



# Loo Wit Rumblings



Environment, Education, Conservation & Events for Southwest Washington

## April Member Program—Restoring Snake River Salmon: the Salmon/Dam Equation

*Lehman Holder, Executive Committee*

Loo Wit Group will host Sierra Club conservation organizer Alex Craven on Apr. 29 (Tues) for a program on the controversial lower Snake River dams. Program time/location is 6:30 p.m. in the Columbia Room of the downtown Vancouver library, Ave C and Evergreen.

Alex's program will cover salmon recovery in the Snake River, the link to endangered Orcas, why additional spill over the dams is critical to salmon, and why removing the four lower Snake River dams will be necessary.

Craven, a native of Vermont, says he moved to Washington state "to enjoy the breathtaking natural landscapes." He adds that his work is motivated by a "desire to protect irreplaceable species and ecosystems and to build a sense of place for all people."



Alex Craven, April's Program Speaker

The plight of Southern Resident Orcas in Puget Sound has put renewed focus on the fight to remove the Snake dams.

Please join us for an informative program. Light refreshments will be served.



The four lower dams on the Snake river. Image courtesy Statesman Journal/Molly Quinn

# LOO WIT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Saturday, April 20th.** StreamTeam's Eco Fair at Kline Park.  
Learn more on page 11.

**Tuesday, April 29th:** Snake River Dams Member Program. 6:30 pm, Downtown Vancouver Library

**Tuesday, May 7th:** Loo Wit Executive Committee Meeting. St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Vancouver, WA. Glass Room. 6:30—8:00 pm.

***Beyond Coal & Oil Task Force Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of the month at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Vancouver. Meet & greet with pizza starts at 6:00 pm, followed by the meeting at 6:30 pm.***

## Connect With Us!

If you haven't already, please give us a "like" on Facebook! We share information about upcoming events, photos from outings and the latest Loo Wit news. You can even share our posts with your own Facebook friends, helping to spread the word about Loo Wit!

All of our upcoming outings are posted on MeetUp, and archives of our monthly newsletters on our website. You can find us on Instagram by searching "LooWit.Group"

[www.facebook.com/loowit.group](http://www.facebook.com/loowit.group)

[www.meetup.com/Portland-Vancouver-Sierra-Club-Outings-Events](http://www.meetup.com/Portland-Vancouver-Sierra-Club-Outings-Events)

[www.sierraclub.org/washington/loo-wit](http://www.sierraclub.org/washington/loo-wit)

You can also join our listserv for pertinent conservation related news! Send an email to [CASCADE-LOOWIT-CONSFORUM@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG](mailto:CASCADE-LOOWIT-CONSFORUM@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG) with "subscribe" in the subject line to be added to the list!



## Loo Wit Executive Committee Members

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**Don Steinke**—Oil & Coal

**Steve Foster**—Treasurer/Sales

**Lehman Holder**—Outings Liaison

**Alona Steinke**—Oil & Coal/at large

**Fred Suter**—Vice Chair/Legislative Liaison

**David Bybee**—Secretary

**Emily Waters**—Newsletter

**Kelsey King**



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## Washington State Passes Environmental Bills

*Don Steinke, Executive Committee*

I've advocated and waited 50 years for the energy conservation legislation that passed both chambers in Olympia this April. HB 1257 increases efficiency standards in buildings over 50,000 square feet, and HB 1444 will require appliances to be more efficient.

Alona and I were at meeting of the Portland Planning Commission three years ago when they voted to require an energy performance audit for all buildings that enter the resale market. The building owners were there in large numbers to oppose the ordinance.

Those who own commercial buildings are more interested in keeping down the up-front cost than investing in energy conservation. Then they try to hide the energy costs from the buyer. The tenant pays the energy bill, not the owner.

The take away is that there are huge opportunities for conservation in commercial buildings that have been ignored by Public Utilities.

As I understand it, the law has not allowed public utilities to go after energy conservation opportunities unless they can be shown to be cost effective. Their formulas for cost effectiveness have not allowed them to include the avoided pollution cost if they stop polluting.

Therefore they have no inventory of conservation opportunities in schools and commercial buildings.

But if they are allowed to include the cost of your pollution, then many conservation opportunities exist in schools and other commercial buildings.

SB 5116, will require utilities to reduce emissions by investing in conservation, energy storage, combined heat and power, smart meters, and the electrification of transportation.

