A publication of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Northwest Treaty Tribes
Protecting Natural Resources for Everyone
Summer 2017
nwtreatytribes.org

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Accountability Matters

by Lorraine Loomis

Do you make sure you have enough money in your bank account before writing a check for a big purchase?

Of course. That’s what responsible people do to avoid trouble down the road.

You would think that kind of common-sense thinking would be supported by bankers, builders and real estate companies. But it’s a different story when it comes to water supply in rural areas of western Washington.

The development community wants to overturn a 2016 state Supreme Court ruling in Whatcom County v. Hirst that rightly upheld existing state law under the Growth Management Act. The act simply requires counties to ensure that their land-use management actions protect ground and surface waters. That means local governments need to determine whether there is enough water available for new development before issuing building permits.

Instead, developers want to continue relying on a broken system managed by the state Department of Ecology. For decades it has allowed thousands of rural property owners to sink wells that can withdraw up to 5,000 gallons of water each day with no review of the potential impact on streamflows and senior water rights. Groundwater and surface water are connected, so even though wells may be withdrawing groundwater, they affect streamflows as well.

Exempt wells don’t require a permit and don’t have meters, so there is no accountability and no way to determine just how much water is being withdrawn. This approach to water management ignores instream flow rules and the senior water rights of cities, farmers and treaty tribes. As a result, the system fails to protect the groundwater needed for drinking, farming and fish.

After the Hirst ruling, some counties wisely pushed the pause button on issuing building permits in rural areas. It makes sense for local governments to wait while they fine-tune their development review processes to make sure that new property owners can be certain there’s enough water to go around before they build.

It would be irresponsible to allow unregulated wells to continue pumping water with no legal right or accountability. It’s like writing a bad check on purpose, but with far worse consequences.

The Hirst ruling doesn’t mean that no more wells can ever be dug in rural areas. It means that we must act responsibly beforehand. It means we must ignore the false alarms from bankers, builders and real estate companies that the ruling is hampering economic growth in rural areas. Instead we should see this as an opportunity to encourage responsible growth by checking our account before we plunge into a purchase.

New development can certainly occur in watersheds with adequate water resources to accommodate it. In those without, more water can be made available by retiring senior water rights, conserving existing supplies and using reclaimed water, among other solutions.

“Water banks” can provide a solution in some watersheds by enabling counties to buy and sell water rights to help offset short supplies.

Because every watershed in our region is unique, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Accurate water inventories must be conducted in each watershed before any allocation decisions are made, and tribes need to be involved to ensure that their rights and resources are protected.

Unfortunately, those with the most to gain from unchecked development are demanding that the state Legislature overturn or “fix” the Hirst ruling, to go back to unchecked impacts on water resources. They want the Legislature to develop a water management system that allows local governments and citizens to keep writing checks without first reviewing their bank accounts to see if these investments are sustainable. This approach could impact everybody: senior water rights holders, future generations and salmon.

That’s not right.

We can’t drink money, we can’t water crops with it, and salmon sure can’t swim in it.
The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals refused to hear the state of Washington’s most recent appeal of the culvert case. The decision on May 19 could halt more than 15 years of litigation on whether the state of Washington has a duty under federal treaty to protect salmon habitat.

The state has appealed the case at every opportunity, but has consistently been denied by the court. The state’s only remaining option is to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. “This is a win for salmon, treaty rights and everyone who lives here,” said Lorraine Loomis, chair of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. “Fixing fish-blocking culverts will open up hundreds of miles of habitat and result in more salmon. That means more fishing, more jobs and healthier economies for all of us.”

The appeal stems from Judge Ricardo Martinez’s 2013 ruling that failed state culverts violate tribal treaty rights because they reduce the number of salmon available for harvest. Judge Martinez ruled that treaty-reserved rights to harvest salmon include the right to have those salmon protected so they are available for harvest.

