



News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending Dec. 4, 2020:

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We're truly heartened by your generous response to the [NewsMatch giving campaign](#). Thank you! As a new nonprofit, *Salish Current* might also be eligible for a larger amount of [NewsMatch](#) funds so we'd like to cheer on those who can give this month to support independent, local news. We're building up good momentum with a great team of paid freelancers and volunteer editors and advisors. Help us move forward into 2021 with a [donation today](#). Thank you! — Amy Nelson, publisher, and Mike Sato, managing editor.

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[Vulnerable lands — and creatures — of San Juan Islands National Monument await management details](#)



A mother harbor seal and her pup rest on a rock haulout below Iceberg Point off Lopez Island in the San Juan Islands National Monument. Established in 2013, the geographically unique monument still awaits a finalized management plan that speaks to its particular characteristics and location — raising concern among local advocates. (Amy Nelson photo © 2020)

By Genevieve Iverson — One thousand acres of unique and fragile San Juan Islands land sit waiting for an imminent management plan that will outline the next 20 years of protection and recreation. The San Juan Islands National Monument, designated in 2013 by President Barack Obama, protects 65 sites in the San Juan Islands. These acres are currently part of the portfolio of the Bureau of Land Management under general agency regulations and await a resource management plan to be finalized and implemented. ([Read more here.](#))

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

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News from around the region:

Health & Safety

- Washington state on Monday launched a coronavirus exposure alert tool for smartphone users statewide. The smartphone app sends you an alert if you've had close contact with another user who later tests positive for the coronavirus. Tom Banse reports. ([NW News Network](#))
- According to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, the border will remain closed until COVID is under control. ([Seattle Times](#))
- The Washington, D.C.-based Wilson Center has announced the formation of a cross-border task force to study the problem of how and when to relax rules imposed by the U.S. and Canada that limit border travel to essential travel. ([The Northern Light](#))
- The Northwest Clean Air Agency is calling a Stage 2 air quality burn ban in the Columbia Valley urban growth area (including the Peaceful Valley and Paradise Lakes developments) in Whatcom County because cold, calm air is preventing harmful wood smoke from clearing out. ([Whatcom County](#))

Government

- The Anacortes City Council is scheduled on Dec. 7 to approve its 2021 budget which consists of \$72.6 million in expenditures and \$69.7 million in revenue. ([Anacortes American/paywall](#))
- [City of Bellingham](#)

* Before the City Council's [Public Health, Safety and Justice Committee on Dec. 7 at 11 a.m.](#):

- Discussion of the Denver STAR Emergency Response Program for Mental Health, Substance Use, and Other Public Health Needs [\[22837\]](#)

* Before the City Council of the Whole on Dec. 7 at its [1:45 p.m. meeting](#):

- An Ordinance Terminating the Non-Exclusive Franchise for QWEST Broadband Services, Inc. d/b/a Lumen Technologies (f/k/a CenturyLink) to Operate and Maintain a Cable Television System within the City. [\[21671\]](#)
- An Ordinance Adopting the 2021-2022 Biennial Budget [\[22775\]](#)

* Before the City Council on Dec. 7 at its [7 p.m. meeting](#):

- A Public Hearing on Ordinance 2020-11-028 to Extend the Moratorium on the Processing of Development Applications and Permits Relating to the Redevelopment of Existing Mobile Home Parks [\[22025\]](#)

- *The next Council meeting is scheduled for Dec. 14.

- Whatcom County

* The Whatcom County Council at its meeting of Nov. 24 passed a [resolution](#) affirming that racism constitutes a public health crisis in Whatcom County, joining other cities and counties across the state and the nation with this resolution and committing the county to take steps toward racial equity.

* Before the Whatcom County Council on Dec. 8 at [its meeting at 6 p.m.](#):

- [AB2020-577](#) Request approval for the County Executive to authorize the purchase of body-worn cameras, and enter into a contract for associated services with Axon Enterprise, Inc., using the Washington State Contract #06316, in an amount not to exceed \$381,437.85
- [AB2020-585](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a 10-year lease agreement between Whatcom County and Stryker for the acquisition of capital equipment including gurneys, powerlifts, LifePaks and more to outfit EMS Advanced Life Support Units in an amount of 10 equal payments of \$468,316.48 over 10 years totaling \$4,683,164.80
- [AB2020-564](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and GSI Water Solutions, Inc. to conduct a peer review of the Lynden-Everson-Nooksack-Sumas numerical groundwater model, provide recommendations for improvements and additional work, in the amount of \$103,700 (Council acting as the Whatcom Flood Control District Board of Supervisors)
- [AB2020-565](#) Consideration of Hearing Examiners recommendation on preliminary long subdivision application filed by Governors Point Land LP (Governors Point subdivision)

- Port of Bellingham

* Before the Port of Bellingham Commission on Dec. 8 [at its meeting at 4 p.m.](#):

- The commission will hear the following presentations: Waterfront District Update, Working Waterfront Task Force Update, Legislative Update.
- Approve a [motion](#) authorizing the Executive Director to execute an [Infrastructure Agreement](#) with Corix Utilities Systems Inc. to provide District Energy on Bellingham's downtown waterfront.
- Approve a [motion](#) to approve an Option Agreement between the Port of Bellingham and ABC Recycling Operations Corp for 5.97 acres of property located in the Log Pond area plus rights to use the Bellingham Shipping Terminal on a non-exclusive basis.

Nature

- Lummi Natural Resource staff have captured 2,600 European green crabs this year compared to 64 the year earlier. ([KUOW](#))
- The Center for Whale Research in Friday Harbor has purchased a 45-acre ranch in the Elwha River watershed to protect spawning habitat for native Chinook salmon. ([Center for Whale Research/Orcsonian](#))
- The Ag Water Board of Whatcom County [will meet on Dec. 16 at 1 p.m.](#) in Lynden and discuss Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu's Nooksack water rights [draft concept paper](#) that proposes to have the Watershed Management Board reassert its lead role in a comprehensive settlement process and continue to operate under a 2016 agreement.
- Two salmon habitat restoration projects on the South Fork Skagit River and at Port Susan have received funding as part of a \$918,700 grant package. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Business

- Federal authorities in Seattle have charged two people with a terrorist attack on train tracks, suggesting they were motivated by opposition to the construction of a natural gas pipeline across British Columbia when they interfered with the operation of a railroad in Washington state. ([Associated Press](#))
- Skagit County Hearing Examiner Wick Dufford on Monday approved the expansion of a gravel and sand mine on Fidalgo Island which will remove 60,000 tons of material per year for 60 years from 53.5 acres off Rosario Road near Lake Erie. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Community

- Police Chief David Doll will retire from the Bellingham Police Department, effective Jan. 4, 2021. Deputy Chief Flo Simon will serve as interim chief. ([City of Bellingham](#))

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

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