Energy conservation is the cheapest way to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Instead of using the word conservation, the legislation uses the expression "Energy Transformation Projects.

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Ready for 100% logo via SierraClub



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## **Washington State Passes Environmental Bills**

*Don Steinke, Executive Committee*

An administrative penalty of \$60 per non-compliant Megawatt Hour will be assessed. That number may be used in their cost effectiveness formulas.

Money's collected go into a low-income weatherization and structural rehabilitation account. Sales of equipment for renewable energy will be exempt from the sales tax. SB 5116 will be called Washington Clean Energy Transformation Act.

Utilities will get credit not only for reducing their use of fossil fuel for electricity, but also for reducing the use of fossil fuels in their vehicles and in the vehicles of others. SB 5116 also allow utilities to use renewable hydrogen. SB 5116 takes effect immediately after signing.

Change is coming.

## **Tar-Sands Oil May Be Traveling Through SW Washington**

*Don Steinke, Executive Committee*

In March, 2018, reports surfaced that trains carrying heavy crude oil from Canada's tar sands were moving through the Portland-Vancouver area. Now, Zenith Energy is retooling its Portland terminal next to the Willamette River to greatly expand rail capacity, to handle more tar sands oil for export by ship. The company received building permits for the current expansion before the Portland City Council passed a ban on new fossil fuel infrastructure in 2016.

We don't know for certain what routes the trains are taking to reach Portland, but it is thought that many travel along the Washington side of the Columbia River, right through Washougal, Camas and downtown Vancouver. Washington's Department of Ecology issues quarterly oil train reports, but unfortunately, oil that is moving through the state on its way to Oregon is not included. In addition to Sierra Club, local groups like Columbia Riverkeeper, 350 PDX and Physicians for Social Responsibility are fighting to stop the expansion, and to urge Oregon to adopt more transparency in its oil-by-rail disclosure policies.

You can take action by visiting <https://www.columbiariverkeeper.org/news/2019/2/risky-move-tar-sands-oil>



## Legislative Report

*Fred Suter, Legislative Liaison & Vice Chair*

HB 1109 - Operating Budget 2019-2021: The Sierra Club is fighting to secure funding for two line items that support Gov Inslee's Orca Task Force recommendations - \$500,000 for Department of Ecology rule making authority to regulate spill over the Columbia River dams; \$750,000 to support the stakeholder process for the Snake River dam removal.

The Senate version of the operating budget contains both line items; the House version currently doesn't include the Snake River dam stakeholder process. The issue will need to be resolved during reconciliation. There is vigorous debate among legislators concerning the state's funding sources and ability to balance the budget. There is also opposition from eastern Washington farmers/wheat growers, the tug and barge industry, and organized labor at the affected ports and dams. Here is a record of the floor votes for HB 1109:

**House** vote March 29th: Yes - Blake (19th LD), Wylie & Stonier (49th LD)

No - Mosbrucker (14th LD), Kraft & Harris (17th LD), Vick & Hoff (18th LD),  
(19th LD), DeBolt & Orcutt (20th LD)

Walsh

Excused - Corry (14th LD)

**Senate** vote April 4th: Yes - Takko (19th LD), Braun (20th LD), Cleveland (49th LD)

No - King (14th LD), Rivers (18th LD)

Excused - Wilson (17th LD)

Both line items are considered crucial steps for salmon recovery and survival. During hot summer months, there are extended periods when river water temperatures rise above 68 degrees Fahrenheit which threatens salmons' ability to migrate upriver to spawn. This is contributing to starvation of the Puget Sound Orca.

In 2018, both Oregon and Washington closed the Columbia to all sport and commercial salmon fishing due to low salmon counts (per OregonLive, Sep 11, 2018). The Washington Department of Ecology has the authority under the Clean Water Act to issue Section 401 comprehensive certificates to address water quality issues at federal dams.

*Article continued on following page.*



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The Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over federal dam operation and is required to get pollution discharge permits from the EPA. The EPA had submitted draft permit applications to WA Department of Ecology to address this. But after Ecology had initiated the public comment process on the draft permits, the EPA suddenly withdrew its permit applications on Jan 31, 2019.

This action stopped the state's effort to regulate water quality at federal dams. This leaves Ecology with the task of enforcing water quality standards on federal dams and Gov Inslee has committed his support (per the Seattle Times, Feb 7, 2019, *EPA Ices Washington State's Effort to Regulate Hot Water in the Columbia, Snake Rivers*). This issue will continue to unfold in the face of the already significant pressure that is being placed on salmon survival and recovery.