He also ruled that the state’s duty to fix its culverts does not arise from a “broad environmental servitude,” but rather a “narrow and specific treaty-based duty that attaches when the state elects to block rather than bridge a salmon-bearing stream.”

Judge Martinez gave the state 15 years to reopen 90 percent of the habitat blocked by its culverts in western Washington. More than 800 state culverts block salmon access to more than 1,000 miles of good habitat, and harm salmon at every stage of their life cycle. The state has been fixing them so slowly it would need more than 100 years to finish the job.

The U.S. government filed this case in 2001 on behalf of the tribes. It is a sub-proceeding of the U.S. v. Washington litigation that led to the landmark 1974 ruling by Judge George Boldt. His decision upheld tribal treaty-reserved rights and established the tribes as co-managers of the resource with the state of Washington.

“Reserving the right to fish so that we can feed our families and preserve our culture was one of the tribes’ few conditions when we agreed to give up nearly all of the land that is today western Washington,” Loomis said.

“The treaties our ancestors signed have no expiration date and no escape clauses,” she said. “We hope the state will end its misguided efforts to deny our treaty-reserved rights and stop the waste of time and money that could be better spent restoring salmon habitat.” – T. Meyer

Board Members Re-Elected

Elections for NWIFC vice-chair and treasurer took place at the May Commission meeting. Shawn Yanity, far left, retained his position as vice-chair and Ed Johnstone was re-elected as treasurer. The chair was not up for election this year, so Lorraine Loomis remains in her position.
The Suquamish Tribe is bringing back smokehouse culture to the tribal community and making it more accessible to everyone.

Through a Seeds of Native Health grant, the tribe received funding to construct five 8-foot by 8-foot smokehouses throughout the Port Madison Indian reservation, including on the tribe’s Chief Kitsap Academy campus.

Traditional methods of food preparation are in danger of being lost, said Jay Mills, Suquamish tribal fisherman.

“This project brings together and honors the knowledge held by the community, particularly the elders, while passing those skills on to younger generations,” he said. “It also provides access to traditional foods for our people.”

Chief Kitsap Academy has incorporated one of the smokehouses into its Ocean to Table program, where students participate in a nearly two-week process every fall to harvest, prepare and hang salmon for smoking.

“The main smokehouse can hold up to 200 salmon and last year, the Ocean to Table students caught 112 chum and smoked them all with room to spare,” Mills said.

“The community has been very responsive,” said Azure Boure, the tribe’s traditional plants program coordinator. “The school has gotten great feedback from the students as well as the parents and elders of our community.”

The smokehouses are available to tribal families on the reservation. Families can sign out canning and vacuum-sealing equipment to preserve the smoked food.

“We have a ways to go on some of the smokehouses but the community is committed to get them all functional and keep them in use,” Boure said. “We are hoping to use them also to smoke geoduck, clams and game meats. The possibilities are endless.” — T. Royal

Above: Rob Purser, Suquamish fisheries director, right, and Robert Hartung, community volunteer, build a smokehouse for preserving fish. Right: Salmon hangs from the rafters of one of the Suquamish Tribe’s new smokehouses built by Bob Alexander and his family.
First Salmon Ceremony and Blessing of the Fleet

Lummi Nation tribal members Sharlaine LaClair, left, and Ellie Kinley divide a chinook salmon into small pieces to share with the community during the tribe’s annual First Salmon Ceremony in May.

Swinomish fisherman Will James prepares to release the remains of one of four chinook salmon to the water. Each salmon was released in a different cardinal direction following the tribe’s Blessing of the Fleet in May.

Lessons of the 13 Moons

Right: Swinomish tribal member Ronald Day carves a piece of ironwood that was harvested on Kukutali Preserve. Below: Tribal member Jordan Wilbur smooths ironwood into a stick used traditionally to prepare fish.

