



Dear Donors and Readers: First of all, thanks to those who have donated to our [NewsMatch campaign](#) during November. We have another month to meet our matching goal of \$11,500 —and if we raise another \$3,000, we will meet that goal. Please take some time to read Bill Dietrich's essay below on why a nonprofit, independent news platform like *Salish Current* is increasingly important in our democracy today. And read Kimberly Cauvel's freelance news story about Cherry Point fossil-fuel development — stories like that are what your donations to NewsMatch pay for and will pay for in the coming year. Reading *Salish Current* is free — but it takes money to report real, local news. Thanks for doing your part. Tell your friends. Go with the *Current*. [Donate here](#). Thank you! Amy Nelson, publisher, and Mike Sato, managing editor.

News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending Nov. 29, 2020:

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[Unlikely partners' compromise will halt new fossil-fuel development at Cherry Point](#)



Fuels for cars, furnaces, airplanes and more have been produced at refineries on Whatcom County's Cherry Point for decades. The nature of those products could change or other uses of the industrial area could be added, with a stakeholders' group working on recommendations for regulations that would prohibit some new fossil-fuel-based development; above, a view from the BP Cherry Point Refinery's main entrance. (Amy Nelson photo © 2020)

By Kimberly Cauvel — An effort to steer future development at Whatcom County's primary industrial center away from fossil fuels while providing regulatory certainty is inching closer to completion with the help of an unlikely partnership between environment and industry interests. [\(Real more here\)](#)

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Community Voices / Erosion in local news threatens democracy



Journalism seeks to bring important, fact-based information to the communities it serves; in that quest, *The Seattle Times* staff have won 11 Pulitzer Prizes. Above, publisher Frank Blethen is doused with champagne after a Pulitzer win in April 1990 for coverage reported by Mary Ann Gwinn, two-time Pulitzer winner Eric Nalder, Ross Anderson and Bill Dietrich of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound. (Courtesy *The Seattle Times*)

By Bill Dietrich — My old newspaper boss isn't shy about warning that local dailies here in Northwest Washington are turning into ghosts — ghost newspapers, existing in name but no longer having the staff or the commitment to cover local and regional news. That's not the fault of Whatcom and Skagit's hard-working, underpaid journalists. It's a national crisis that's been accelerating at warp speed since 1990, when newspaper revenue began to crater because the internet eliminated want ads and much of print retail advertising. ([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:

Election

- Skagit County election results on Nov. 24 certified that the race for Skagit County Superior Court Position 3 was won by Elizabeth Yost Neidzowski with 31,641 votes (50.1%) over Tom Seguine with 31,253 votes (49.49%).

Health & Safety

- A so-called "Turkey Rebellion" protest rally Nov. 21 against COVID-19 restrictions drew about 150 attendees who heard anti-Inslee speeches from Jim McKinney, pastor Gary Small, Joe Murphy, Rep. Mike Sutherland, Sen. Doug Ericksen and Kris Halterman. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))
- The U.S./Canada border will stay closed to non-essential land travel until Dec. 21. ([Northern Light](#))

Government

- The Ferndale City Council will meet online at 5 p.m. on Nov. 30 to discuss the city's 2021 draft budget. ([My Ferndale News](#))

- City of Bellingham

- At the Nov. 23 [City Council meeting](#) the following selected actions were taken:

- Approval (7-0) to add 10 additional measures to the 2018 adopted Climate Action Plan.
 - Approval (7-0) of the 2021 joint legislative agenda of the City of Bellingham, the Port of Bellingham and Whatcom County.
 - Council Member Hammill announced that at the next City Council meeting, he will seek to present a resolution for consideration that declares racism a public health crisis.

- The next Council meeting is scheduled for Dec. 7.

- Whatcom County

- At the Nov. 24 [County Council meeting](#) the following selected actions were taken:

- Approval (5-2, Byrd and Ellenbaas nay) of a substitute ordinance adopting of the final budget of Whatcom County for the biennium 2021-2022
 - Approval (4-3, Byrd, Ellenbaas and Kershner nay) adopting an ordinance imposing an interim moratorium on the acceptance and processing of applications and permits for new or expanded facilities in the Cherry Point urban growth area, the primary purpose of which would be the shipment of unrefined fossil fuels not to be processed at Cherry Point (Also see: [Unlikely partners' compromise will halt new fossil-fuel development at Cherry Point](#))

- The next meeting of the Whatcom County Council is scheduled for Dec. 8.

- Port of Bellingham

- The next meeting of the Port of Bellingham Commissioners is scheduled for Dec. 8.

Commentary

- Lummi Nation chair Lawrence Solomon writes: "Though I welcome this opportunity to reply to the recent op-ed opposing the adjudication of water rights in the Nooksack, it is with great frustration and disappointment that I do so. We need rapid, meaningful action in the Nooksack River basin to protect and restore the natural resources upon which the Lummi People and all members of our community rely. We need to ensure there is enough cold, clean water in streams for salmon to survive and thrive. We need to keep illness-causing bacteria out of our waterways, so shellfish are safe to eat. We are failing on both fronts. There is a solution in sight: adjudication [\(Bellingham Herald\)](#)

Nature

- The Washington State Parks Commission is weighing concerns about Navy military exercises on state public lands. [\(Skagit Valley Herald/paywall\)](#)
- The Sandy Point Improvement Co. reported that water samples along with dead waterfowl and fish specimens taken from Agate Lake shortly after large numbers of dead fish were discovered floating along the lake shore revealed the presence of copper sulphate. [\(My Ferndale News\)](#)

- Federal relicensing of City Light's three Skagit River dams need to take into consideration threatened species of chinook salmon and steelhead trout. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Business

- Environmental groups are appealing to the Washington Supreme Court a decision upholding a permit allowing Cooke Aquaculture to transition from farming Atlantic salmon to steelhead. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Community

- Whatcom County Library System buildings are closed to the public as of Nov. 23 due to increased risk of COVID-19 infection ([Whatcom Talk](#))

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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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