## June Event to Focus on Hops & Salmon

*Kelsey King, Executive Committee*

Join Loo Wit on June 4th 7-9pm at Hopworks Urban Brewery Vancouver 17707 SE Mill Plain Blvd, Vancouver, WA 98683 for 50 guests to learn about Salmon Safe certifications for hops yards, urban development and more. **Must RSVP via meetup.com [www.meetup.com/Portland-Vancouver-Sierra-Club-Outings-Events](http://www.meetup.com/Portland-Vancouver-Sierra-Club-Outings-Events)**



## **HOW DID YOUR LEGISLATORS VOTE?**

### **100% Clean Energy:**

SB 5116 - Transition to Clean Energy.

Senate vote March 1st:

Yes - Takko (19th LD), Cleveland (49th LD)

No - King (14th LD), Wilson (17th LD), Rivers (18th LD), Braun (20th LD)

House vote April 11th:

Yes - Wylie & Stonier (49th LD)

No - Corry & Mosbrucker (14th LD), Kraft & Harris (17th LD), Vick & Hoff (18th LD), Walsh & Blake (19th LD), DeBolt & Orcutt (20th)

### **Southern Orca Task Force:**

HB 1578 - Oil Transportation Safety.

House vote March 7th:

Yes - Corry & Mosbrucker (14th LD), Harris (17th LD), Walsh & Blake (19th LD), DeBolt (20th LD), Wylie & Stonier (49th LD)

No - Kraft (17th LD), Vick & Hoff (18th LD), Orcutt (20th LD)

Senate vote April 12th:

Yes - Rivers (18th LD), Takko (19th LD), Cleveland (49th LD)

No - King (14th LD), Braun (20th LD)

Excused - Wilson (17th)

### **HB 1579 - Habitat Protection / Improved Enforcement.**

House vote March 7th.

Yes - Blake (19th LD), Wylie & Stonier (49th LD)

No - Corry & Mosbrucker (14th LD), Kraft & Harris (17th LD), Vick & Hoff (18th LD), Walsh (19th LD), DeBolt & Orcutt (20th LD)

Senate vote April 10th.

Yes - Takko (19th LD), Cleveland (49th LD)

No - King (14th LD), Rivers (18th LD), Braun (20th LD)

Excused - Wilson (17th LD)





### **Climate Action/Inaction at the City and Port**

*Alona Steinke, Executive Committee*

In 2014, in order to pre-empt another project like Tesoro from popping up in Vancouver, the City Council called for a moratorium on crude oil terminals.

In 2016, the Council passed a permanent ban. The fear that we have now, is that a different fossil fuel project might rear its ugly head--maybe LPG, LNG, methanol, ammonia, or even coal.

On April 8, we packed City Hall. We presented our petition, with more than 300 signatures, asking the Council to expand their ban to include all fossil fuels. Several of us spoke during the public comment period. I asked that they also prevent any expansion of existing fossil fuel facilities. Some of us urged the Council to get moving on a Climate Action Plan.

We had originally planned this action for the previous Council meeting, but at that time, our friends in the communities of color wanted to attend in force to talk to City Council about the three recent police shootings. They were advocating for body cams for the officers.

Because they are our friends and neighbors and because environmental justice intersects with social justice, our group attended but stayed in the background, showing our support.

On April 8, the favor was returned. We had people from Odyssey World Int'l., the Noble Foundation, the Sunrise movement and LULAC show up to support us.

We were met with nonsense from climate deniers Councilor Bill Turlay, his friend Gordon Fulks, and someone else who claimed that Sierra Club takes money from the Russians. He said he read it on Wikipedia. That was just a bit of comic relief.

Councilor Ty Stober was the only one who responded with a measure of support, asking the staff to determine how many fossil fuel projects exist now and how much capacity there is for more.

We will continue to show up at City Council meetings to see how they progress with the ban, as well as with a Climate Action Plan. Our hope is that they will at least call for a moratorium on any new fossil fuel infrastructure.

*Article continues on next page.*



### **Climate Action/Inaction at the City and Port (Continued)**

*Alona Steinke, Executive Committee*

The Port of Vancouver is actively working on a climate action plan. They said, at their last meeting, that they will have something to report in a month, after talking with their tenants to get their input.