The ironwood workshop was part of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community’s curriculum based on the 13 Moons calendar. Each moon cycle is named for the natural resources available and seasonal events that occur during that time. For the Moon of the Digging Time in May, elder Francis Peters taught tribal members how to harvest ironwood.
The Tulalip Tribes’ wildlife program is in its fourth year capturing beaver in the Snohomish lowlands and relocating them to the upper Skykomish watershed. So far, about 100 beaver have been moved to 13 sites on public land.

The project removes nuisance beaver from private property where they can cause flooding. Away from human development, beaver dams can improve salmon habitat significantly by impounding water. Beaver ponds have been found to increase salmon smolt production 80 times more than placing large woody material in streams, said Mike Sevigny, Tulalip Tribes wildlife manager.

The tribes have been able to move the animals because of tribal sovereignty, but it has been illegal for other agencies to relocate beaver on the west side of the Cascade Mountains. That meant that any nuisance beaver trapped on the west side of the state had to be euthanized or transported over the mountains. In 2015, about 2,400 beaver were lethally removed on the west side of the Cascades. Meanwhile, in the Methow Valley, 300 beaver have been relocated over the past 10 years, impounding an estimated 45 million gallons of water, Sevigny said.

"If we had taken a portion of the euthanized beavers and moved them into areas they can’t get to now due to habitat fragmentation, roads and other urban development, just imagine what 10 percent of those beavers could do for water storage and the creation of salmon rearing habitat," Sevigny said.

Sevigny testified before the state Senate Natural Resources and Parks Committee to urge them to revise the law to allow relocation on the west side of the Cascades. The law was passed and signed by Gov. Jay Inslee in April. It goes into effect July 27.

– K. Neumeyer

Big Day for Big Water

Tulalip elder Stan Jones Sr. and Vice Chairwoman Teri Gobin sip from a ceremonial golden spigot at an April celebration for “Big Water,” a 7.5-mile pipeline from Everett to the reservation.

The water originates in Spada Lake, and the pipeline will provide up to 30 million gallons of water a day for the next 100 years. The pipeline was built through a partnership with the city of Everett, Snohomish County and Snohomish Public Utility District, resulting from a 2005 legal settlement over the destruction of salmon habitat by the Sultan River dam.

Until now, aquifers on the reservation supplied many homes and businesses with water. The new pipeline will provide water for the tribal community and economic development while helping to protect the reservation streamflows and ensuring there will be water for the Bernie “Kai-Kai” Gobin Hatchery.

Jones, a former tribal chairman, and Herman Williams Jr. are credited with working with then-interim Mayor Frank Anderson and Mayor Ray Stephanson to negotiate the agreement.
Native Lamprey Return to Elwha

As the Elwha River restores itself after the removal of two fish-blocking dams, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe is studying how lamprey are using the new watershed.

“They’re poor swimmers, so they’ll swim along the banks of the river in undercut areas and hang out in logjams and rootwads,” said Rebecca Paradis, a project biologist heading up the study for the tribe. “They prefer dark spaces.”

The tribe set out 24 traps this spring to monitor lamprey populations in the river. The traps consist of 3-foot-long PVC pipes with holes drilled in the sides. They’re placed along the banks of the river and in logjams in slow-moving water. The tribe’s screw traps in Little River and Indian Creek, tributaries of the Elwha, also are capturing post-spawning adults.

When caught, the lamprey are outfitted with radio tags and passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags so their migration patterns can be tracked by antennae in the Elwha, Little River and Indian Creek.

“We want to see if any new lamprey come in and establish nests,” Paradis said. “We’re not going above the dams where lamprey have already been found. The purpose of the study is to see if they recolonize the lower river and where they go.”

Ammocoetes – larval lamprey, the size of a pen – were found in the tribe’s hatchery ponds in 2016. Mating lamprey can produce hundreds of thousands of eggs.

“Also, they are pheromone driven, so they don’t go back to their natural streams like salmon,” Paradis said. “There are so many unknowns.”

