

## News of the week: Nov. 11, 2022

Dear Reader —

Election week always provokes some observations, but particularly in this time of polarization and mistrust.

To jump to this week's articles, here are Richard Walker's story on [toxic waste dumps like that in Anacortes](#), Nancy DeVaux's recap of [San Juan County election results on ranked-choice voting](#), Matt Benoit's look at how [trust in truth of news is a casualty of the information wars](#), a beautiful rendering of Thomas William Jones' [Sunset at Wiley Slough](#) in the Artist's Corner, and up-to-date election results.

[It's Week Two of our 2X match fundraiser](#); every dollar you donate is doubled, whether a one-time, monthly or small first-time donation. Donations from those who can give make it possible to keep our fact-based local journalism free for all to read—and help *Salish Current* report more in-depth stories and grow our readership.

It's a relief to see the end of the bombardment of campaign advertising in the last few weeks, even with the lingering sense of slime slung via the obscene amount of money spent by campaigns to denigrate opponents. Those of us whose job it is to fact-check were overwhelmed by the sheer volume of claims and counterclaims that portrayed opponents as evil, lying and sinister. Truth and trust were the ultimate casualties. Without trust, how will our elected public servants govern in its aftermath?

Did your information sources traffic in facts and reasoning or in rhetoric and opinion? Did it matter to you?

For our community, it matters a lot. As former Nebraska Sen. Ben Sasse wrote in his book, *Them*, "We need to recover the essential distinction between fact-based reporting and opinion commentary. We need to recover the essential distinction between journalism and entertainment. Why? Because a democracy depends on shared facts."

We can't trust each other if we don't share the same facts. We can have our opinions; we need to share the facts.

Please support independent, fact-based community journalism. [Your donation will be doubled today](#). And share this newsletter with a friend. Thank you!

— Amy Nelson, Publisher

Want more environmental news? [Salish Sea News and Weather](#) is a weekday curated compilation of news from Salish Sea news sources. Free via email or on the web.

[Salish Sea News Week in Review Nov. 11, 2022](#):

Origami Friday, Fraser River, acid ocean, heat pumps, dying crabs, herring homecoming, British Columbia old growth, climate killers, grizzlies, superport

**Salish Current affirms its commitment to work for truth, justice, equity and healing for all people.**

**#SayTheirNames #BlackLivesMatter**

**#NoJusticeNoPeace**

## News from the *Salish Current*

### [Anacortes toxic city dump one of hundreds dotting the state](#)



*Naturalist Bob Jepperson talks with Moriah Armstrong about what she enjoys most about the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. A cleanup plan is being negotiated for a former landfill site near the forest trailhead.*

**By Richard Arlin Walker**—A landfill for four decades, a site on the edge of a forest in Anacortes is the target of a cleanup plan being negotiated by the City and the Department of Ecology. [Read more](#).

## [Trust in truth of news is a casualty of the information wars](#)



*Sorting true from false, opinion from fact in the sea of information around us can be challenging, and trust in news media is a casualty of that confusion.*

**By Matt Benoit**—A growing and divisive mistrust of the truthfulness of news media

raises serious concerns for the local community and the wider society. [Read more.](#)

## [San Juan County voters reject ranked choice voting, spending measures](#)



*After early counting, the challenger leads the incumbent in the race for the office of San Juan County sheriff. Voters decided several funding issues and charter amendment proposals.*

**By Nancy DeVaux**—Turnout plummeted, charter

amendments failed and the challenger leads the incumbent sheriff in San Juan County's midterm election. [Read more.](#)

## [Sunset at Wiley Slough](#)



*An overcast sky, a motionless high-perched eagle and still tidal rivulets suddenly brightened by sunset colors were the inspiration for Sunset at*

*Wiley Slough.*

**By Thomas William Jones**—A longtime watercolor artist found inspiration in the Skagit Valley's protected estuaries during a dramatic sunset. [Read more.](#)

## **News from around the region**

(The links found here may have limited access for those who don't subscribe to the source publication. Sorry for any inconvenience!)

## **The Border**

Opening. After two-and-a-half years of closure, B.C. Parks reopened Peace Arch Provincial Park on Oct. 24. ([The Northern Light](#))

## **Nature**

Grizzlies. The National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said they would jointly prepare an environmental impact statement on restoring the endangered bears to the North Cascades ecosystem. ([Associated Press](#))

Carbon. The City of Bellingham will not meet the goals it adopted to reduce overall carbon pollution by 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2050, compared to baseline measures taken in 2000, according to a report to the city council ([CDN/paywall](#))

## **Business**

Superport. The Port of Vancouver is pushing ahead with its proposed \$3.5 billion superport south of Vancouver by making new promises and deals, winning over First Nations despite “significant” impacts on endangered killer whales, famed salmon runs and the beleaguered Fraser estuary. ([The Tyee](#))

Heat pumps. New homes and apartments in Washington will be required to install heat pumps beginning in July, the Washington State Building Code Council ruled last Friday in a decision that could help the state further reduce carbon emissions by electrifying the heating systems of new buildings. ([Seattle Times/paywall](#))

