

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Jim Burke, with local news for Tuesday, August 30, 2022.

Yesterday, there was no Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners Meeting on the fifth Monday when there are no scheduled meetings. While there was no Public Health report from Dr. Allison Berry, the county websites do provide information about COVID-19 cases, so here are the numbers:

In Jefferson County, the two-week COVID-19 case-rate is 448 per hundred thousand. 1 person is currently hospitalized. 57 new cases were added this week for a total of 5,578 cases (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>).

In Clallam County the two-week COVID-19 case-rate is 363 per hundred thousand, 114 new cases for a total of 15,397 cases since the pandemic began. 1 person is hospitalized at this time (<https://www.clallam.net/Coronavirus/>).

The Board of County Commissioners does not meet next Monday due to the Labor Day holiday, but the County Health Report will return on Tuesday morning, September 6 and will be broadcast live at 9:45am right here on KPTZ.

[COVID-19 Tests will no longer be free from the US government starting September 2, this Friday. You can still order some tests between now and then (<https://www.covid.gov/tests>) or from Medicare/Medicaid (<https://www.cms.gov/how-to-get-your-at-home-OTC-COVID-19-test-for-free>) And of course you can still order tests from Washington State at <https://www.sayyescovidhometest.org>.]

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WashDot) said that crews are finishing work to remove fish barriers at Steamboat Creek, north of Kalaloch in Jefferson County. Yesterday, contractor crews working for WashDot removed the one-way alternating traffic signal on US 101 near Kalaloch that has been there since early July, while crews removed the remainder of an old box culvert and improved the streambed. This marks the end of a project to remove barriers to fish migration at three creeks under portions of US 101. Previously, Fisher, Harlow, and Steamboat Creeks flowed through culverts under portions of the highway, but those older culverts were too small and impeded fish travel. Crews replaced each culvert with new bridges over the waterways, which allow more space for fish to move through the water. Workers also improved streambeds to assist all life cycles of fish.

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe is hosting a discussion called, "Elwha Ecosystem Restoration – 10 Dam-Free Years and Counting" to the public, tonight from 6:30 to 9:30pm in the Little Theater at the Port Angeles campus of Peninsula College. It is open to the public, but registration is required (<https://tinyurl.com/yf7ajv6j>).

The Elwha Dam removal project began on September 17, 2011. By March of 2012, the 108-foot Elwha Dam was gone. Two years later, the 210-foot Glines Canyon Dam was also gone. It is the largest dam removal in United States history, so far. An article about the event and the anniversary of the dam removal was in yesterday's *Peninsula Daily News*.

Panel participants include:

- Mike Belchik, a senior water policy analyst for the Yurok Tribe, who will discuss progress on the Klamath River dam removal, which will be a larger and more complicated undertaking than the Elwha project. It will involve four dams and two states – Oregon and California.
- George Pess, a leading researcher on salmon recovery on the Elwha River.
- Pao Fernández Garrido of the World Fish Migration Foundation, who will explain the Elwha project's impact on the dam removal movement in Europe.

Following the conclusion of the speaker panel, there will be a poster session at Peninsula College Longhouse, where scientists from many disciplines will present their research. Questions will be encouraged.

Sarah Morley is a research ecologist in the watershed program at NOAA Fisheries Northwest Fisheries Science Center. She has been studying the Elwha River since 2003. Salmon tend to attract much of the attention when the Elwha River recovery is discussed, Morley said, but Tuesday's event will illustrate the many different research fields focused on the river. She said, "This is a great opportunity to talk to scientists... Salmon are key components of river ecosystems, but they're part of a larger food web." Her work focuses on periphyton – "the slimy stuff on rocks that you slip on when you try to cross a river" – and the invertebrates that feed on it, like mayflies and caddisflies, that are an important food source for young salmon.

Following Tuesday's public event, 98 scientists and educators will gather for a two-day workshop at Nature Bridge, where they will share their ideas and research on the Elwha River and dam removal. According to Sarah Morley, it will be a rare opportunity for those who have been working on the Elwha River to get together. She says, "There have been a lot of folks over the years who have been involved in monitoring and studying the Elwha." She added, "Of course, the Lower Klallam Tribe have been the heart and hub of all of the work, and they've funded research that's been central to scientific study of this river."

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.