

Good afternoon, thanks for being with us at 91.9 KPTZ FM. I'm Simon Jaynes in Port Townsend, Washington with your local news for Friday, December 23, 2022.

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It is always tricky to pin down localized weather reports or predict how a broader storm alert might affect Port Townsend and communities on the Peninsula. Temperatures are warming slightly today, and East Jefferson County will likely see rain this afternoon. To what extent it may be freezing rain is hard to predict but that freezing rain, and the threat of it, is what shut down public transportation in Seattle this morning and grounded flights out of Sea-Tac.

Freezing rain on the peninsula could be extremely damaging if it combines with the high winds we are experiencing. There is a small craft advisory in the area until 5pm and it is expected to be reinstated again this evening at 10pm with winds up to 25 miles per hour.

The big takeaway for anyone with travel plans today or this weekend: While local conditions might be one thing, the highways, ferries and airports connecting your route to rest of the world may be experiencing more severe conditions.

- As of 6am all ferry service on the Port Townsend Coupeville route was cancelled due to severe weather. You can see status updates on the wsdot Alerts webpage (<https://wsdot.com/ferries/schedule/bulletin.aspx>).
- Runways at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport were “closed indefinitely as (they) continue to work to de-ice the surfaces,” the airport tweeted just after 5am. As of 6am, 423 flights arriving at or departing from Sea-Tac were canceled and 53 were delayed.
- As mentioned, Sound Transit Express Services were “suspended until further notice,” the agency said early this morning.
- Local riders should check in with any shuttle service they are using and look into road condition at the DOT Real-Time Travel Page (<https://wsdot.com/travel/real-time/>).

Plan ahead and be extremely cautious folks. The road conditions are likely going to get worse before they get better.

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All Jefferson County Offices are closed today, December 23, due to a Weather Alert. County Offices are also closed Monday, December 26 in observance of Christmas. The Jefferson County Commissioners Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 27, is cancelled. The next Regular Jefferson County Commissioners Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

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The Port Townsend Marine Science Center (PTMSC) has announced a new exhibit at its visitor's center at 1001 Water Street: “Bull Kelp: Our Remarkable Underwater Forests.” “We've just launched a new exhibit at Flagship Landing in beautiful downtown Port Townsend,” said PTMSC Executive Director Bee Redfield. “This family-friendly, 3D experience explores through sight and sound the vital ecosystem of kelp forests and marine life just off our shores.” Dynamic artwork by Timbul Cahyono surrounds visitors as they walk through the immersive structure. Cahyono's images of sea otters, swimming puffins and other sea creatures are printed on translucent fabric, providing a watery feel. Designed to be highly portable, the structure includes a recorded soundscape that plays sea sounds on discreetly placed speakers, as well as an underwater video of a kelp forest. Ambient lighting simulates the nearshore habitat's location to the sun. The Exhibit is open to the public Friday through Sunday, 12-3pm, through the end of February 2023.

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This week, the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives released the 2023 Omnibus Appropriations bill, which includes a historic \$54 million for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Puget Sound Geographic Program. This investment, combined with \$18 Million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, means Puget Sound will receive \$72 million in federal funds next year to protect irreplaceable habitat. According to Senator Maria Cantwell, "This is a historic investment in Puget Sound recovery.... The creation of the first-ever Puget Sound Recovery National Program office and Puget Sound Federal Task Force will mean that the Puget Sound salmon, and orcas are poised to receive unprecedented support well into the future.

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The City of Port Townsend Planning and Community Development Department and Public Works Department is set to launch its online permit portal that will accept building and right-of-way permit applications starting January 3, 2023. According to mayor David Faber, "Electronic permitting will improve (the City's) ability to effectively deliver timely and predictable permits." The transition to digital permitting will effectively open permitting processes to 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. The City has long been accepting some mechanical, re-roofing, and solar permits digitally, but with this launch, it will expand to building, street development, and minor improvement permits. Users can sign up for the public portal and set up an account at the City of Port Townsend's website (<https://cityofpt.us/planning-community-development/page/inspection-and-permitting-portal>). If you are having difficulty in establishing an account or need to reset your account, you may call the city at 360-379-5095.

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And that's it for today's local news. You can contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Simon Jaynes. Thanks for listening, and have a great day.