As larvae, lamprey are filter feeders, helping to preserve water quality for the marine ecosystem. As adults, they are parasitic on larger fish and marine mammals.

They have high oil content and are an energy-rich food for salmon, sea lions, seals and other marine species. While they look like they belong to the eel family, they are more closely related to sharks and hagfish. Lamprey are considered the second oldest fish, next to hagfish.

After adult lamprey spawn and die, they provide nutrients to the system, much like spawned-out salmon. – T. Royal

Lamprey Fast Facts

- Three types of lamprey are found in the region: Pacific (Lampetra tridentate), river (Lampetra ayresi) and western brook (Lampetra richardsoni).
- The lamprey is very smooth and slimy to the touch. Its mouth is adapted for clinging and sucking.
- A lamprey has no true fins, jaws or bones. It can grow up to 30 inches and weigh more than a pound.
- Lamprey live from Baja California to the Bering Sea.
- Like a salmon, the Pacific and river lamprey are anadromous – born in fresh water, migrate to the ocean and return to fresh water as adults to spawn. Western brook lamprey spend their entire lives in fresh water.
Collecting seal scat may be the best way to see how many salmon are being eaten by marine mammals.

The Nisqually Indian Tribe is investigating seal diets in South Sound following the rapid increase of the harbor seal population the past few decades.

In late 2016, tribal researchers began observing marine mammal predation on winter chum salmon on the lower Nisqually River.

Tribal staff are working with the Salish Sea Marine Survival Study to collect scat at three sites, including the mouth of the Nisqually River. Samples are sent to a lab to measure genetic content.

The impacts of marine mammal predation on salmon are potentially serious. The Nisqually Tribe has fished a complete chum fishery only once in the last seven years, while fishermen have observed marine mammals eating a large number of chum.

“We’re concerned that up to one-third of the incoming chum run is intercepted by seals and sea lions before making it to the spawning grounds,” said David Troutt, the tribe’s natural resources director.

The tribe also has partnered with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to study Nisqually steelhead survival rates by tracking harbor seal predation. The partners inserted acoustic tags in steelhead and attached receivers onto harbor seals.

So far, researchers have found that the presence of other predators and prey might benefit salmon and steelhead.

“In the places we knew there was orca activity, there was steelhead survival,” Troutt said. “We think the orcas either ate a lot of seals or chased them away and affected their behavior, resulting in more steelhead making it out to the ocean.”

Based on data from the acoustic tagging project, salmon and steelhead survival increased last year while seals apparently pursued anchovies.

“We want to see if that was a normal year, or if we were seeing something in isolation,” Troutt said. “By analyzing marine mammal scat and tracking Puget Sound survival of steelhead, we will get a much better idea of what makes up their diet and if they’re limiting salmon productivity.” – E. O’Connell

Arlene Rosamond, right, an intern with the Nisqually Tribe, and Bill St. Jean, the tribe’s enhancement manager, collect seal scat on Eagle Island in Puget Sound.

Examining Seal Diet to Learn Impact on Salmon

Marlin George, Port Gamble S’Klallam community member, participates in a clam bake following the tribe’s blessing ceremony of the newly cleaned up waterfront and mill site in Port Gamble Bay.
Tribal natural resources staff are setting traps for European green crab on the North Olympic Peninsula and Puget Sound, hoping not to find any. A small number of the invasive crab were found last year in North Puget Sound, apparently not enough to establish a population. However, since April, 72 green crab have been found at a single site near Sequim.

“At Dungeness Spit, multiple crabs are being found at the same site over successive days of trapping,” said Emily Grason, Washington Sea Grant’s Crab Team program coordinator. “This indicates a situation where the population could grow very quickly if we don’t intervene.”

Area tribes are partnering with Sea Grant and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Aquatic Invasive Species Unit to monitor nearshore habitat to ensure that invasive green crab don’t take over. Tribes involved in the work so far include Jamestown S’Klallam, Stillaguamish, Suquamish and Swinomish.

