will not change from the 2020 level except for new construction and improvements. AB2020-510 (Ordinance 2020-064) **Adopted 7-0**

241. **Limit the 2021 general fund tax levy?** (Public hearing held.) The levy will not change from the 2020 level, except for new construction and improvements. AB2020-511 (Ordinance 2020-065) **Adopted 4-3, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, and Carol Frazey opposed.**

242. **Adopt the 2021 tax levy for the Conservation Futures Fund?** (Public hearing held.) The levy will not change from the 2020 level except for new construction and improvements. The levy is 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation on real property. The funds can only be used to acquire land or development rights for conservation easements,

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Washington Is Threatened by Sea Level Rise

Continued from page 19

researchers at Construction Coverage set out to determine which states are most at risk. The researchers considered the total share of housing units projected to be in risk zones by 2100, assuming a worst-case scenario of unchecked pollution, along with information about housing values, the share (and value) of new housing in risk zones, and the ratio of housing growth in risk zones versus safe zones.

It is estimated that Washington will be impacted by sea level rise over the next 80 years. In a worst-case scenario, 1.3 percent of all Washington housing units (31,008 total units) will be threatened. Among all coastal U.S. states, Washington is the 18th most impacted by sea level rise.

Here is a summary of the data for Washington:

- Share of housing units in risk zones: 1.3 percent (31,008 units)
- Share of housing value in risk zones: 1.4 percent (\$15,201,029,574)
- Share of new housing units in risk zones: 0.9 percent
- Share of new housing value in risk zones: 1.4 percent
- Ratio of home growth in risk zones vs. safe zones: 0.49

For reference, here are the statistics for the entire United States:

- Share of housing units in risk zones: 5.4 percent (3,373,485 units)
- Share of housing value in risk zones: 7.3 percent (\$1,746,570,000,000)
- Share of new housing units in risk zones: 3.1 percent
- Share of new housing value in risk zones: 6.2 percent
- Ratio of home growth in risk zones vs. safe zones: N/A

For more information, a detailed methodology, and complete results, you can find the original report on Construction Coverage’s website: <https://constructioncoverage.com/research/US-cities-most-impacted-by-sea-level-rise>

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Port of Bellingham Commission

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District 3

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Term expires: Dec. 2023

Upcoming Meetings

Harbor Center
Conference Room
1801 Roeder Avenue
January 5 and 19: 4 p.m.
February 2 and 16: 4 p.m.
March 2 and 16: 4 p.m.

Action Taken at November 3, 2020 Meeting

Shall the commission:

95. Authorize the executive director to **sign an agreement with Sanitary Service Company for a remedial design investigation at the Central Waterfront site?** The contract to perform the work was approved at the 1/22/2020 meeting, vote #7. The port shall coordinate the work to minimize impact to the Sanitary Service Company. The cleanup site is approximately 55 acres of industrial property; a four-acre portion of the site is property owned by Sanitary Service Company. The cleanup is being managed under the Model Toxics Control Act. There are no costs associated with this agreement. (9789/Consent Agenda C) **Approved 3-0**

96. **Award the low bid of \$235,879 for exterior repairs and painting at the Harbor Center and Marine Square?** The engineer's estimate was \$329,000. The work at the Harbor Center involves exterior repairs, caulking windows and doors, gutter repair and other miscellaneous work. The work at Maine Square involves cleaning, painting and repairing the exterior. The port received five bids. (9790/Consent Agenda D) **Approved 3-0**

97. **Small Works Roster.** Contracts under \$300,000 fall within the executive director's spending authority; they only require commission notification. Inner harbor pile replacement: \$94,243; waterfront lawn and trail: \$80,438; Gate 1 float and gangway replacement: \$195,606; cruise terminal solar power project: \$210,971; electrical vehicle and pay station improvements: \$142,868. (9791/Consent Agenda E)

98. **Approve the appointment of Becky Kelly to the grounds transportation position on the Bellingham Airport Technical Advisory Committee?** Ms. Kelly is a transit planner for the Whatcom Transportation Authority. She has a master's degree in urban planning and has 15 years of transportation experience. As a graduate intern she worked in aviation planning at SeaTac airport. She will serve a three-year term on the nine-member committee. (9797/Consent Agenda B) **Approved 3-0**

99. Authorize the executive director to **accept a \$312,303 state grant for the Gate 1 replacement project?** The wood float, creosote pilings and service ramp at the Gate 1 pump-out float at Squalicum Harbor will be replaced with a utility gangway and a concrete float/piling system. At the 11/5/2019 meeting, vote #132, a \$95,435 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the project was accepted. The two grants bring the total for the project to \$381,740. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$442,946. (9793/Consent Agenda G) **Approved 3-0**

