

Subject: Salish Snippets, May 14, 2023

From: <evergreen.islands@comcast.net>

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Skagit County Commissioners Approve 2023 Docket of Proposed Policy, Code, and Map Amendments.

The Growth Management Act provides that each comprehensive land use plan and development regulations shall be subject to continuing review and evaluation and requires Skagit County to annually accept petitions for amendments or revisions to the Comprehensive Plan.

Press Release

Skagit County Planning & Development Services, May 10, 2023

Skagit County received five timely petitions and two deferred petitions from previous dockets to amend the Comprehensive Plan, Comprehensive Plan Map, or development regulations. By Skagit County Code 14.08.040, deferred petitions must be brought forward from the previous docket cycle for consideration on the current docket. ***The two deferred petitions from the 2021 and 2022 Dockets were LR20-04 and LR22-02, both regarding Fully Contained Communities (FCCs).*** An additional eleven amendments were proposed by the Planning and Development Services (PDS) Department.

LR20-04 and LR22-02: Skagit Partners Fully Contained Communities (Pt 1 & 2), WERE EXCLUDED from the docket.

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Lawsuit Asserting the 'Rights of Salmon' Ends in a Settlement That Benefits the Fish

In an accord with an Indian tribe, the city of Seattle agrees to create passageways so salmon can swim upriver past three hydroelectric dams.

By [Katie Surma](#)

Inside Climate News, May 6, 2023

A landmark lawsuit filed by the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe asserting the “rights of salmon” has been settled, with the city of Seattle agreeing to provide passageways for the fish around hydroelectric dams on the Skagit River.

In the suit, filed against the city last year in a tribal court, the Sauk-Suiattle argued that the three dams impede the upstream migration of salmon and block the flow of nutrients that the fish need to grow, contributing to a decline in the population. The tribe also contended that the dams, built in the early to mid-20th century, violated a treaty giving the Sauk-Suiattle the legal right to fish in the Skagit River for salmon, an important food source for the tribe that is deeply entwined with its culture.

Although the lawsuit is one of four to be filed by the Sauk-Suiattle over the city-owned dams, it is the only one in tribal court. It was dubbed the “rights of salmon” case because it sought a declaration by the city that the fish “possess inherent rights to exist, flourish, regenerate and evolve, as well as inherent rights to restoration, recovery and preservation.”

The settlement came just ahead of an April 21 hearing before the Sauk-Suiattle tribal appellate court over whether the panel had jurisdiction over the city of Seattle. The three hydroelectric dams are located around 100 miles northeast of the city and provide about 20 percent of its electricity.

As part of the agreement, the city agreed to include passages for fish at the three dams in its final license application filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Agency, which approves hydroelectric projects under the Federal Power Act. The dams’ existing licenses expire on April 30, 2025, and the city is seeking a 50-year renewal.

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Trees are important for many reasons

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

By ERICA PICKETT Anacortes

Anacortes American, May 10, 2023

Dear Editor,

Have you ever stopped to wonder why it is that Safeway spends so much money on the trees that surround the parking lot at the grocery store? Or why McDonald’s

spends so much to keep the trees and landscaping around their place looking good? Why do you suppose Anthony's restaurant looks like it was placed in the middle of a garden or why the developers building the homes out at San Juan Passage spent a million dollars on trees and landscaping before they sold the first house?

There is something about trees that people really like without even thinking about it. Most people are unaware they have a response to trees, but they do. Whether we get a signal that tells us that this is a nice place with water, just look at the trees; whether we like the occasional birdsong or maybe we just like looking up a bit so we are not quite so fixated on our own humble footsteps. Whatever it is, we like trees and will pay a bit more when they surround our favorite spots because of that.

It can be harder to replace trees than to put them all in at once for some reason, and so the number of trees can diminish over the years, but this is something we really need to look after. Why? Among all the other good reasons for planting trees, trees are good for business.

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THIS NATIONAL PARK INSTALLED 'WILDLIFE CROSSINGS' TO PROTECT ANIMALS FROM CAR COLLISIONS — AND THE RESULTS WERE STAGGERING

The project has been so successful that the same model has been adopted in Costa Rica, Argentina, and parts of Asia.