The Port of Vancouver has made public their environmental goals:

- Compile existing POV climate and air quality
- .Evaluate current/future regulatory framework regarding initiatives
- Contact tenants and customers regarding growing opportunities and evaluate fit for POV
- Convene POV Sustainability Team
- Continue communication with governments

We have reason to believe that the Port will soon make a resolution to ban all new bulk fossil fuel infrastructure. Hopefully, that will give the City of Vancouver the courage to do the same.

City Council meetings are held the first through fourth Mondays of each month, except holidays on the second floor of the City Hall building, 415 W. 6th Street Vancouver. Here's the website: <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/citycouncil/page/city-council-meetings>

Port Commission meetings are typically held every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at the port administrative offices, 3103 Lower River Road, Vancouver. More info can be found here: <https://www.portvanusa.com/commission/agendas-minutes/>



## LOO WIT OUTINGS

### Spring, Summer Outings See Delay

*Lehman Holder, Outings leader*

A very rainy April has delayed the start of Loo Wit's popular bike outings. Sea kayak outings begin in May. Hikes led by outings leaders Don Rose and Matthew Diamond are also scheduled.

First bike outing is now set for Apr 28, barring rain. To see all outings postings, check the Meetup page for Loo Wit: [www.meetup.com/portland-vancouver-sierra-club-outings-events](http://www.meetup.com/portland-vancouver-sierra-club-outings-events).



"Boots McFarland" comic by Geolyn Carvin

### Loo Wit to Attend 2019 EcoFair on Earth Day

*Lehman Holder, Executive Committee*

Loo Wit will again participate in the Clark PUD Streamteam 2019 EcoFair on Apr 21. Time is 10 a.m.-2 p.m., location is near Kline Pond off NE 117<sup>th</sup> St in Salmon Creek.

Highlights include a singalong, "Mr. Lizard Mobile Zoo," bluegrass music, an OMSI program on radical reactions and Watershed Reflections art contest winners. Loo Wit's exhibit will focus on issues of significance to Sierra Club in Washington state. Learn more about the event here: <https://www.clarkpublicutilities.com/event/streamteam-earth-day-fest-2019/>



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## **Learning from History: Celilo Falls**

*Alona Steinke Executive Committee*

I wonder how many people remember Celilo Falls before the Dalles Dam was built. I was fortunate enough to have visited there with my family when I was in grade school. I will never forget the sight of the native fishermen on their precarious perches, or the sound of the roaring water as it spilled over the falls.

The dam submerged the falls and obliterated the oldest continuously inhabited community in North America. In existence for 15,000 years, Celilo had been a center of trade and Native American social and spiritual life. Dams have destroyed villages and treaty-guaranteed fishing sites, as well as cultural, economic and spiritual ways of life for thousands of Native Americans.

Dams are the most deadly threat to salmon, making it difficult to survive their journeys to and from the ocean. Spilling water in the spring helps the young salmon avoid the turbines, however, Columbia and Snake River dams create large shallow reservoirs that make the water dangerously hot in summer, threatening adult salmon attempting to swim upstream. The stressed salmon are susceptible to disease and subsequent death. In 2015, 96% of the endangered Snake River sockeye salmon died before they could get upriver to spawn. The threatened steelhead population has collapsed.

There has been a lot of discussion for the past few years about possibly removing the four dams on the lower Snake River. A number of myths abound, predicting dire consequences from such action. One of the myths is that renewable energy and conservation cannot replace the lost generation or cover future load growth if the dams are removed.

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council's 6th Power Plan shows that the region can meet its growing energy needs almost entirely with energy efficiency and new renewables, and with no net increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Both the 6th Power Plan and the Bright Future Report from the NW Energy Coalition show that we have a sensible and affordable path toward a Northwest energy future where regional carbon emissions are reduced enough to meet the regional climate targets and the lower Snake River is restored for the benefit of salmon, jobs and communities.

For more information regarding removal of the dams on the lower Snake River, here is a link.

<https://www.wildsalmon.org/facts-and-information/myths-and-facts-about-lower-snake-river-dam-removal.html>



# Don't Get Left Out in the Cold... Join Us!



Sierra Club Outings are a terrific way to meet new people and enjoy the great outdoors. Whatever your interests - hiking, canoeing or birdwatching - there is an outing for everyone. If you are new to the area, let your local Chapter or Group give you the lay of the land. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization offering the most enjoyable outings.

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