New hotel. The Fairhaven Sycamore Hotel is a new five-story, 64-bedroom hotel approved in Bellingham at 12th Street and Donovan Avenue. It will also include eight, two-bedroom residential units on the upper floor, a ballroom/conference room space and a ground-floor restaurant area. ([Bellingham Herald/paywall](#))

Raspberries. Whatcom raspberry production totaled 49.6 million pounds in 2022 which, with a yield of 44.6 million pounds in 2021, falls way short of an eight-year average of 61.3 million pounds. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))

No confidence. The Anacortes Port Commission were presented with a letter from members of the Anacortes Marine Trades indicating no confidence in the leadership of Port Director Dan Worra. ([Anacortes American/paywall](#))

### **Community**

Island housing. More than 40% of Lopez Island residents (320+ families) struggle to maintain decent, safe and affordable places to live, according to Housing Lopez, a not-for-profit housing development organization. Here's the community-driven solution. ([San Juan County](#))

SR 20. The North Cascades received about 30 inches of snow last weekend, prompting the state to close Highway 20 over the North Cascades until next spring. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

### **Commentary**

Old growth. Joel Connelly writes about how the “Brazil of the North” is grappling with how and whether it logs its old-growth forests. ([Post Alley](#))

### **Arts and Leisure**

Celebrate. November is Native American Heritage Month. Check out the resources at the [Bellingham Public Library](#) and at the Bellingham City Club [web site](#).

The Land. Check out the Allied Arts of Whatcom County exhibit "[Of the Land, From the Land](#)" featuring pieces by John Hoyte, Lori Hill Sterling Rung, Belinda Botzong, and Liz Cunningham. Through Nov. 26.

Skyviewing. The Western Gallery brings 41 of Noguchi's skyviewing works together for the first time. Through Nov 26. [Information](#).

### **Jump in!**

Poetry. The South Fork Valley Community Association and the Deming Library bring Poetry Cafe back live at the Van Zandt Hall, Nov. 12, 6:30 p.m. with local poets, musicians, and storytellers. [Register in advance](#).

Housing. Bellingham City Council holds a public meeting to hear what residents have to say about affordable housing. Nov. 14, 6 p.m., [connect here](#).

Lummi Fisherman. NWIC alum and Deputy Director of Lummi Natural Resources Qwa Shus—Frank Lawrence III—talks about his life as a Lummi fisherman, Nov. 15, Noon–1 p.m. In-person lunch (50-person capacity) at the NWIC Log Building or by [Zoom](#).

Trails. Work with Skagit Land Trust at the Samish Island Conservation Area to enjoy and help maintain walking trails. Nov. 18, 9 a.m.–Noon. [Info and registration here.](#)

Flood. Whatcom County hosts a community meeting on flood vulnerability and risk assessment, Nov. 19, 1–3 p.m. at Birch Bay State Park’s BP Heron Center. The county is gathering information to better understand river and coastal flooding impacts, which will be used for policies and preventive plans. ([The Northern Light](#))

## **Government**

### **San Juan County**

The council met on Nov. 7. [Agenda and video.](#)  
Discussion: Comprehensive Plan update.

The council met on Nov. 8. [Agenda items and video.](#)

- The council unanimously adopted an ordinance amending the Noxious Weed Program Assessment.
- The council approved a one-year extension of the San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau Destination Marketing Services Agreement to Dec. 31, 2023. (3:00 discussion)
- The council unanimously approved pursuit of a San Juan County mooring buoy vessel management strategy via a grant to the Puget Sound National Estuary Program.

### **City of Bellingham**

The council met on Nov. 7. [Agenda items](#) included:

- The council unanimously recommended approval of the Interlocal Agreement with Whatcom County to support and fund the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission.
- The council unanimously approved for first and second reading an ordinance establishing legal framework for the city's operation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging stations. The council unanimously approved a resolution adopting a fee schedule for electric vehicle charging.
- The council unanimously approved an ordinance amending 2021-2022 biennial budget increasing

revenues and expenditures and authorizing an interfund loan of up to \$1,500,00 from the general fund to the Medic One.

- The council unanimously approved for first and second reading an ordinance related to city of Bellingham's property tax levy.

The council will next meet on Nov. 21.

### Whatcom County

The council met on Nov. 9. [Agenda items](#) included:

- The council unanimously adopted an ordinance amending the Whatcom County Code relating to Personal Wireless Service Facilities.
- The council authorized (5-2, Byrd and Kershner opposed) the County Executive to enter into an Interlocal Agreement amendment between Whatcom County and Basic Life Support First Responder agencies in the amount of \$5,951,262.55.
- The council authorized (5-2, Byrd and Elenbaas opposed) the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the State of Washington Puget Sound Partnership for water resources programs in the Whatcom County region, in the amount of \$375,000.

The council will meet again on Nov. 22.

