

# Salish Current

Independent, fact-based news for Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit counties

News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending July 3, 2020:

## [Necessary travel: ferries' winter schedule in summer brings travel delays for locals, visitors in San Juans](#)



Is the boat on time? Maybe, maybe not. Lanes fill with cars awaiting the call to board for the San Juan Islands on the Friday afternoon of Independence Day weekend. Riders have been met with delays of up to 90 minutes — and more — as the Washington State Ferries system copes with COVID-related challenges. (Amy Nelson photo © 2020)

*By Genevieve Iverson*

— Several COVID-shutdown related factors require Washington State Ferries to continue running on a limited schedule even as summer travel increases, creating travel delays and raising as-yet unanswerable questions about when things may change. Routes from Anacortes to the San Juan Islands are on an extended winter, or baseline, schedule. This means that the island routes are working with reduced loads on just three vessels from Anacortes daily, compared to five fully crewed boats per the regular summer schedule. [Read more here.](#)

*Salish Current* affirms its commitment to work for truth, justice, equality and healing for all people. #SayTheirNames #BlackLivesMatter #NoJusticeNoPeace

\* \* \*

## News from around the region:

### Health & Safety

- Applications for county phases under the Safe Start plan will be paused for two weeks and all businesses will be required to serve only customers who are wearing facial coverings, according to Governor Jay Inslee. ([Bellingham Herald](#))
- Wearing a mask can reduce virus transmission rates by about 75%, according to Whatcom Health Department Director Erika Lautenbach. ([Bellingham Herald](#))

### Government

- The San Juan County Planning Commission will take testimony on the county's proposed marijuana production and processing development regulations on July 17. ([San Juan County](#))
- League of Women Voter online [candidate forums for San Juan County](#) are scheduled on July 7 and July 8. [Skagit County forums](#) and [Whatcom County LWV forums](#) are scheduled to be online July 15.
- July 6, 1 and 7 PM, Bellingham City Council agenda items of possible interest:
  - \* A public hearing (7 PM) on a proposed ballot measure in November 2020 to extend for 10 years a sales and use tax of two-tenths of one percent (0.002) to fund the following projects in the City's adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program: Annual Street Pavement Resurfacing Program; Nonmotorized Transportation Improvements; and Climate Action Plan & Whatcom Transportation Authority Transit Plan Improvements. [22686](#)
  - \* Authorize amending the City's 2019-2020 biennial budget by disbursing the \$2.7 million CARES Act funding: \$500,000 on grants for businesses in Bellingham's commercial core, \$200,000 on grants for childcare providers, \$200,000 to address food security issues, and \$500,000 for the Drop-in Center, with the remaining \$1.3 million to reimburse expenditures related to COVID-19 response. [22691](#)
  - \* To participate in City of Bellingham Council meetings, [click here](#).
- July 7, 6 PM, Whatcom County Council agenda items of possible interest:
  - \* Approve a contract between Whatcom County and the Washington State Military Department for a \$400,725 federal Operation Stonegarden grant for

the sheriff's department to secure the international border. [AB2020-269](#)

\* Authorize amending an agreement with the Washington State Department of Health for support of the Pollution Identification and Correction program to include an additional grant of \$447,732 for a total amended contract amount of \$1,047,732. [AB2020-271](#)

\* Authorize a bid award of \$644,554.61 and contract with Boss Construction, Inc. for the Swift Creek Channel Excavation and Oat Coles North Repository Development project. [AB2020-273](#)

\* To participate in Whatcom County Council meetings, [click here](#).

## **Nature**

- The Port of Vancouver's expansion at Roberts Bank Terminal 2 has been described as making the Fraser River a "parking lot," threatening salmon, southern resident killer whales and an Indigenous way of life. ([The Narwhal](#))
- Bellingham's Squalicum Creek construction will begin in mid-July to address quality and habitat problems created by Bug Lake, a man-made gravel borrow pit. ([City of Bellingham/Whatcom Talk](#))
- The Washington Department of Agriculture is setting out 600 traps around Blaine, Custer and Bellingham in forested areas to trap invasive Asian giant hornets. ([Associated Press](#))
- Members of L and K pods returned this week but the absence of the Southern Resident whales can be traced to the lack of salmon prey. ([Puget Sound Institute](#))

## **Business**

- Canadian visitors in 2018 spent \$140 million --11.5% of Whatcom County's taxable retail sales, according to an updated Border Policy Research Institute report. ([Bellingham Herald](#))
- Skagit County commissioners passed an ordinance creating a Tourism Promotion Area funded by a \$2-per-night room tax on large hotels. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))
- The city of Ferndale's lodging tax supports projects encouraging tourism and cultural activities, and applications for the 2021 Lodging Tax Grants are now being accepted. ([My Ferndale News](#))

## Community

- Police practices and social justice were discussed Wednesday by Bellingham Deputy Police Chief Flo Simon, Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu, Rosalinda Guillén of Community to Community, Shirley Williams of Lummi Nation and White Swan Environmental and Jonathan Randolph, a Black entrepreneur and professional vocalist. ([Bellingham Herald](#))
- Hundreds of marchers in Bellingham last Sunday celebrated the anniversary of the Stonewall riots and stood in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and the call to defund the police. ([Bellingham Herald](#))
- Lynden has been ground zero for both a Black Lives Matter rally and a support-the-police rally this past Saturday and this weekend will see a Freedom Parade on Saturday and a Black Lives Matter march on Sunday. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))
- The Town of Friday Harbor will celebrate the 4th of July with a fireworks display. ([San Juan Journal](#))
- Canadians are still entering Peach Arch Park despite it being closed from the Canadian side in June, according to Len Saunders, Blaine attorney. ([CBC](#))

\* \* \*

*Like this newsletter? Share it. And it's easy to subscribe by reply mail. Your email address will never be shared-- and you can unsubscribe at any time. Mike Sato.*

\* \* \*

*Salish Current is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, online local news organization serving Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit Counties. Salish Current exists to strengthen democratic governance by reporting and curating local news with independence and strict journalistic integrity.*

*Facebook: [Salish Current](#)*

*Twitter: [@currentsalish](#)*

*Email: [SalishCurrent@gmail.com](mailto:SalishCurrent@gmail.com)*

*Website: [salish-current.org](http://salish-current.org)*