After the discovery in Dungeness Spit in April, scientists organized to eradicate the crabs there, increasing the trapping from monthly to three or four times a week. The Crab Team will continue to set traps monthly to monitor other areas around Puget Sound.

“From the tribe’s perspective, our goal is to set traps in all the salt marshes in Sequim Bay,” said Neil Harrington, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s water quality scientist. “We don’t want a green crab population establishing itself this summer without us knowing it. To knock that back is really important.”

On the East Coast, the invasive species is blamed for the collapse of the eastern softshell clam industry in Maine. Here, green crab could threaten Dungeness crab, oyster and clam fisheries. They feed on many organisms, including clams, oysters, mussels, marine worms and small crustaceans.

In large numbers, they could also damage eelgrass and degrade nearshore habitat by burrowing into the mud.

A population of green crab was found in 2012 in the Sooke Inlet at the southern end of Vancouver Island, Canada.

The Washington Sea Grant Crab Team monitored seven sites in 2015, finding no green crab. In 2016, they surveyed 26 sites in Puget Sound, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and San Juan Islands. One live green crab was found on San Juan Island, along with the discarded shell of a different crab. Four crabs were found at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Reserve in Skagit County.

This year, more than 50 sites will be monitored, with the help of volunteers, agencies and tribal natural resources staff.

“The way to eradicate them is to trap and remove them before they proliferate,” K. Neumeyer and T. Royal

For more information, visit wsg.washington.edu/crabteam. If you find a green crab, leave it in place and take multiple photos to email to crabteam@uw.edu for verification.
Juvenile steelhead might not be making it past the Hood Canal Bridge this spring, according to acoustic tagging studies.

Tagging steelhead is part of the Hood Canal Bridge Ecosystem Assessment project being coordinated by the local nonprofit Long Live the Kings and implemented by the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The assessment project is intended to determine the cause of the high number of steelhead deaths reported in previous studies.

The tribe’s participation is multifaceted: biologists are mapping fish density and distribution at the bridge and away from the bridge; measuring light and shade effects on fish and predator behavior; assessing zooplankton densities and community composition; and determining fish, predator and zooplankton relationships around the bridge and away from it.

“We’re hypothesizing that there are multiple factors leading to the high mortality rates of steelhead observed at the Hood Canal Bridge,” said Hans Daubenberger, the tribe’s senior research scientist. “There are large pools under the bridge that seem to attract fish and may be acting like a baited mouse trap. The fish are attracted by zooplankton, which collects in the pool areas created by the bridge structure. The fish are then eaten by seals, birds and other predators.”

The installation of the bridge in 1961 essentially changed the marine food web system, Daubenberger said.

Other agencies and organizations are looking at sound propagation from cars, pathways of individual fish, tidal circulation, and how bridge placement is affecting water and predator movement.

“The idea is that all these things will overlay and result in a picture that shows causes of mortality,” Daubenberger said.

– T. Royal

“We’re hypothesizing that there are multiple factors leading to the high mortality rates of steelhead observed at the Hood Canal Bridge.”

– Hans Daubenberger

Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, senior research scientist
A severe winter threatened to starve the White River elk herd, which the Muckleshoot Tribe has spent years helping to recover.

The tribe’s wildlife program trucked in alfalfa to support food resources that were minimized by this year’s deep snowpack.

“We have spent a lot of time and money trying to recover this elk herd, and we wanted to ensure that all of our efforts were not undone due to this severe winter,” said Mike Jerry, chairman of the Muckleshoot wildlife committee.

The size of the herd has improved in recent years from a low of 700 animals in the early 2000s to around 900 today.

However, with the depth and hardness of the snow pack and significant harvest of the herd’s winter timber resources, wildlife managers stepped in to help.

