



News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending Jan. 29, 2021:

[Democracy in America: Are you citizen? Let's test that.](#)



The Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor endures as one of the most powerful symbols of the promises of America's democracy — and is the subject of a question in the U.S. citizenship test. (Image by Andreas H. from Pixabay)

By *Mike Sato* — Who is a U.S. citizen? Simply put, by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution: 'All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.' In these rather tumultuous times, it's refreshing to have a simple definition of a fundamental fact, by reference, that we can agree on. ([Read more](#))

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[Community Voices / Understanding the importance of the Point Elliott Treaty](#)



By *Terri Thayer* — Today is Lummi Treaty Day. On Jan. 22, 1855, a hundred and sixty-six years ago, the United States of America entered into a solemn agreement with the Lummi Nation. This solemn agreement, this treaty, is known as the Point Elliott Treaty. ([Read more](#))

This essay was shared with the Whatcom Community College campus community on Jan. 22 and posted in the Salish Current with permission of the author.

The views expressed in the essays, analyses and opinions as Community Voices are those of the author exclusively and not those of Salish Current.

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Letter to the Editor:

- [Follow up wanted on Lopez school funding](#)

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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

- Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan counties remain in Phase 1 despite changes to the state's reopening criteria. ([Bellingham Herald](#))

Education

- Ferndale middle and high school students who opted for a hybrid curriculum of in-person and remote learning are scheduled to return to classes Feb. 1. ([My Ferndale News](#))
- Whatcom Community College has been awarded a \$130,780 grant from the Washington State Employment Security Agency to enhance its associate degree in Computer Information Systems (CIS). In August, WCC was named a Career Connect Washington Intermediary and awarded \$101,628 to develop a new associate degree in software development and work with employers to host paid work-based learning opportunities. ([Whatcom Community College](#))

Government

- [San Juan County](#)
- The San Juan County staff at Monday's council meeting reported that there are about 1,000 outstanding vacation rental (VR) permits issued countywide at the moment, which includes about 400 that are either inactive or noncompliant with current regulations. View a [list of current VR permits](#) along with other VR permit-related data. ([Orcasonian](#)) For a map and site details, [click here](#).
- San Juan County councilmembers received a presentation from the Islands Oil Spill Association (IOSA) on Jan. 26 which included an update on the joint effort between the Port of Friday Harbor, IOSA, and San Juan County for construction of an oil spill response operations base near the Jensen Marina in Friday Harbor. ([Orcasonian](#)) See also: New oil spill response base in Friday Harbor will address present — and growing — threat ([Salish Current](#))
- The San Juan County Charter Review Commission held its first meeting on Jan. 21. The 18-member commission was elected last November. The purpose of the Charter Review Commission is to conduct a review of the County Charter and recommend any changes that the majority believe to be necessary. ([San Juan Journal](#))

- City of Bellingham

- The City of Bellingham on Thursday removed what has been called the Camp 210 encampment from the grounds of City Hall and the Bellingham Public Library. ([The Western Front](#))
- The Bellingham City Council met on Jan. 25 and among its [agenda items](#):
- The Council (7-0) awarded a bid of \$631,388.39 by Tiger Construction for the Boulevard Park Restroom Improvement Project.
- The Council approved (7-0) an interlocal agreement with Whatcom County transferring ownership of 25-50 Tiny Homes to the city for immediate use in response to the current housing emergency and for future use as temporary shelter.
- Council President Stone reported that, after consulting with the director of Base Camp, she was assured that social distancing is provided for those who wish to utilize the facility and that COVID-19 testing is also provided at Base Camp.
- Adopted (7-0) ordinances accepting the donation by Neal and Ann Kobritz of 60 acres of real property and donation of a conservation easement over an 0.87 acres tract of real property along Lake Whatcom.
- The Bellingham City Council is next scheduled to meet on Feb. 8.

