

## Environmental Agenda Items for Environmental Protections:

**There are more environmental delegates in the WA legislature which is super exciting and means that a lot of these are pretty darn possible/worth a try at the very least. So yay! Good year for environmental junk!:)**

**1631:** Senator Rinker might be introducing a bill related to this that has to do with carbon pricing. HOWEVER supporting another carbon tax right after it got shot down might not be super strategic, plus nationally the discourse around carbon taxes is pretty negative (as with most stuff with climate change, go figure) BUT fear not there are other cool carbon things happening!

**Carbon Free Utilities:** Basically would require utility providers to have a plan to be 100% renewable by 2045, phase out natural gas, and transition out of utilizing LNG plants. Supporting this would be similar to expressing support for 1631, additionally most carbon free utility plans come with some sort of subsidy so impacts socially would, at the very least, be curbed. HOWEVER, I have not recently had the time to look over what this plan would entail exactly so I am not 100% sure on the social impacts and what that would entail. Additionally, this could be seen as *more* extreme than a carbon tax and fail with constituents if education is lacking (as what happened in CO and Kansas)

**Governors orca task force:** There is A LOT to unpack in the task force's asks but a lot of them have budget and funding requests regarding recovering orcas including getting more prey to the orcas. This does have do with things like dam removal BUT the snake river dam is protected in their asks. Additionally, they are working with tribal groups to talk about conservation fisheries operated by tribes to help maintain their land as well as preserve orca populations. Even further this group is looking at vessels impacts and toxin usages (DDT, farm pesticides, etc.) SO; there is a lot in the orca task force asks and it was designated by governor Inslee so that is super helpful. HOWEVER, again, I have not had time to thoroughly research the social impacts but all signs point that these would benefit groups socially, economically, with human health, and, of course, the ecological environment. So we could lobby on the orca task force asks, or we could pick one or two out of the asks to support.

**Tribal Water Rights:** SO as usual with literally anything regarding tribes; it is complicated. SO tribes in Whatcom county have requested a formal adjudication of water rights, the federal government has not acted on this request and likely in this administration they will not. HOWEVER, they can do pre-adjudication work through the state through a funding request. The department of ecology has already put forward a request we can support. This is good because often times adjudication work is not approved by the federal government *because* pre-adjudication is not approved by the state (basically, the fed doesn't want to spend as much money if there is the chance that the state would be willing to fund part of the work, as seen in AZ with the Havasupai tribe). So by supporting the funding request we would show we want to define water rights for everyone, this include farmers. Tribes have shown that they are for this, and seems like a good measure to support

**Oil Spill Legislation:** this is one of the recommendations of the Orca task force and would require more tug escorts to escort oil barges which is a current loophole for barges. Tankers have to have a tug escort, but *barges* do not (when they can be holding the same amount of oil, the classification can affect how they move about the pinch points of the Puget sound). So, again this is complicated. More tug boats=more fossil fuels=more emissions for the sake of preventing oil spills. So which one outweighs, fossil fuels or oil spills? I really don't know, kind of why we are talking about this! A more expensive, but perhaps less environmentally impactful solution is to have tug boats at pinch points where it is shallow and narrow to guide all traffic through. Many of the people who work for these oil barges are against it because it is pricey.

**Plastic bag ban???** At this point we have a lot of constituents that are for environmental protection and with the momentum of the straw ban going for a full plastic bag ban may actually be possible in this moment in time. There is not any existing legislation at the moment but Resources has been hearing some rumblings of folks introducing bills about this, so it could be strategic to lobby on this and push legislators to ban.

**Farm worker protection:** pesticide exposure sucks for farm workers and literally kills hundreds of people every year (need I say more). Community to Community may be pushing forward a measure protecting farm workers and perhaps reducing (or eliminating) the use of pesticides so we stop literally killing people. This is not fleshed out and C2C hasn't gotten back to me about what all they are pushing forward. BUT the orca task force is trying to reduce the use of pesticides so by supporting their measure we can also inform legislators that it is a social justice issue as well as an orca issue. If folks are passionate about this I can certainly pursue some leads and figure out what is going on what is happening!