“During intense winters with a lot of snow, we tend to see a lot of elk having a hard time getting enough food to help them survive to spring, especially now with so little forest cover remaining,” said David Vales, Muckleshoot wildlife biologist. “The forest cover is essential to intercept snow and reduce depth.”

Near Huckleberry Creek, the snow was almost 3 feet deep.

“The snow is so deep in some areas that they’re having a hard time even moving around,” said Mike Middleton, Muckleshoot wildlife biologist.

Over the winter, the tribe hauled 56 tons of alfalfa to nearly two dozen remote sites throughout the upper White River.

“We wanted to make sure to disperse the feed, so we weren’t getting large concentrations of elk in one spot,” Vales said. The department purchased a special off-road snow vehicle to reach remote feed sites that had too much snow.

The tribe conducted a population survey this spring to estimate the number of mortalities and to assess how the elk fared over the winter.

“Having healthy elk herds is a top priority for the Muckleshoot Tribe, because we have always depended on the health of our natural resources,” said Melvin Daniels, vice-chair of the wildlife program. “We are happy that we can help the elk population up there, because we rely on them to feed our families.” – E. O’Connell

During this year’s harsh winter, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe trucked food into the Cascade foothills to prevent a massive die-off of elk.
For a few weeks this spring, members of the Squaxin Island Tribe fanned out across prairies in deep South Sound to gather camas, a traditional tribal food that grows across the region. Participants learned how to prepare the root of the plant from Elizabeth Campbell of the Spokane Tribe. "She came out and showed us how to do a pit roast," said Aleta Poste, the tribe’s garden program coordinator. Pit roasting is a traditional process to preserve camas for winter use, making it sweet, like a caramelized pear. "In the past, we’ve always used it as a substitute for potatoes in soups," Poste said. "It’s neither a potato nor an onion, but it looks like an onion and its nutritional value is so much higher than your typical potato." However, places for tribal members to harvest are becoming harder and harder to find. The combination of development and changes in land management practices means that Puget Sound prairie habitat has declined by 90 percent. Since the arrival of non-Indians, the tribe has stopped burning the prairie to prevent trees from taking over. As a result, Douglas fir and non-native species like Scotch broom have spread to prairies once dominated by camas. "The conifer trees in the area need to be maintained because they’re constantly competing and encroaching upon these areas," Poste said. Tilling the soil during harvest is one of the best ways to ensure next year’s crop is plentiful, Poste said. "We harvest just as the plants are going to seed, so if the soil is tilled and soft, the seeds find their way into the ground," she said. The camas harvesting program is part of the tribe’s comprehensive garden program, where traditional medicinal knowledge is passed on through a series of classes and harvests for the tribal community.

Over the winter, two dozen members learned how to use trees for medicine. In addition to a discussion about various uses of trees, the attendees made a chest rub and a cedar oat bath infused with tree ingredients. "We want to make sure that this information will be shared, so that we are passing this on to future generations," Poste said. The tribe started the traditional plants garden with camas bulbs acquired through trade with the Lummi Nation and Kwakiutl First Nation in Fort Rupert, British Columbia. The program now provides for the elders lunch program, as well as food from the garden and an orchard, plus a facility for traditional food and medicine classes with staff from the tribal museum. "The museum has really sustained a lot of these classes, so we wanted to partner up with them and really make this a community effort," Poste said.

– E. O’Connell
Skagit River Juvenile Steelhead Tracked

The Upper Skagit Indian Tribe is tracking Skagit River juvenile steelhead before they out-migrate to salt water – if they out-migrate to salt water.

The tribe has been tagging juvenile steelhead with passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags for a few years to collect information about freshwater production in tributaries to the Skagit River. This year, they also are using Juvenile Salmon Acoustic Telemetry System (JSATS) tags, which can be detected at a greater distance than a PIT tag.

Steelhead smolts are collected in screw traps in Hansen Creek near Sedro-Woolley and Illabot Creek near Rockport. Upper Skagit natural resources staff implant fish with both tags.