100. **Approve the sale of the building at 3710 Williamson Way from Rover Stay Over/The Puget Hound to Scheffer Holding of Lynden?** At the 9/17/2019 meeting, vote #115/116, The Puget Hound/Rover Stay Over (dog boarding, daycare and grooming services) purchased the building at 3710 Williamson Way from the port for \$53,239. The airport property was leased to the Whatcom Humane Society until 2013 and to The Puget Hound in 2017. Rover Stay Over conducting business as The Puget House will sublease the building from Scheffer Holdings. (9794/Consent Agenda H) **Approved 3-0**

Action Taken at November 17, 2020 Meeting

Shall the commission:

101. **Donate an ARFF Lukas tool to Firefighters United and accept an Amkus tool donation from the North Whatcom Fire District?** The Lucas tool was acquired by the port in 1980 with federal funds. The Lucas tool requires a power cord, it is designed to cut through metal. The Amkus tool was acquired in 1995, is powered by gas and is 20 pounds lighter than the Lucas tool. (9826/Consent Agenda B) **Approved 3-0**

102. Authorize the executive director to **sign a \$351,305 contract (amendment #3) with SP Plus Corp. of Chicago, Ill., for janitorial services at 13 Bellingham airport buildings?** This contract is the same amount at the

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one approved at 1/7/2020 meeting, vote #2. This one-year extension runs from 2/1/2021 to 1/31/2022 and brings the total amended amount to \$1,650,833. (9827/Consent Agenda C) **Approved 3-0**

103. **Small Works Roster.** Contracts under \$300,000 fall within the executive director's spending authority; they only require commission notification. Airport carpet replacement: \$72,793; Cornwall toxic covering repairs: \$68,264. (9828/Consent Agenda D) **Approved 3-0**

104. Authorize the executive director to **sign a \$31,500 contract (amendment #2) with Bennett Engineering of Bellingham to monitor the airport woodwaste landfill?** Georgia-Pacific operated the landfill from 1984 to 1992; the port acquired the property in 2005. The Whatcom County Health Department issued the permit for the closure of the wood-waste landfill site in 2010, see the 12/7/2010 meeting, vote #165. It is anticipated that woodwaste post-closure monitoring, water sampling and reporting will be required for 15 to 20 years. The total amended amount is \$125,430. (9829/Consent Agenda E) **Approved 3-0**

105. **Lease an additional 4,899 square feet to Alpha Distributors at 3767 Alpha Way?** A lease for the property was signed at the 8/18/1987 and the property increased on 12/19/1988. On 1/18/1989, an underground fuel storage was installed. (9832/Consent Agenda H) **Approved 3-0**

106. **Modify a lease with The Coffee Junction located in Fairhaven Station?** The original lease was signed in 1995, the business was known as Fairhaven Coffee and News. Dues to the pandemic, the business has been unable to cover operational costs. The rental structure will be change from monthly rent to 6 percent of gross sales from June 2020 through August 2021. (9833/Consent Agenda I) **Approved 3-0**

107. **Approve a lease with Fairhaven Workstudios LLC (amendment #6) for property north of the Fairhaven Marine Industrial Park?** At the 12/6/2016 meeting, vote #205, the commission approved a lease for 1.5 acres of undeveloped property for office and live/work studios, subject to city of Bellingham's approval. The lease was amended at the 2/6/2018 meeting, vote #25; 5/7/2019 meeting, vote #60, and 12/10/2019 meeting, vote #151 and 6/2/2020 meeting, vote #43. The monthly payment will remain at \$500. This amendment expires on 12/31/2021. (9834/Consent Agenda J) **Approved 3-0**

108. **Adopt the 2021 strategic budget?** (Public hearings held at November 3 and November 17 meetings.) The regular property tax levy for 2021 will result in approximately \$7,464,017 in taxes collected by the port. 9835/Action Item 1 (Resolution 1394) **Approved 3-0**

109. **Adopt the 2019 property tax levy?** (Public hearings held at November 3 and November 17 meetings.) The estimated levy rate will be \$.2089 per thousand of valuation. 9835/Action Item 1 (Resolution 1395) **Approved 3-0**

