

Suzanne Skinner

From: Center for Environmental Law & Policy (CELP) <contact@celp.org>
Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2013 3:46 PM
To: sskinner@celp.org
Subject: CELP's Washington Water Watch and our thanks



Washington Water Watch

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From the Director:

Dear CELP members and friends:

In this season we stop to give thanks for what we enjoy. Here in Washington--we are lucky to still have a fighting chance for clean, ample water for fish, wildlife, and our children. So many parts of the world, and parts of this country are increasingly doing without: an outcome known as water

stress.



Source: WaterGAP 2.0 - December 1999

We in Washington are feeling that stress certainly--even though we enjoy relatively ample clean water compared to many parts of the world. But it is because of that blessing, that we must act to protect Washington's rivers and aquifers for the future. The World Water Vision Report succinctly summed up our mandate at CELP, and our mandate for humanity.

"There is a water crisis today. But the crisis is not about having too little water to satisfy our needs. It is a crisis of managing water so badly that billions of people - and the environment - suffer badly."

I read this as a reason for hope--bad management can be corrected. Working together we can manage water better in Washington so that there is sufficient clean water for fish and wildlife, schoolchildren in the Yakima Valley, conservation minded agriculture, and for other essential needs. And what we do in Washington, can be done worldwide.

You could help CELP work for better management of Washington's water by participating in Giving Tuesday this December 3rd. Giving Tuesday is a new national movement taking place every year on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving that is all about giving back to our communities (instead of consuming more). Some ways you can participate include giving back through volunteering in your community or by [contributing to CELP.](#)

Thank you for your concern and support.



Suzanne Skinner
Executive Director

Fish consumption standards: After the Machinists'

Vote

CELP is part of the **Clean Seafood Coalition:** an alliance of Puget Sound tribes and environmental organizations working to get the state to adopt a safe, rational fish consumption rate. **Washington State is in the process of resetting the state's fish consumption rate:** the standard required under the federal Clean Water Act to set limits on pollutants for our lakes, rivers, streams, estuaries, and, of course, Puget Sound, which support the fish that we eat. How those limits are set is a very complicated, contentious process-that far too often involves more political science than the physical and health sciences.

Determining that rate means the state must first find out how much fish people are eating. Currently, Washington's standard is 6.5 grams per day: the amount that would fit on a Ritz cracker. That amounts to 195 grams per month-a portion just a bit larger than Oregon's current fish consumption rate for a single day.

Washington's fish consumption needs updating.

CELP is working with many tribes and other environmental advocates through the Clean Seafood Coalition to get that done NOW.

EPA has told Washington that it must raise our fish consumption rate to more accurately protect the health of Washingtonians who eat fish and other kinds of seafood. The state has studied the science and understands that Washington's fish consumption rate should be at least that of Oregon's. **The science, although complicated, is not the problem.**

The problem is that setting a realistic fish consumption standard will require the state to impose more stringent water quality standards, limiting discharges of new pollutants into Washington's waters. Even though those higher standards will only

apply to new discharges of pollutants, industry is very concerned. Limiting new water pollution could cost industry and others regulated under the Clean Water Act money—perhaps serious money.

Last Spring, Boeing kept the state legislature from passing a budget for several days over the issue of fish consumption rates. (See CELP's June Waterwatch). **This Fall, when the Governor called a special session to ask the legislature to pass tax breaks to keep Boeing in the state; fish consumption rates were also on the table.** Boeing and other companies have pushed the Governor hard, very hard, to make the Department of Ecology hold back on proposing new, significantly, higher fish consumption rates.

Then Boeing's Machinists rejected Boeing's new contract which would have cut back pension and health benefits. Boeing is now shopping its new 777x plane to other states.

So where does that leave the state's roll out of a new, more realistic fish consumption rate?

The legislature is getting involved. Last week, in a pre-session hearing, Kelly Sussewind of the Department of Ecology's Water Quality Program testified before the Senate Energy, Environment and Technology committee that the data pointed to three options to change the fish consumption rate:

- Increasing it to 125 grams per day, or 8 pounds a month. This is the mean fish consumption rate of three Puget Sound tribes which Ecology surveyed. This is also roughly the minimum amount that the American Heart Association recommends everyone should eat monthly.
- Increasing it to 175 grams per day, or 12 pounds a month. This is Oregon's standard.
- Increasing it to 225 grams of fish a day, or 15 pounds a month. This rate is based on data from the Suquamish Tribe and recreational fishers.