By Laurelle Stelle

The Cool Down, May 13, 2023

The Banff Wildlife Crossings Project in Canada's Rocky Mountains has dramatically reduced the amount of wildlife being hit by cars on the Trans-Canada Highway, [APEGA reports](#).

[According to APEGA](#), the section of the Trans-Canada Highway that runs through Banff National Park was built in the 1950s. At the time, it wasn't expected to attract as much traffic as it does today. Collisions with wildlife, including deer and elk, took a toll on animal populations in the area.

Meanwhile, the highway effectively divided the animals on each side of the road into two separate populations, [APEGA reports](#). A wide variety of potential mates

helps an animal population to maintain its numbers and pass on healthy genes.

The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA)

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Group of 16 young people sue state for allegedly violating its own constitution: 'The state may have to change its policies'

By Rachel McGlasson

The Cool Down, May 13, 2023

A group of 16 young Montanans looking to protect their [home's](#) natural beauty have joined with an environmental legal organization to [sue](#) the state for failing to provide a "clean and healthful environment," as outlined in the [state constitution](#).

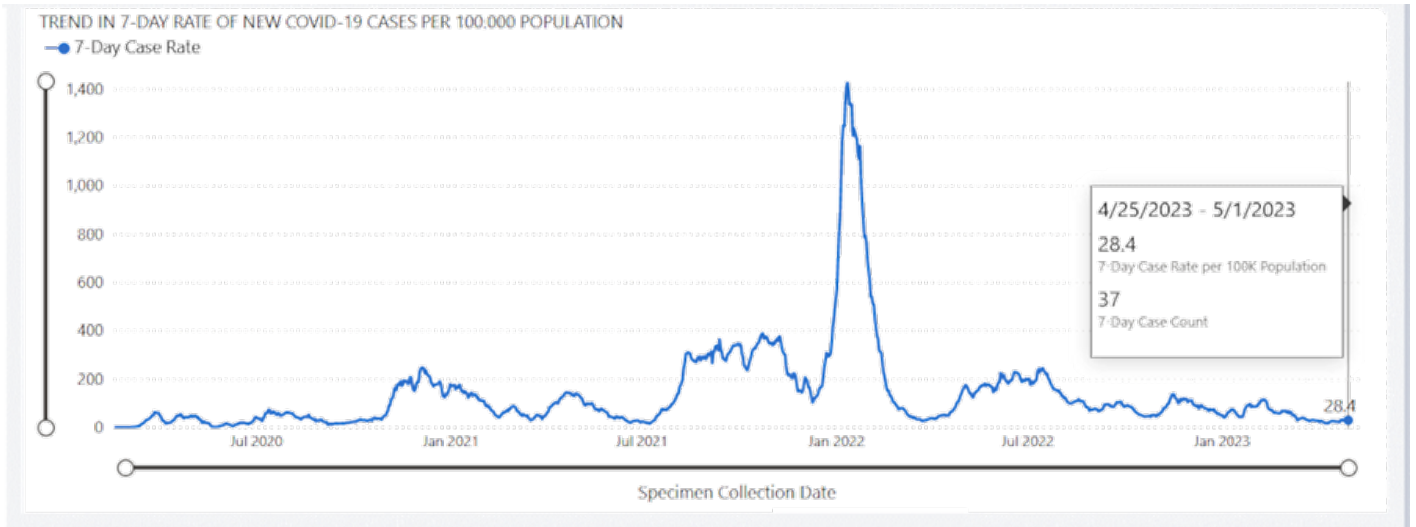
The group filed the complaint in 2020, claiming that by supporting the use of [dirty energy](#), like coal, oil, and gas, the state is violating its own constitution. These forms of unrenewable energy are contributing to the overheating of our planet, which is worsening [extreme weather](#) events like [wildfires](#), torrential [rains](#), and [severe](#) droughts, putting our communities in jeopardy.

Legal experts say that this trial — set to begin on June 12 in the state capital — is one of the first constitutional climate cases.

"This is the first that will get into the merits of [climate change](#) and what needs to be done, and how the state may have to change its policies," Michael Gerrard, director of the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia Law School, [told](#) the New York Times.

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Skagit County Case Counts, May1, 2022



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