110. Authorize the executive director to **sign a \$12,013,472 settlement agreement with Univar Solutions USA for remediation costs at the Harris Avenue Shipyard cleanup site?** In 1915, Pacific American Fisheries constructed a shipyard on the five-acre site and in 1916 leased the in-water area from the state of Washington. In 1966, the port purchased the upland property. Hazardous substances have been identified at the site and require action under Model Toxics Control Act. Univar is a successor to the Pacific American Fisheries and liable for the environmental remediation. At the 3/19/2013 meeting, vote #53, Univar signed an agreement that it was liable for 40 percent of future cleanup costs. Liability insurance was issued by The Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania, the New Hampshire Insurance Company and Northbrook Excess and Surplus Insurance Company. In the agreement, the port will not pursue claims against the three companies in exchange for the remediation costs. (9836/Action Item 2) **Approved 3-0**

111. Authorize the executive director to **sign an agreed order with the state of Washington to perform remedial design for cleanup actions at the Harris Avenue Shipyard site?** At the 12/17/2002 meeting, vote #121, the executive director signed an agreed order with the state of Washington for a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) of contaminated marine sediments at the Harris Avenue shipyard site. At the 2/16/2010 meeting, vote #37, the executive director signed an agreed order with the state of Washington for a site-wide remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS). The RI/FS agreed order was amended in 2016 and finalized by the state in 2019. A draft cleanup action plan for the site has been developed and will be available for public review prior to finalizing. (9837/Action Item 3) **Approved 3-0**

Continued on next page

Whatcom County Council

Continued from page 21

Action Taken at November 24, 2020 Meeting

with a small percentage used for maintenance. AB2020-512 (Ordinance 2020-066) **Adopted 7-0**

243. **Authorize the 2021 levy of taxes in Whatcom County for road purposes?** (Public hearing held.) The levy will not change from the 2020 level except for new construction and improvements. For the 2021 budget year, \$806,530 will be diverted from county road taxes and used for traffic enforcement. AB2020-513 (Ordinance 2020-067) **Adopted 7-0**


244. Adopt the Whatcom County 2021-2022 biennium budget? (Public hearing held.) The total appropriation for 2021 is \$219,792,067 and for 2022 is \$218,021,374. AB2020-504 (Ordinance 2020-068) **Substitute adopted 5-2, Tyler Byrd and Ben Elenbaas opposed.**

245. **Continue the interim moratorium on the acceptance and processing of applications and permits for new or expanded facilities in the Cherry Point urban growth area?** (Public hearing held.) The moratorium covers facilities including but not limited to piers, wharfs, buildings, tank farms, pipelines, rail loading and off-loading facilities, road spurs, or other infrastructure purposed on exporting unrefined fossil fuels, including stabilized or unstabilized crude oil, diluted or raw bitumen, syncrude, coal, methane, propane, butane, and liquid or gaseous natural gas. An emergency ordinance was adopted at the 8/9/2016 meeting, vote #147; the first interim moratorium was passed at the 9/27/2016 meeting, vote #173. This vote is the ninth time the interim moratorium has been renewed. Interim moratoria are required to

be renewed every six months. AB2020-520 (Ordinance 2020-069) **Adopted 4-3, Tyler Byrd, Ben Elenbaas, and Kathy Kershner opposed.**

246. **Amend the 2020 budget (request #21) in the amount of \$316,676?** Appropriated: \$290,324 to fund Covid-19 prevention measures at the health department, including contracting of temporary nursing staff and case investigators; \$13,852 to fund customizations services for a medical outreach vehicle at the health department intended to provide safe injection resources in the county; and \$12,500 to fund drug enforcement overtime wages at the sheriff's department. AB2020-494 (Ordinance 2020-070) **Adopted 7-0**

247. **Establish the Shallow Shore culvert relocation fund and \$100,000 project-based budget?** The project is listed as number one on the six-year water resources improvement program and will address flooding by relocating the existing outfall three hundred feet to the north. The estimated cost of the project is \$350,000. AB2020-495 (Ordinance 2020-071) **Adopted 7-0**

248. **Appropriate an additional \$237,395 in expenditure authority (amendment #2) to the project-based budget for the public safety radio system fund?** The fund will repair and replace failing communications equipment at Mount Constitution, Post Point and Lummi Island, Point Roberts and Blaine. At the 11/20/2018 meeting, vote #205, the council voted to establish a \$396,802 project-based budget and approved (amendment #1) at the 5/21/2019 meeting, vote #118. The total amended project budget is \$688,553. The estimated cost of a new system is \$6,023,751. AB2020-496 (Ordinance 2020-072) **Adopted 7-0** 

Bellingham City Council

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Action Taken at November 23, 2020 Meeting