### Port of Bellingham

The Port's 2023 Preliminary Strategic Budget is online ([76mb](#)). Presentations and public hearings are scheduled for Nov. 15, with adoption scheduled for Nov. 15.

The commission will meet on Nov. 15. [Agenda items](#) include:

#### Consent Agenda

- Authorize a modification to the "[Public Space Use Policies and Procedures](#)" in order to better capture the Port's current event spaces and the line-up for food truck operation at the Portal Container Village. In addition, a modification to raise the amount charged for Events Damage/Cleaning Deposit to better operate private event rentals in Port facilities and parks.
- Authorize the [sale](#) of 19.22 acres and a 20,000 square foot building to Teal Jones Lumber Services at market value of \$4.2 million less \$246,000 for indemnifying the

Port against potential environmental hazards and less \$34,500 of half of the option payments for a total sales price of \$3,919,500.

- Authorize entering into a [contract](#) with the state Broadband Office to accept a \$4 million infrastructure grant which, when coupled with a \$1 million grant received from the Whatcom County EDI, will be used to fund a fiber-to-the-home project between Lake Terrell and the city of Ferndale.

Public hearing

- 2021 Strategic budget

Action items

- Approve 2023 strategic budget and authorize regular property tax levy.
- Authorize [option to purchase](#) real property with Millworks LLC, a purchase and sale agreement for real property with Mercy Housing Northwest and all related documents required to finalize the transaction.

The commission will meet again on Dec. 6.

### **Elections**

Election Results (As of 5 p.m. Nov. 10, 2022; the next count will be Nov. 14, 2022)

#### **Whatcom County**

[64.85% voter turnout; 7,500 ballots remaining to be counted]

#### **42nd Legislative District**

State Senate

Sharon Shewmake (D): 35,128; 50.64%

Simon Sefzik (R): 34,181; 49.27%

House Position 1

Alicia Rule (D): 35,813; 51.76%

Tawsha (Dykstra) Thompson (R): 33,299; 48.13%

House Position 2

Joe Timmons (D): 35,366; 51.32%

Dan Johnson (R): 33,482; 48.59%

## Whatcom County

### District Court 2

Jonathan Rands: 53,324; 62.33%

Gordon Jenkins : 31,792; 37.16%

### Whatcom PUD 1 - District 3

Jaime Arnett: 41,968; 51.9%

Eric Davidson: 38,294; 47.35%

### Proposition 5 (Healthy Children's Initiative Levy)

Approve: 48,988; 49.44%

Reject: 50,091; 50.56%

### EMS Levy

Approve: 62,992; 63.83%

Reject: 35,702; 36.17%

## 40th Legislative District

[Areas of Whatcom, Skagit and San Juan counties.]

### House Position 1

Debra Lekanoff (D): 42,912; 71.94%

Shannon Perkes (R): 16,644; 27.9%

### House Position 2

Alex Ramel (D): 38,857; 75.87%

Trevor Smith (D): 11,096; 21.66%

## **Skagit County**

[37.4% voter turnout; 24,000 ballots left to count]

### Skagit Commissioner District 3

Lisa Janicki (D): 19,200; 61.4%

Christian Burns (R): 12,049; 38.53%

### Skagit Sheriff

Don McDermott (D): 20,063; 67.08%

Kevin Ewing (None): 9,779; 32.69%

### Skagit PUD - Countywide

Germain J. Komegay: 13,494; 50.87%

Corrin Hamburg: 12,917; 48.7%

## **San Juan County**

[76.49% voter turnout; 50 ballots remaining to count]

### San Juan County Sheriff

Ron Krebs: 4,829; 46.61%

Eric Peter: 5,500; 53.08%

Charter Amendment 1 - Public Advocate

Approve: 3,870; 37.36%

Reject: 6,488; 62.64%

Charter Amendment 2 - Charter Commission funding

Approve: 4,864; 49.74%

Reject: 4,914; 50.26%

Charter Amendment 3 - Ranked-choice voting

Approve: 4,659; 45.3%

Reject: 5,626; 54.7%

Charter Amendment 4 - Initiative signatures

Approve: 3,511; 34.35%

Reject: 6,709; 65.65%

San Juan County Road Fund Levy

Approve: 4,041; 43.07%

Reject: 5,342; 56.93%

San Juan Island New Library Bond

Approve: 2,177; 41.33%

Reject: 3,090; 58.67%

Lopez Solid Waste Excess Property Tax Levy

Approve: 1,348; 77.21%

Reject: 398; 22.79%

**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, Managing Editor**

*Salish Current* is a nonprofit online newsroom serving  
Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit Counties. Founded in  
2020, *Salish Current* exists to protect and improve  
democratic governance by reporting and curating local  
news — freely accessible to all — with independence  
and strict journalistic integrity.

Follow and engage with *Salish Current* on social media:

Facebook — [Salish Current](#)

Twitter — [@currentsalish](#)

LinkedIn — [Salish Current](#)

Write to us: [SalishCurrent@gmail.com](mailto:SalishCurrent@gmail.com)

Check out what's new: [Salish Current](#)