

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. This is Jim Burke, with local news and commentary for Thursday, April 18, 2024.

A reminder that motorists who use the State Route 104 Hood Canal Bridge between Jefferson and Kitsap counties will want to plan additional travel time each weekday now through April 26 as WSDOT bridge preservation crews conduct in-depth inspections of the bridge which require opening the draw span twice daily around 10am and 2:30pm for up to an hour. During each opening, the bridge is closed to all traffic. That's through next Friday, April 26.

From *Peninsula Daily News*: A person involved in a collision that left a vehicle down an embankment on Deer Park Road was airlifted to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, Clallam 2 Fire-Rescue said in a press release. Firefighters were dispatched just after 8am Saturday to the collision near the 6 1/2-mile mark on Deer Park Road, Fire Chief Jake Patterson said. The person, identified only as the single adult occupant, was trapped with life-threatening injuries in the vehicle, which was pinned against a tree about 20 feet down the embankment. Firefighter/paramedics and EMTs used hydraulic extrication tools to untangle the person and then used a litter to get them up to the roadway, where a crew from Olympic Ambulance was waiting to take over care.

A Lifeflight helicopter landed near the 7000 block of Deer Park Road and flew the person to Harborview for continued care. The fire district was not able to provide an update on the person's condition. Based on initial reports, it is possible the collision may have occurred sometime during the night and was discovered by a passerby about 8am. Clallam 2 Fire-Rescue responded with two ambulances, one fire engine, one rescue vehicle and one command vehicle with a total of 13 personnel. Olympic Ambulance responded with one ambulance and two personnel. Clallam County Sheriff's deputies responded and provided traffic control and will continue to investigate the collision.

The Washington State Transportation Commission is updating the state's 20-year plan for transportation and will begin its first round of listening sessions in April and May, with six meetings planned throughout the state. The Washington Transportation Plan provides an overarching transportation policy framework along with strategies for use by all jurisdictions statewide that issue transportation plans or operate parts of the transportation system. The plan also serves as one of the state's tools to demonstrate compliance with federal planning requirements. The listening sessions will focus on gathering early input from statewide leaders, interested parties, and the public on what the top transportation priorities, needs, and challenges are in their part of the state. All meetings will be conducted via Zoom, and one meeting has an in-person option. The public is invited to attend the meetings to hear about topics from transportation professionals, listen to the dialogue, and provide feedback. Public comment will be taken at each meeting.

The following meetings will be virtual and require online registration:
Greater Seattle area: Tuesday, April 23, 1:30 to 3:30pm
Southwest Washington: Thursday, April 25, 9 to 11am
Olympic Peninsula and Olympia: Monday, April 29, 1:30 to 3:30pm

One of the meetings will be hybrid, with in-person and virtual options:
South Central Washington: Monday, May 13, 1:30 to 3:30pm

Those wishing to attend any of the meetings, virtually or in person, may register by visiting the commission's website, wstc.wa.gov (<https://wstc.wa.gov/>).

From *The Washington State Standard*: Low snowpack and forecasts for a dry and warm spring and summer have led the state's Department of Ecology to declare a drought emergency for most of the state. The agency said, "With chances for significant additions to our snowpack now diminishing, there is simply not enough water contained in mountain snow and reservoirs to prevent serious impacts for water users in the months ahead." Limited areas in Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett are not covered by the drought declaration because utilities in those cities have reservoir storage and water management strategies that make them more resilient to drought than other places, Ecology said. You can read the agency's full announcement here:

https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/news/2024-news-stories/april-16-drought-declaration?amp%3bhmac=XMg-lyxUw2GM49_mW8CadvHeNIk1hUxzJWKEc9nkjl%3d&%3bemci=e561d375-74fc-ee11-aaf0-7c1e52017038&%3bemdi=75250867-cafc-ee11-aaf0-7c1e52017038&%3bceid=553235.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can reach out to us at news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.