- Whatcom County

- The Whatcom County Council met on Jan. 26 and among its [agenda items](#):
- Affirmed the Purchase and Development Rights Oversight Committee ranking and authorized Whatcom County PDR Program Administrator and Whatcom County Executive to proceed with the acquisition of conservation easements on the Lakeland Foundation, Jones-Bishop, Martin, VanderWerff, Kiera-Duffy Forestry, and Kiera-Duffy Ecological applications. (5 ayes, Byrd nay, Elenbaas abstain) [AB2021-029]
- Appointed Elenbaas to the Intergovernmental Tribal Relations Committee and appointed Donovan as an alternate Washington State Association of Counties Board Member.
- Nominated and appointed to fill vacancies on the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force : Alicia Hanning, Anne Granberg, Brian Nelson, Chris Cochran, Melissa Isenhardt, Urvasi Graham, Escarleth De Leon; to 4-year terms: Debbie Ahl, Jamie Desmul, Mara Kelley, Mike Ford, Ray Deck III, Rosalva Santos-Guzman, Jennifer Wright, and Komal Shah.

- Port of Bellingham

- The Port of Bellingham Commission will meet on Feb. 2 at 4 p.m. [Agenda items](#) include:

- Motion authorizing the Port of Bellingham's legal counsel to enter into contracts with Anchor QEA, L.L.C. and other consultants to provide technical expertise in support of the legal work related to the Environmental Division in an amount not to exceed \$148,996.
- Motion authorizing a six-year lease with Aliotti Enterprises for a Fish Market and Fish and Chip Restaurant at 1030 C Street, including the former Romaine Electric Corporation Building, to commence on or around April 1, 2021.

Nature

- Canadian and U.S. elected officials, indigenous representatives, and conservation and recreation groups call for B.C. leaders to prohibit mining in the upper reaches of the Skagit River in Canadian territory. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))
- The Environmental Protection Agency and Restore America's Estuaries has awarded Kwiaht a grant of \$95,000 to design and build shellfish reefs as "living breakwaters" for the protection of homes and habitats in Fisherman Bay, Lopez. Director Russell Barsh [describes the project](#).
- The Lynden City Council received a presentation on rerouting Pepin Creek to improve transportation while benefiting flood protection and habitat improvement in an area from Benson Road west three-quarters of a mile and north to Badger Road, a portion of which has been under a development moratorium for four years. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))
- The State Parks Commission voted 4-3 Thursday to allow Navy SEAL training in some state parks. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))
- A cougar recently seen and photographed in the Blaine area is suspected of killing two goats Jan. 24 at a home east of Blaine. ([The Northern Light](#))

Business

- The *M/V Chilkat*, which came to rest on the bottom of the Guemes Channel during a windstorm two weeks ago, was lifted up by a crane and placed onto a barge Wednesday afternoon. ([Anacortes American/paywall](#))

Commentary

- Why Bellingham's Waterfront Took So Long, and Why It's a Good Idea; by Floyd McKay ([Post Alley](#))
- Is that all there is? Bellingham's Attempt to Reclaim its Waterfront; by Mark Hinshaw ([Post Alley](#))

Community

- The Orcas Island Community Foundation will receive matching funds from the Seattle Foundation for donations to the Community Emergency Response Fund received from July 8 through Dec. 31, bringing an additional \$630,000 to Orcas for COVID-related recovery efforts. ([Orcas Island Community Foundation](#))
- The Skagit Community Foundation hopes to hire a new executive director by Mar. 1, when it begins sifting through the grant applications at the heart of its mission. Michael Stark, the current executive director, will remain during the transition, ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Get Involved!

- Registration is open until Feb. 16 for the Salish Sea Stewards online volunteer training program which will be held on Tuesday afternoons from Feb. 23 to June 1. Information and registration [here](#).
- Learn about Whatcom County Public Works' plan to replace the Jackson Road Bridge over Terrell Creek in Birch Bay, at a virtual open house on Feb 3. Project details and an online survey are found [here](#).
- Washington State Ferries holds two virtual public meetings led by new ferries director Patty Rubstello. Register for the 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9 meeting [here](#); Register for the 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, meeting [here](#).

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