

This is Casey Dolan with your local news for Wednesday, August 31, 2022 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

Port Townsend has always been vulnerable to sea level rise. At the commissioners' meeting last week, the board agreed to hire Environmental Science Associates (ESA), a Seattle-based environmental planning and design firm, as the consultant to prepare a sea level rise study for the county. The contract will run through June 30, 2023. The ESA team will be led by Lindsey Sheehan, who has more than a decade of experience in sea level rise analysis and coastal planning and engineering. The county's Department of Community Development received a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology for the study earlier this year, and county commissioners signed a grant agreement with the state agency in late April.

In a response to the County's request for qualifications, ESA wrote, "ESA recognizes the challenges – and costs – that sea level rise, storm surge, and erosion pose to coastal residents, business owners, infrastructure, and other social and cultural values... We have assembled a team of highly qualified experts in regional and local sea level rise science, climate adaption planning, and community engagement to support the county's efforts," the firm added. According to an article in the *Port Townsend Leader* in February 2020, a 9- to 10-foot tide now only happens a couple times a year during a king tide, but sea level rise projections say that in 50 years or less, those high tides could be the new normal. Two days ago, the *Washington Post* reported that a new study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* confirms that "3.3% of the Greenland ice sheet will melt – equal to 110 trillion tons of ice. That will trigger nearly a foot of global sea-level rise." And a report released in July of 2018 by the Washington Sea Grant and the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group showed that the coast of Washington is rising, whereas the land surrounding the Puget Sound, including Port Townsend, is sinking.

Black-market marijuana operations are being clamped down on in Clallam County. As they are legally prohibited to manufacture and sell cannabis, they are perceived as a threat by local law enforcement to state-licensed industries and often go hand in hand with the sale of other illegal drugs, according to the Clallam County Sheriff's Department. The sheriff's office has utilized a new way to dispose of a recent seizure of 58.3 pounds of processed marijuana and 146 3- to 4-foot-tall plants from a recent arrest: the incinerator of the McKinley Paper Company in Port Angeles.

Clallam County Chief Criminal Deputy Brian King said in an interview with the *Peninsula Daily News*, "Incineration has become popular, although it used to be the standard," King said. "But when the EPA implemented stricter clean air standards, it became more difficult." The sheriff's office had considered burying it, but "Some landfills accept it, then blend it into a mulch and bury it. But we decided to contact McKinley," he said. "They were open to it, so we got a Superior Court order allowing us to conduct the incineration... The mill's boilers burn so hot that anything organic will burn. They compress the material and drop it into the incinerator. It burns so hot that the drugs just dissolve, so they don't impact anyone nearby."

The Gaines Street Pump Station Project commenced construction last Monday. The project is located at the intersection of Gaines Street and Water Street, south of Sims Way, at the entrance to the major artery accessing Downtown Port Townsend. The project involves installing a new Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic liner for the wet well of the Gaines Street Pump Station, a key component in conveying wastewater from downtown Port

Townsend to the City's sewer treatment plant. The pump station was rebuilt approximately 20 years ago; it is now experiencing some serious corrosion in portions of the interior concrete walls.

The sewer pump station serves many businesses and thus the project requires temporary pumps be installed in the street during the rehabilitation of the existing pump station. This requires a street closure with a chain link fence and barricades in order to install temporary sewer pumps that will take the place of the lift station while the rehabilitation work is being done. Most parking stalls on the east side of Gaines Street and the north side of Water Street will be available throughout the project. The construction contract has a duration of sixty days, including the periods of both the Wooden Boat Festival and the Film Festival.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.