Surface and Stormwater Comprehensive Plan was established in 1990 to further the public health, safety, and welfare by promoting a comprehensive approach to surface and stormwater problems, controlling water runoff and enhancing environmental protection. At the 9/28/2020 meeting, vote #171, the council adopted the 2020 Surface and Stormwater Comprehensive Plan. Staff presented a utility rate ordinance to the City Council on 10/12/2020. Based on input from council and public comment, staff made several changes to the proposed ordinance including: 1) Delayed rate increases for the large customer rate class until 2022; 2) Increased rates for all customer classes by the consumer price index effective 1/1/2021; 3) Continuation of the public education credit until 2022 then gradually phased out by 2026; and 4) Continuation of the payment for streets through 2021. These changes provide large footprint customers more time to adjust to and budget for the necessary rate increases. Changes to existing credits, permit fees and system development charges will take effect on 1/1/2021 and have no impact to the proposed 2021-2022 budget. AB22741 (Ordinance 2020-11-031) **Approved 7-0**

220. Reduce the public meeting requirements of the Planning Commission's Shoreline Committee? Currently, Bellingham code requires the Shoreline Committee to hold a public meeting to review every shoreline permit application and make a recommendation to the planning director. This step may be unnecessary for smaller and non-controversial projects that do not propose impacts to shoreline riparian areas. This amendment gives the Shoreline Committee chair the option of requesting the aforementioned public meeting. The Planning Commission currently has a similar practice and supports this amendment. AB22806 (Ordinance

2020-11-032) **Approved 7-0**

221. **Amend the 2019-2020 biennial budget to ensure the city can meet its Sportsplex debt obligation?** Activities at the Sportplex include indoor soccer, ice hockey, figure and speed skating. At the 1/26/2004 meeting, vote #15, the council authorized the sale of 25-year obligation bonds to finance the Sportplex purchase and at 2/23/2004 meeting, vote #40, authorized the payment of \$4,315,000 for the purchase. The city leases the facility to Whatcom Sports & Recreation, with revenues from the lease paying the bond payments. A debt payment is due on 12/1/2020. Due to the impacts of Covid-19 and related restrictions, the city waived three months of rent. Since then, Whatcom Sports & Recreation has been unable make lease payments and is now in default. The city remains supportive of Whatcom Sports & Recreation and is actively working with them to ensure the long-term success of the Sportsplex. Funds will be sourced from \$37,306 in existing cash in bond payment fund; \$147,725 from the Sportsplex deposit fund and \$52,163 from general fund for a total of \$237,194. AB22808 (Ordinance 2020-11-033) **Approved 7-0**

222. **Establish the 2021 property tax levy?** (Public hearing held at October 26 meeting.) State law requires the city to pass an ordinance stating its intent to increase property taxes. The city's 2021 property tax levy will increase by \$194,825 plus new construction. The ordinance must be delivered to the Whatcom County assessor by 11/30/2020. This represents the statutorily allowed one percent increase, exclusive of the affordable housing portion of the regular levy, as calculated upon the previous year's actual levy less refunds. The affordable housing levy is fixed at \$4,000,000 and will not increase. Revenue from new construction will provide an additional \$314,330, resulting in a 2021 property tax levy of \$28,211,745. AB22819 (Ordinance 2020-11-034) **Approved 7-0** 


Port of Bellingham Commission

Continued from previous page

Action Taken at November 17, 2020 Meeting

112. Authorize the executive director to **send a non-binding letter of intent to Dominion Sustainable Development Corporation of Bellingham for the acquisition of property at 1000 C Street in exchange for port property in Fairhaven?** Dominion (owned by David Ebendal) is planning a development in Fairhaven that includes an underground parking structure that requires the acquisition of 24,500 square of property at the port's Fairhaven Marine Industrial Park. David Ebendal owns property at 1000 C Street that port would like to acquire, it abuts port holdings

on C Street. In exchange for the C Street property, the port will convey to Dominion the Fairhaven Marine Industrial Park property and \$350,000. (9838/Action Item 4) **Approved 2-1, Michael Shepard opposed.**

113. Authorize the executive director to **sign a docket application to rezone a part of the Fairhaven Marine Industrial Park?** The rezone would add Commercial Core zoning to the existing Fairhaven Urban Village Industrial 2 zoning. The rezone can take a year or more. The port will sign the rezone docket application so the process can move forward. (9838/Action Item 4) **Approved 2-1, Michael Shepard opposed.** 

State of Washington Awards \$9.8 million for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

The Washington State Department of Commerce announced \$9.8 million in Electrification of Transportation Systems (ETS) grants for 14 projects in communities across the state. Priority was given to projects designed to close gaps in availability of EV charging infrastructure and aid communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and pollution from transportation systems.