Acoustic receivers at 11 locations along the Skagit River between Marblemount and Fir Island collect information about the juvenile fish while they’re in the river. In addition, Upper Skagit’s natural resources department is conducting mobile surveys using a receiver attached to the bow of a boat.

“Our goal is to gather biological knowledge about juvenile steelhead survival and the propensity to migrate to the salt water while refining the methodology along the way,” said Mike LeMoine, Upper Skagit fisheries biologist.

Steelhead have been listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act since 2007. Skagit River steelhead account for approximately 40 percent of all the steelhead in Puget Sound. The tribe wants to learn more about what might influence the migratory life history of Skagit River steelhead to develop an independent recovery plan and improve management.

Juvenile steelhead can leave freshwater habitat between their first and fourth year of life, and return from the salt water after one to five years. Because steelhead are genetically indistinguishable from rainbow trout in the Skagit River, understanding the factors driving migration is important.

Currently there is a significant effort to understand steelhead early marine survival, LeMoine said. This research aims to fill in the data gaps for residualized steelhead – those that don’t out-migrate.

Already, researchers have observed a correlation between water temperature and steelhead behavior. With higher river temperatures since 2015, steelhead have been leaving the river at a younger age than before, which will likely influence how they survive to become adults.

“Oncorhynchus mykiss can mature either in the salt water as steelhead or fresh water as a rainbow trout,” LeMoine said. “Because they can interbreed with the other form, we must understand factors that influence survival and migration.” – K. Neumeyer
Fisher-Kids Have Their Day

Right: Malia and Naomi McGimpsey hold their prized catches during the annual Kids Fishing Day in May, sponsored by Makah Fisheries and the National Fish Hatchery.

Below: Kids try their hand guessing the types of fish that are in the hatchery’s aquarium.

Generations

Racks for drying halibut are shown in this photo taken between 1900-1904 on Tatoosh Island, near Cape Flattery. The photo is courtesy of Arthur A. Reid, the photographer’s great-grandson.
Jeremy Freimund

Jeremy Freimund, longtime water resources director for the Lummi Indian Business Council, passed away May 5.

Born Oct. 4, 1961, Freimund held a master’s of science degree in watershed management and a bachelor’s of science in zoology.

He began working at Lummi in 1996, and was integral in establishing the country’s first federally backed tribal wetland and mitigation bank.

Prior to working for the Lummi Nation, he was a watershed scientist and a hydrologist for an environmental consulting firm based in Seattle; a research technician for the USDA Agricultural Research Service in Tucson, Arizona; a project assistant for Catholic Relief Services; and a rural community development agent for the Peace Corps. His Peace Corps and Catholic Relief Services work was performed in Senegal, West Africa, where he worked for five years.

He was known for his integrity, tireless work ethic and stoic sense of humor. He is survived by his wife of 27 years, Katherine; three sons Max, Cole (Fatmah) and Nate; mother Joann; brother Jeff (Teri); and sisters Jennifer and Julia.

Thomas Gouley

Thomas Gouley Sr. was born Jan. 7, 1937 in Mason County and passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on Aug. 22, 2016 at home in Skokomish, at the age of 79.

He attended Bacone College in 1955 and 1956, where he played baseball. He served in the Army from 1959-1962, and then attended the University of Idaho from 1964-1967. He married Diane Johns on Feb. 8, 1964, and attended the University of Washington in 1968.

In 1977, he went to work for the Skokomish Tribe as fisheries manager and then hatchery manager. He helped to build the Enetai Hatchery and worked part-time until he was 70 years old.

He loved his family and loved to spend time with his children and grandchildren. He imparted to his children and grandchildren the value of hard work and love of sports. He also loved to spend time on Hood Canal, fishing and harvesting oysters.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Diane Gouley; children Serena (Troy), Marjorie (Tom), Christina, Thomas Jr., Arthur (Stacy), Alex (Durinda), John (Lynnell) and Patricia; 24 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and sisters Lila Vigil, Marie Gouley and Carol Cordova.

