

On The WATERFRONT

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Fall 2025 Newsletter

A New Chapter for Cold Storage as BCS transitions to Lineage

By Dan Tucker

Bellingham Cold Storage (BCS) has been a cornerstone of the region's working waterfront for nearly 80 years. Supported by its deep-water marine terminal, strong customer base, and commitment to community, BCS helped make Whatcom County a hub for cold storage and seafood distribution. Now, the company is entering a new chapter as it transitions into Lineage Logistics, the world's largest temperature-controlled warehouse network.

Lineage operates more than 485 facilities worldwide, with 86 million square feet and 3.1 billion cubic feet of capacity. The company partners with leading food producers, retailers, and distributors to improve efficiency, sustainability, and supply chain reliability. The acquisition means both continuity and expanded opportunity for Bellingham.

Doug Thomas, longtime owner of BCS, sees the transition as building on a solid foundation. "Most all of the BCS team has moved to Lineage," he said. "I'm serving in an advisor role to help Lineage succeed with customers, employees, and the community. BCS built a special relationship with its employees and partners—our 'secret sauce'—and I'd like to see that continue wherever possible."

Acquiring BCS is both strategic and practical for Lineage. "We are excited to welcome BCS employees to the Lineage team and recognize their knowledge and experience as cold chain operators," said Quyen Thompson, Lineage's Pacific Northwest Regional Vice President of Operations. "These facilities expand our service offering and give us access to Bellingham's deep-water terminal for movement of food products to and from Alaska, the Pacific Rim, and beyond." Thomas added that Lineage

had long been an "acquirer of choice" in the cold chain sector. Thompson added that what BCS built in Bellingham—its people, reputation, and community standing—made the company a natural fit for Lineage's growing global network.

Lineage's acquisition of the long-term lease for the Bellingham campus signals a commitment to invest in the waterfront for years to come. "Lineage takes pride in having world-class facilities and is always focused on maintaining and upgrading them where it makes sense," said Thompson. "That will be no different with these facilities." This approach provides stability for current customers while opening new opportunities through Lineage's global reach. It offers career growth and a chance to be part of the largest player in the cold chain industry for current and future employees.

One of BCS's hallmarks is their community involvement, supporting more than 70 local non-profits over the decades. Thomas has encouraged Lineage to continue that legacy. "Lineage has been very supportive of those recommendations, and I am hopeful that this continues," he said. Thompson echoed that community engagement is a shared value: "Lineage and BCS both have a long history of philanthropy. We look forward to engaging with local organizations, including the Working Waterfront Coalition."

While the company name has changed, much of what made BCS vital remains. Nearly all staff are now part of Lineage, ensuring continuity of service and expertise. At the same time, new leadership is bringing fresh energy. Alongside Thompson, Justin Ernest will oversee Pacific Northwest accounts as Regional Vice President of Sales, while longtime local sales director Jose Roques continues serving Whatcom and Skagit County customers.

For Thompson, the focus is on building relationships and leaning into shared strengths. "I'm excited to get to know our new team members and neighbors on the waterfront. Continuous improvement and customer service are two things both BCS and Lineage have in common, so I'm excited to see how we build on those as we continue the integration."

The transition from BCS to Lineage Logistics blends a proud local legacy with the resources of a global network. For customers, it means access to expanded supply chain solutions. For employees, it represents stability and new opportunity. For the community, it ensures ongoing involvement from one of the waterfront's most important tenants. As Thomas reflects, he points back to the values that fueled BCS's long success: "We thrived for nearly 80 years by putting people first—our customers, our employees, and our community. That's the culture I hope continues under Lineage's leadership."

With that foundation, the arrival of Lineage in Bellingham is less an ending than the start of a new chapter—one that carries forward the legacy of BCS while embracing the future of global logistics.



Lineage's facility in Port of Seattle. Look for the new Lineage logo on Roeder Ave. soon. Photo: Lineage Logistics

Port Releases Industrial Lands Survey

By Mike Hogan, Port of Bellingham
(From a Port of Bellingham Press Release August 21, 2025)

[Port of Bellingham] - The Port of Bellingham completed an industrial lands study to assess the current and future industrial land needs of Whatcom County's manufacturing sector. It is the first study of its kind in Whatcom County and supports the Port's broader mission to promote sustainable economic development, manage public land and facilities, and strengthen regional transportation and infrastructure.