Transportation is by far the largest source of greenhouse gas pollution – over 40 percent of all carbon emissions and a variety of co-pollutants.

Washington state is one of the top three states for EV adoption, having already surpassed Gov. Jay Inslee's initial goal of 50,000 EVs by 2020. Investments in fast-charging infrastructure are crucial to ensuring that our state is equipped to handle the next phase of accelerated adoption of EVs called for in the 2020 Motor Vehicle Emission Standards law, requiring a percentage of yearly new vehicle sales to be zero emission.

The ETS grants are from the state's Clean Energy Fund, established in 2013, and will result in over 320 new plugs in 11 counties installing Level 2, fast-charging and heavy duty public transportation charging stations. The initial round of 37 applications totaled \$25 million in requests for funding.

Proposed projects conditionally awarded grants include:

- City of Bellingham – \$1.5 million to install charging stations on city-owned land for public, fleet and workplace use, including DC fast charging stations near on-and-off-ramps to Interstate 5, Level 2 charging stations at established parking locations, and off-grid solar chargers at areas with higher use during summer travel months.
- Skagit County – \$989,521 to procure and construct shore-side EVSE for a 28-car, 150-passenger battery electric ferry for service to Guemes Island.

Reporters Get Free Legal Help

Continued from page 1

subpoena case, too. He said the purpose of the shield law is not only to protect reporters from appearing like they are an arm of the state, but also to encourage the public and potential sources to confide in reporters. “I think if the press had to respond [to a subpoena], any time they had potentially discoverable information in some lawsuit, the burden on their time would be extreme,” Stahl said in a Nov. 20 phone interview. “It would prevent them from doing their jobs. It would cause sources to dry up and be less and less willing to disclose information on matters of public interest.”

Resources for Journalists

Journalism organizations like the Committee to Protect Journalists, the Society of Professional Journalists and Reporters Without Borders each offer a unique perspective and resources to defend press freedom. The Protecting Journalists Pro Bono Program is not trying to replace

“The specter that [a journalist] may get sued and financially taken down by the threat of someone who doesn’t want that story to be told I think is unfair.” – Sima Sarrafan, Microsoft attorney

the work done by those organizations, but rather enhance journalist safety, according to Burke. Reporters should be able to do their work unencumbered and publish important stories, he added. For the pre-publication service, the program provides trained media lawyers to review news articles, podcast scripts and other journalistic productions for potentially libelous or defamatory language. Burke emphasizes that their lawyers can provide guidance and advice, but ultimately, it’s the reporter in control of what goes to print. “We don’t make a decision about what they publish or what they don’t publish,” said Burke, who also teaches media law at UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. “We help them identify risks and we talk them through those based on the review that we’ve done.” The second arm of the program, FOI assistance, can help journalists who are getting pushback from agencies on open government requests. The Washington State Coalition for Open Government makes referrals to the program specifically for journalists who are experiencing resistance by agencies to provide public records, according to WCOG President Toby Nixon. The WCOG helpline receives two to three requests per week, on average, he said in a Dec. 17 email, and those calls come from journalists and members of the public. The third component of the program is the subpoena support. Receiving a subpoena can be daunting for a freelancer who’s focused on reporting and writing and not defending herself/himself in a legal battle nor considering the consequences, which as mentioned, could include jail time. “Generally, any person who is asked or ordered to testify at a legal proceeding, or to produce documents relevant to one, is required to comply,” according to Jonathan Peters, Associate Professor of Journalism/Law at The University of Georgia. In his 2016 *Columbia Journalism Review* article, “Shield laws and journalist’s privilege: The basics every reporter should know,” Peters says the purpose of the penalty is not to punish, but to “extract compliance.” Experts agree, a reporter who receives a subpoena requesting his/her notes, materials or sources should seek the help of an experienced media attorney and act quickly as a subpoena typically has a deadline to respond. **W**

Local Government on TV Channel 10

Bellingham City Council Meetings

January 11 and 25; February 8 and 22: 7 p.m.

Live telecast Monday

Committee meetings at 1 p.m. and regular meeting at 7 p.m.

Repeat telecast Tuesday

Committee meetings at noon and regular meeting at 7 p.m.

Repeat telecast Wednesday

Regular meeting at 8 a.m.

Repeat telecast Saturday

Committee meetings at noon and regular meeting at 7 p.m.

Whatcom County Council Meetings

January 12 and 26; February 9 and 23: 7 p.m.

Telecast: Wednesdays – 7 p.m.

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