

This is Casey Dolan with your local news and commentary for Thursday, March 2, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

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The *Seattle Times* carried a story this past Sunday on the 20 worst carbon emitters in the state of Washington for the year 2021 and the auctioning of carbon allowances – permits to pollute. On Tuesday, the allowances for the first time went up for sale in an online auction. The article mainly focused on fossil fuel companies and the state’s carbon-pricing program in which the state’s biggest emitters of climate-warming greenhouse gases can buy and sell carbon allowances. The intention is for the state to be carbon-free by 2050.

The Port Townsend Paper Corporation, our paper mill, placed #19 on the list with 521,622 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>E. The list was compiled by the Washington State Department of Ecology, but failed to include fuel suppliers, which account for all the gas sold in the state and burned on the road. The state recently removed fuel suppliers from its data. New data is promised to be available in the fall.

Washington’s carbon-pricing program is largely based on the successful cap-and-trade enacted in California in which emissions were reduced as economies grew. The Washington Policy Center, a conservative think tank, claims that the program is a “tax” and circulated petitions calling for its repeal.

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And, speaking of the paper mill, the *PT Leader* reports that the planned development on 14 acres of land northwest of the Port Townsend Paper Mill – Evans Vista – is getting closer to becoming a reality. The Port Townsend City Council heard the master plan presentation last week. Olympia-based Thomas Architecture Studio, led by company president Ron Thomas, presented a diversity of ideas for the project, from three-story and dense housing ideas to constructing a Makers and Artisan District within the property. Drafts included a gateway circle, a live/work district, and between 80 to 150 workforce housing units. In other words, as Thomas emphasized, “This is a new neighborhood.”

The city received \$3.1 million from federal and state coffers which will be used in part for the land purchase, utility design, and installation of a lift station, which is used to move waste water from lower to higher elevation.

A total of \$500,000 from Jefferson County will be used for Evans Vista’s master plan. Thomas Architecture and the city are set to host public outreach meetings to gain more feedback from the public in the coming weeks and months. The city hopes to complete the master plan by August and Thomas Architecture intends to provide updates every two or three months.

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In a press release, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has announced that a total of \$5.5 million in funding has been awarded to 11 proposed projects that aim to restore and protect shellfish habitats across Puget Sound. Awardees were chosen by DOH’s Shellfish Strategic Initiative Advisory Team using Environmental Protection Agency Puget Sound Geographic Funds. Washington is the leading producer of farmed shellfish in the nation and for the shipping of commercial shellfish internationally. However, 16,000 acres of Puget Sound shellfish beds are currently closed to harvest due to nonpoint fecal pollution, such as water runoff from agricultural activities, pet waste, boater waste discharge, and onsite sewage systems. Proposals funded by this grant will work to find and fix nonpoint source pollution, which occurs when runoff from rain and snowmelt carries the pollutants into waterways.

One such proposal is by the Washington State Department of Ecology, who proposes to fund three Ecology Water Quality Nonpoint and Shellfish Specialists to work collaboratively with pollution identification and correction partners in Whatcom, Skagit, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Jefferson, and Clallam counties to address sources of fecal coliform and other pollutants on agricultural lands. They were awarded \$624,330 as partial funding.

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Jefferson Healthcare has issued a press release announcing that it has received three 2023 Women's Choice Awards. These prestigious awards include America's Best Hospitals for Minimally Invasive Surgery, America's Best Hospitals for Outpatient Experience, and America's 100 Best Hospitals for Patient Experience. The Women's Choice Award is a respected referral source for the best in healthcare.

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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](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.