



**SIERRA  
CLUB**

# NATURE'S *Advocate*

A Publication of the Upper Columbia River Group

Fall / Winter 2023

## NOVEMBER 2023 ELECTION

### THE UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP SIERRA CLUB STRONGLY ENDORSES LISA BROWN FOR SPOKANE CITY MAYOR

Lisa Brown answered our Sierra Club questionnaire thoughtfully, did the same in our zoom interview. She pledged to include environmental concerns in her transition committee — “those issues will rise to the top,” she said. We interacted with her about the polluting incinerator and the lawsuit on PCBs in the Spokane River. We informed her of the problems with the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force that is heavily balanced on the side of the polluters. We urged her to contact the Sierra Club whenever such matters require her attention. She pledged to do so.

It's worth noting that the Sierra Club supports environmental justice. Brown's serious plan to solve the homeless problem in Spokane is an important contribution to that goal.

#### HERE IS LISA BROWN'S CAMPAIGN FOR MAYOR IN HER OWN WORDS.

I am most proud of my environmental work in the legislature - 20 years of a pro-environment voting record and particularly working on legislation to clean up the Spokane river, to limit fossil fuels, and to incentivize wind and solar. As Commerce Director, I worked on creating more geographic diversity of grants so rural areas and Tribes could participate, on economic development in the clean energy and clean technology space and on our environmental justice initiatives.



#### MY TOP PRIORITIES ARE:

**1. Creating a coordinated homelessness response system and expanding affordable housing.** Smart land use policies, transit-oriented development and reducing carbon in the built environment will be part of this agenda.

**2. Expanding economic opportunity.** We have companies in the region working on clean energy, battery storage technologies, smart grid and grid resiliency, cross laminated timber, biofuels, local food production and more. I will highlight this sector in my work to create more good jobs and pathways for local students and workers to be part of our city's plan for addressing the climate crisis and decarbonization.

**3. Championing quality of life for our urban neighborhoods.** This will mean limiting development in our remaining green spaces, continued investment in the protection of the Spokane river and aquifer, incentivizing density, transit, micro-mobility and EV vehicle use, and expanding our already enviable walkable neighborhoods and trail system.

The incumbent Mayor's political allies are well-funded Realtors, developers and members of Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers staff and campaign team. Based on recent local campaigns and a push poll currently in the field, we anticipate hundreds of thousands of dollars in negative attack ads will be broadcast or mailed.

The good news, however, is that I have a strong record of winning votes in the city of Spokane including my 6 successful legislative campaigns and my strong showing within the city in my 2018 Congressional run against Rep. McMorris Rodgers. We have a strong grassroots campaign of 458 volunteers and 796 individual donors working to help us move our community forward. We are doing direct voter contact to voters targeted as supportive or undecided and will coordinate with progressive city council candidates and other organizations on voter turnout. ■

### THE SIERRA CLUB ENDORSES THE FOLLOWING THREE CANDIDATES FOR SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL

**Lindsey Shaw** has represented her neighbors in the northeast by serving on

the Logan Neighborhood Council.

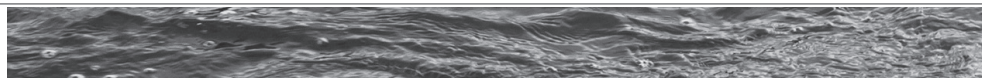


In our interview with Ms. Shaw, she displayed great curiosity on environmental issues, a quick mind regarding an understanding of them, and a

heartfelt statement of support for the local issues of greatest concern, including the flow and cleanliness of the Spokane River and the

retirement of the heavily polluting garbage incinerator. She is committed to fighting for environmental justice, which is a serious matter in her district that includes Hillyard. She wonders about the kind of clean up that has occurred in the industrial area across the railroad tracks, and what's in the dust clouds that settle over Hillyard from there. She noted that development in Hillyard has resulted in an even tinier tree canopy in the neighborhood, as trees are removed willy nilly. She supports better mass transit for her district. She communicates a strong sense of belonging to her neighborhood, and points out that her opponent, Michael Cathcart, doesn't even live there. Shaw pledged to keep in touch with

**continued on page 3**



# ONE RIVER, ETHICS MATTER - COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY AND ETHICS WORK CONTINUES

The "One River, Ethics Matter Conference" (OREM) #10 will be a part of a larger international conference on November 29 and 30, 2023, from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. each day. The conference is hosted by The Universities Consortium on Columbia River Governance, The University of British Columbia Okanagan, The One River Ethics Matter Project, and The North American Youth Parliament for Water. Conference information and registration are online here / <https://columbiabasingovernance.org/>. Registration is free.

For the international Columbia River in a time of climate change, this two-day virtual symposium on the status of major watershed-wide issues and opportunities for public engagement in transboundary water governance will provide important information and opportunities for engagement.

## Day one of this Columbia River Transboundary Water Governance and Ethics Symposium 2023:

"Re-engaging in Public Dialogue" will include an update on threats to our watershed, and a look at other transboundary waters as models for how we might respond with regard to the Columbia. **On day two OREM will explore the ethical issues** related to the Columbia River and the North American Youth Parliament for Water will explore the generational issues and goals involved.