He was preceded in death by his parents Alex Sr. and Grace Gouley; and a grandchild, Carver Cade Gouley.

Gordon Wilson


He was born Dec. 27, 1931. Wilson loved the water and appreciated all that it had to give. He pulled with the Lone Wolf and the Red Wing Canoe clubs. He was a lifetime fisherman and loved to support his fellow fisher-people.

His dedication to the salmon people was his life. Wilson served on the Lummi Fish Commission for many years with past and current leaders to preserve the tribe’s sche’lang’en (way of life).

He and his wife of 66 years, Helen, coached a Pee Wee baseball team. In addition to Helen, he is survived by his son Gordon “Ubba” Robert Wilson Jr., cousins Mony (Revey) Owings and Marie Revey, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his son Russell Levi Wilson; his parents Clarence and Margaret (Solomon) Wilson; his brothers James (Robert) Wilson, Michael (Polly) Wilson, Rudy Wilson, Gary Wilson, Alvin (Jeanette) Casimir; sisters Violet (Wilson) Jefferson Adams, Mary (Wilson) Martin, Florence Casimir, Lila (Casimir) Kelly; his grandparents Joseph and Mary Solomon, and Andrew and Ida Wilson.

Mary Jane Jack

Mary Jane Jack, 75, of Tulalip, passed away March 17.

She was born Feb. 3, 1942 in Darrington to Jackson Harvey and Jessie Tommy. Jack was a master weaver, bead worker and knitter.

She worked at the Bernie “Kai-Kai” Gobin Hatchery for 30 years and for the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. She was a Lushootseed language teacher for the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe.

Jack was an avid Seahawks fan. She traveled during the summer to various powwows around the country.

She is survived by her children Rainey (Melissa) Jack Sr., Anderson Jack, Virginia (Matthew Charlie Sr.) Jack and Timothy Jack; sister Rosie Kemp; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Jack was preceded in death by her husband Windy Jack; sons Peter Jack, Peter Jack II and John Harvey Jack; and siblings Helen Pierce, Violet Napoleon, Sally Moses, Paul Harvey and Casper Harvey.

Joshua Levi Monette

Joshua Levi Monette, Kashchuqwayup, 19, of Neah Bay, was lost to the sea April 2 at Cape Flattery. Monette was born in Port Angeles to William Joseph and Rebekah Joy Greene-Monette.

He graduated from Neah Bay High School in 2015 and was a sophomore in Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

He loved fishing, hunting, toolmaking, harvesting and processing traditional Makah foods and resources. Monette participated in singing and dancing tribal and family songs including sla-hal, war canoe racing and the Tribal Canoe Journeys. He also performed at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian exhibit opening in Washington, D.C.

He worked for the marine mammal department of the Makah Fisheries Program as a surveyor, researcher and data collector for the halibut hook project, resulting in publication in the journal Fisheries Research.

Monette is survived by his mother Rebekah J. Monette; stepfather Steve Baum; father William J. Monette and Alison Hero; sisters Lamira Luna and Lani Pele Richardson; brother William Eli Monette and Felicia Monje; nephew Braedyn Eli Monette; grandfather Philip R. Greene Sr. and Beverly Fowler; grandmother Julie Johnson; and numerous cousins, aunts and uncles. He was preceded in death by his maternal grandmother Elsa M. Greene, and paternal grandparents Wally and Mary Monette, and his Papa Coach.
Earth Day

Students from Hood Canal School in Skokomish keep a close eye on a kelp crab in one of the many touch tanks at an Earth Day event at the school, hosted by the Skokomish Tribe. Throughout the day, students from preschool to sixth grade listened to tribal elders talk about the importance of keeping the environment healthy, learned how salmon spawn, and got to touch a plethora of critters, including sea cucumbers, hermit crabs and starfish.

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