

Hello again. This is Derek Firenze with your local news and commentary for Thursday, December 14, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

While the cost of a new community pool in Port Townsend remains a hotly debated issue, the city has done its best to make clear the cost of sticking with the old pool at the current Mountain View Campus. The latest in the suite of feasibility studies around the project was shared on Friday, December 8 by Director of Parks and Recreation Strategy, Carrie Hite. Hite reported that the City of Port Townsend had hired a cost estimator to calculate the cost to rehabilitate the existing pool and to assess the cost to create a competition-size pool from the old footprint. Early projections are approximately \$21 million dollars. That estimate is based on what is visible and, given the age and unknowns around the current structure, as well as the rising costs for construction, the city believes this number is likely a conservative estimate. According to the cost estimator, a rehabilitation project of this type would be considered high risk and would demand higher annual operating expenses over time as parts break, systems fail, finishes deteriorate, and structures weaken.

One major aspect to the cost remains a mystery though, as the condition underneath the current pool structure is unknown. The city stated that there is substantial risk that the pool is more extensively deteriorated than currently assumed and there may be soil conditions that don't support the rebuilding of the current pool. On top of that, it is unknown how long the current pool will be operable. Numerous deficiencies were observed on the pool deck, pool liner, HVAC system, in the locker room, building structure, support areas, and other building mechanical systems. Any one of these points of failure could close the pool. Additionally, as part of the facility assessment, it was determined that the current pool facility is not in compliance with ADA standards.

Thankfully, there are watery mysteries at least somewhat less contentious. The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe is working with a diverse group of partners to learn more about the potential structure of Puget Sound's Dungeness crabs by studying the DNA of both larvae and adults. Liz Tobin, the Tribe's shellfish program manager, said that the main question they're looking to answer is whether Dungeness crab in the region belong to a single large population or if there are multiple genetically distinct populations. This work can also help scientists understand fluctuations or declines in crab populations that may be experienced by natural factors such as larval supply. In the end, the true goal is to maximize harvest opportunities of Dungeness crab while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the resource.

A regionwide light-trap project since 2018 also has helped scientists track when and where crab larvae are present across the inland waters of Washington and British Columbia. Many marine invertebrates, including crabs, are attracted to light and light traps take advantage of this behavior to allow them to be trapped and tracked before they stop swimming and start crawling. So far, more larvae have been found in North Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, while fewer crab have been showing up in South Sound and Hood Canal.

Let's end with a bit of holiday spirit. One local hero has put a beautiful twist on the 12 days of Christmas by committing to 12 days of fundraising for 3 families in need in Jefferson County. Who, you ask? Why the Large Man of PT, also known as Joshua Bingham?

Large Man is a super-hero of sorts: a self-described meat Goliath weighing in at 320 pounds and 6 ft 2, Large Man destroys any heavy lifting, moving, or physical task. With his services, you are renting pure man meat.

There are still openings for Large Man to absolutely manhandle your heaving lifting and labor jobs during his charitable fundraising between December 18 to 23. All proceeds from work that Large Man does during this time period will be given to families in need in Jefferson County. If Large Man suits your fancy, Large Man oh so loves text messages at 206-707-2379.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturdays. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Derek Firenze. Thanks for listening.