Which standard to use? Certainly the highest standard will protect the most people. Moreover, whatever standard is adopted will be used not just for cancer causing agents but all toxins present in fish—including mercury, PCBs, and arsenic. The diseases associated with these carcinogens and toxins have widely different exposure sensitivities, and consequences. This argues for choosing the most stringent standard.

Ecology has yet to announce which of the alternatives identified last Thursday it will choose. But what was clear at the legislative hearing last week is that Ecology will use "**implementation tools**", such as intake credits, compliance schedule extensions of as much as 20 years, and variances to extend when industry has to clean up its discharges. These implementation tools will inevitably seriously dilute the immediate and the long term benefit to human health of whatever updated fish consumption rate is ultimately chosen.

That simply may not protect our children—and especially those who are come from cultures that eat more than the average amount of local fish. Shouldn't they be protected too?

What can you do? Email [Governor Jay Inslee](#) and [Department of Ecology Director Maia](#)

[Bellon](#) Ask them to stop delaying! **The state needs to adopt a scientifically valid fish consumption standard that reflects reality-and does not discriminate against Washingtonians who eat fish for cultural and economic reasons-and their children.**

The CELP website has a new look! We are grateful to **Capitol Media of Seattle** for all its efforts to create a new, easily managed website for CELP. We are even more grateful to **John Osborn, CELP's tireless board president**, for creating and managing CELP's old website for seven years, as he puts it, "with string and bailing wire." Luckily we are able to preserve all the useful information and historical information from the old website. Just check out the resources tab on the new website to link to the old, now archived website. **[Up Time Technology has detected a possible fraud attempt from "r20.rs6.net" claiming to be www.celp.org.](#)**

CELP is pleased to announce the addition of three new board members to the Board of Directors.

Daryl Williams is a member of the Tulalip Tribe, and been on staff with the Tribe since 1977 in many capacities, while currently serving as Executive Director of the Tulalip Energy Corporation and Environmental Liaison for the Natural Resources Division. Daryl also was appointed to the Puget Sound Action Team and the National Tribal Environmental Council.

Denise Smith is a nurse and community activist with over 20 years of experience working on water issues, beginning as a member of the Issaquah Creek Valley Groundwater Advisory Committee. Denise is the past president of the Seattle League of Women Voters and Water Resource Portfolio Chair. She has represented the League on several Department of Health and Department of Ecology committees, including the 2009 Washington State Climate Change Response Strategy Topic Advisory Group, Human Health and Security.

Dr. Frank James is active in teaching, research and medical practice. His interests focus on health promotion and disease prevention. He is currently the Health Officer for San Juan County and Health Officer for the Nooksack Indian Nation. He has been a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Washington School of Public Health since 1992. Dr. James also serves on the Board of Directors of the Institute for Village Studies and Responsible Development. And was the Executive Director of HonorWorks a foundation that promotes a healthy society through the work of Native American artists. He also works on the organizing committee for Whatcom Docs, a group of local physicians that are working to bring a scientific evaluation of the health impacts of the proposed coal port and coal trains on his community. Together with Juanita Jefferson he started the CEDAR Project on the Lummi Nation over 20 years ago, this project has contributed to the health and well being of many in the community and has provided training for young people that have become leaders of several very important organizations in our region.

For a decade he was a Primary Investigator for an NIH funded prostate cancer prevention trial at the St Joseph Hospital Cancer Center. For over a nearly 10 years Dr. James was the medical director of Interfaith Family Health Center, a local community clinic that provides care to thousands of families on a sliding fee scale. That community clinic continues to see over 50,000 visits a year. He was also the Whatcom County Health Officer for nearly a decade in the 1990's. He has been the President of the Whatcom County Medical Society, President of the University of Washington Medical Student Association and National Vice-President of the American

Medical Students Association.

Thanks for taking the time to read CELP's newsletter. Thanks to your help, CELP has accomplished much but, as you can see, more needs to be done. CELP needs your help once again to tackle the ever-increasing squeeze on our essential water resources.

Please join CELP or renew your membership for 2013. We need you!
You can join and make a donation to CELP [here](#) or send a check to our offices at:
911 Western Ave- #305, Seattle WA 98104

THANK YOU!

ABOUT CELP

CELP's mission is to protect and restore Washington's rivers and aquifers through science-based management of our waters. CELP works through public education, grassroots assistance, agency advocacy, legislative reform, and public interest litigation.

If you care about a future with water, please become a [CELP member](#) today!
You can reach us at: 206-829-8299 or [email us](#).

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