OREM / <https://riverethics.org/> brings together three processes in ethics: (1) tools used by hospital ethics consultants to determine who speaks for those who due to medical limitations cannot speak for themselves; (2) the truth and reconciliation process used in South Africa after the fall of apartheid and more recently in Canada in addressing the injustices visited upon Indigenous people; and (3) the International Columbia River Pastoral Letter of the U.S. and Canadian Catholic Bishops of the Watershed.

OREM explores the ethical principles of Justice, righting historic wrongs and sharing equitably the burdens and benefits of the watershed; Stewardship, protecting and restoring healthy ecosystems with abundant fish and wildlife as well as healthy human communities; and **Autonomy in treaty decision-making**, namely the important role for Indigenous sovereigns to provide substituted judgment for salmon and the river.

The Ethics and Treaty Project, which facilitates the OREM conferences, does not speak for Indigenous Sovereigns. However, the project seeks to improve the quality of ethical decision-making for the Columbia River Basin by recognizing that Indigenous people have been inseparable from this river for centuries, during which the river, its land, wildlife, and other resources thrived. Despite that history and experience, Indigenous people were not even consulted in the development of the Columbia River Treaty. ■

## RIVERS OF HISTORY TOUR

Arranged and hosted by John Osborn, an environmental activist on behalf of the Spokane River for decades, this Sierra Club Outing attracted a dozen participants, who spent the entire day on Saturday, August 26, driving from the Spokane House, to various sites along the Spokane River, to Lake Coeur d'Alene, to mining sites in the mountains of the Idaho Panhandle. We are currently putting together a slide show for the Upper Columbia River Group-Sierra Club website. Below is a sneak peak at what we will publish on that site.

First stop was at the Spokane House, where we heard Warren Seyler speak. He is a member of the Spokane Tribe of Indians and serves as the tribal historian. Seyler decried the construction of the dams along the Spokane and Columbia Rivers that ruined the salmon runs. But he began by narrating the terrible history that the Spokane and other tribes experienced long before the dams went up.

"Creator placed us here for a reason," Seyler said, and that reason was fish. "You could walk across the river on backs of the fish, there were so many fish. Five thousand fish. Spokane tribe's economy was based on the fish, which they dried to preserve. It was a world-class operation for 4,000 years. Taking only what we needed. The fur traders were the beginning of exploitation: take all the beaver you can get." *The full article will be published in our next newsletter and online soon at <https://www.sierraclub.org/washington/upper-columbia-river>*

## UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP

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Upper Columbia River Group



Warren Seyler is a member of the Spokane Tribe and serves as the tribal historian.





## Sierra Club Endorses Three Candidates

continued from page 1

UCR-Sierra Club on environmental issues should she be elected. She's been doorbelling ("I believe I have a connection with my community"), and she's raised \$40,000 of the \$90,000 she thinks she'll need. She points out that Mr. Cathcart lost to Amber Waldref in the recent County Commissioner election. Ms. Waldref is actively advising Shaw's campaign. Cathcart enjoys financial support from real estate concerns.

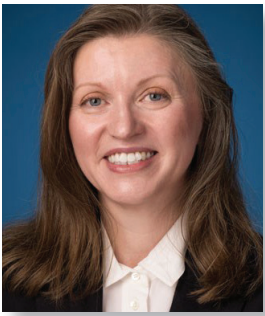
**Kitty Klitzke**, won the primary election in her district. If you add her votes to those of Mr. Herevia, another progressive candidate, the total equals 52% of the vote at final count. Although she has only brought in less than half the \$100,000 amount in fundraising that is her goal, she has a strong plan for doorbelling, beginning with the persuadables in the northern part of

her northwest district and moving toward the southern, more reliably progressive portion as the election nears.

She points out that her opponent, Ms. Moore, has paid doorbellers at \$17 per vote, while her own campaign is grassroots. Klitzke is very aware of the issues in her district. She describes the ex-urban and suburban areas as having changed character through development. A big question is how and whether people could easily escape these areas in case of wildfire. These roads are already congested with traffic. Klitzke has a solid background in environmental advocacy for 20 years. "I worked for The Lands Council, 2003-2007 and Futurewise, 2006-2021.

While both organizations worked to protect the outdoors, habitat, fish and wildlife, I am most proud of my work at Futurewise, which provided expertise to the City of Spokane, Spokane County, the City of Spokane Valley and the City of Millwood to ensure that each had "shoreline master plans that aimed for 'no net loss of ecological function' and 'protected intact riparian areas and public access.'"

Klitzke answered our questionnaire very knowledgeably and shares Sierra Club's goals in every respect.



**She wants to "stop irresponsible development and sprawl, focus growth where we have the infrastructure to support it." She supports "affordable housing for everyone in our city." She wants to "address climate change and vehicle miles travelled reduction targets. I will work to ensure that we continue to invest in our multimodal and active transportation systems to make greener transportation choices affordable and convenient for everyone."**

Further, she wishes to work "with state and local partners to continue to attract and foster businesses in our region working on green technologies and to support a just transition for workers and low income communities who may be affected as we adapt." She is aware that "Spokane has inherited a legacy of toxic mining and industry impacts that still disproportionately impact low income communities, tribes, and communities of color. We need to partner with tribes and community organizations to clean up our toxic legacy and make affected communities whole."

Regarding the incinerator, she says, "I will advocate for a new solid waste plan that is better for the climate."

**Paul Dillon**. Similar to Ms. Klitzke, Mr. Dillon has achieved about half of his fundraising goal of \$90,000. Also similar to her campaign, his is grassroots, with few large



donors. "I'm a big believer in the \$5 - 50 contributions." (His general election opponent, Ms. Katey Treloar, has raised over \$110,000 of her \$125,000 goal with the real estate industry

well represented as donors.) Advisors to his campaign include a campaign manager that worked for Lisa Brown and Marcus Riccelli. Dillon also has a volunteer coordinator and "a robust group of volunteers" for doorbelling, phoning and texting contacts. Dillon expects soon to make a formal announcement of support from his progressive primary challenger, Ms. Donohue. The two of them

together accounted for almost 58% of the primary vote count.

Dillon says he is "a lifelong advocate for environmental progress and justice. I've been involved with the Spokane Riverkeeper, The Lands Council, Pedals2People, Washington Bikes." He is the former board president for the Center for Justice and served as a legislative aid for former council member Jon Snyder and Senate Majority leader Andy Billig.

**"We worked together on numerous policies to help protect the environment, including transportation access and cleaning up the Spokane River." If elected, he wants to work on the homeless problem, expand affordable housing, and expand our transit network to mitigate climate change."**

He supports the Spokane Sustainability Action Plan. "I am the only candidate in my race to support a development moratorium for Latah Valley, a sacred place." Living in the East Central neighborhood, Dillon observes that "we have a large Marshalllese population and we need to do more outreach on eating fish safely in the river since the majority are monolingual speakers." He also proposes more city engagement with regional tribal members.

Both Klitzke and Dillon noted the importance of this particular city council election, since the city's Comprehensive Plan, if properly managed, can provide, in Dillon's words, "a great framework for smart growth, sustainable development and conservation." Under this policy, the aging garbage incinerator could be retired. ■







## UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP

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Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet.

# A NOTE TO OUR READERS, POEMS

## VOLUNTEER CORNER

Our August Outing was a magnificent all-day trip to follow the history of the Spokane River (see this issue for a brief presentation of it). But most of our Outings last for about two hours. We seek more Outings co-leaders. No special training needed. Do you love nature? Could you plan an educational outing?

If so, please contact Carolyn Leon at [lonestar4@aol.com](mailto:lonestar4@aol.com) or Kathy Dixon at [kathleengdixon@gmail.com](mailto:kathleengdixon@gmail.com)

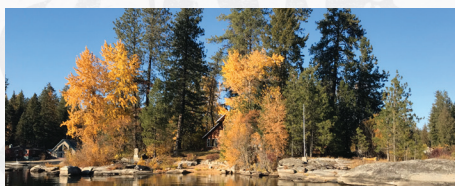
As always, we are happy to include volunteers in our committee work (Rivers, Forests, Politics, Outings, Communications, Outreach). Contact us at [spokaneriverstories@gmail.com](mailto:spokaneriverstories@gmail.com)

## NOTES TO OUR READERS

You can find our newsletter on our website at <https://www.sierraclub.org/washington/upper-columbia-river>

Once there, cast your eyes to the right side of the page. Our links are live on the website, and you can more easily follow them to volunteer or to find more information.

**Executive Committee Election:** look for our email ballots in mid-November!



We hope that you enjoy these two poems by our Upper Columbia River Group-Sierra Club members. Send us your Spokane River Stories, poems, photos, or artwork for the Spring/Summer 2024 edition of Nature's Advocate. Email them to this address: [spokaneriverstories@gmail.com](mailto:spokaneriverstories@gmail.com)

## AUTUMN: AS THE WORLD STEWS

As the world stews in its petroleum juices and New Yorkers fish in their subways, I am watching four species of bees buzzing in the asters and finches performing acrobatics on long-stemmed sunflowers. I know climate havoc will also come for me and this good place, the summers hotter, the winters unpredictable, spring and autumn anomalous. Still, I trust taking care of this place with its native critters as much and well as I am able allows the land's teeming life to take care of me, at least until humanity's great neglect has seeped into what's left of earth's intention. Then I and my species, latest to evolve and first to dismiss its natural symbiosis, will be absent, and the earth in its universally assigned orbit will renew its journey, this time one hopes, toward a life form with greater mindfulness and less arrogance. – wts

## SPOKANE RIVER

**A river flows through my city.**

**She is windy and 111 miles long.**

**She has been a pathway of life for many.**

**She is the water for the "children of the sun".**

– Susan Coe-Lundstrom, August, 2023.