The study, produced by consultants Maul Foster Alongi, provides a comprehensive look at how industrial land is currently being used across the county and whether the available supply is well positioned to support job growth and business investment over the next 20 years. It considers industry trends, land availability, infrastructure readiness, and projected employment growth through 2045.

A detailed assessment of 19 industrial areas in Whatcom County helped determine the quantity and quality of land that is realistically developable, and projections of industrial employment growth through 2045 were used to estimate future land needs. The analysis also included a County-level comparison of industrial land use to better understand neighboring trends and to confirm the industries where Whatcom County has a competitive advantage locally. The report concludes that there is an adequate supply of industrially zoned land in the county, however, several barriers limit the usability of this land, including utility access, parcel size, transportation connections, and other site constraints.

To address these challenges, the study offers a range of recommendations aimed at improving industrial land readiness and supporting long-term economic development. These include expanding wetland mitigation options, improving freight corridor infrastructure, coordinating infrastructure planning with local jurisdictions, promoting regulatory consistency across the county, and preserving space for both established industries and emerging sectors.

Finally, the report also highlights the importance of the Port of Bellingham as an economic actor and employment generator in Whatcom County. Of the industries analyzed, maritime manufacturing was found to have the smallest space requirements per employee (470 square feet per employee). The next most efficient industries are other manufacturing (730 square feet per employee) and energy manufacturing (740 square feet per employee). By continuing to support the marine trades and maritime manufacturing opportunities, the Port is therefore not only supporting an industry of historical and culture significance to Whatcom County, but also contributing to a responsible, sustainable, efficient use of our remaining buildable industrial lands. The Port was further identified as serving an essential coordinating role for improving regulatory consistency and addressing infrastructure gaps across jurisdictions.

"As the Associate Development Organization for Whatcom County, the Port is focused on supporting the retention and expansion of living-wage jobs," said Port Economic Development Director Tyler Schroeder. "This study is about helping businesses thrive by making sure we have the right tools and space in place to meet the demands of a changing economy."

The findings from this study come at a key time, as the Small Cities, the City of Bellingham, and Whatcom County work to finalize their 2025 Comprehensive Plan updates. The report provides valuable insight to help guide local land use, infrastructure investments, and future economic development strategies.

- The Port of Bellingham

Editor's top highlights from the study:

The Whatcom County Industrial Lands Study (2025) contains many discussion points that highlight the importance of our marine trades and maritime economy in the region. The study also points out recommended strategies to aid in the future growth. We've compiled a few of those highlights and strategies below, but you can also read the full study via our 'Data' page on our website, or the Port's website.

Regarding our maritime trades:

- Maritime industries are a target growth sector for Whatcom County.
- Activities include ship and boat building, vessel repair, fishing, marine equipment manufacturing, and terminal operations.
- Key local operators: All American Marine, Birdon Group, Northwest Marine Industries.
- Washington Maritime Blue and other state initiatives are advancing low-carbon and zero-emission vessel technologies.
- Local example: All American Marine built the nation's first hydrogen fuel cell-powered ferry on Bellingham Bay.

Industrial land & waterfront connections are also key points in the study:

- Deep-water access at Bellingham Bay and Cherry Point are critical to maritime commerce and global trade.
- Nearly all maritime-related industries require freight connections (truck, rail, waterways).
- Cherry Point is the county's largest industrial area (7,135 acres) and a major hub for maritime and energy activity.
- Bellingham's working waterfront supports marine trades and food product exports, directly linking to Alaska, the Pacific Rim, and beyond.

There are several key challenges that the county must consider in the coming years:

- Wetland impacts limit usable waterfront land—48% of county industrial acreage is constrained.
- Few large, utility-ready parcels near the waterfront exist for future maritime expansion.
- Industrial zoning inconsistencies create barriers for marine-related uses across jurisdictions.

The study concluded with recommendations for action, including:

- Coordinate Port and city planning to ensure waterfront lands are development-ready with water, sewer, and power service.
- Pursue wetland mitigation banking to unlock industrial parcels for maritime use.
- Protect large tracts (20+ acres) near freight corridors and the waterfront for marine trades.
- Improve freight corridor connections to ports and terminals (truck, rail, and waterways).
- Ensure zoning consistency to safeguard marine industry land and reduce permitting barriers.

Waterfronts work for all.

Member Highlight: Top to Bottom, Inc.

By Dan Tucker

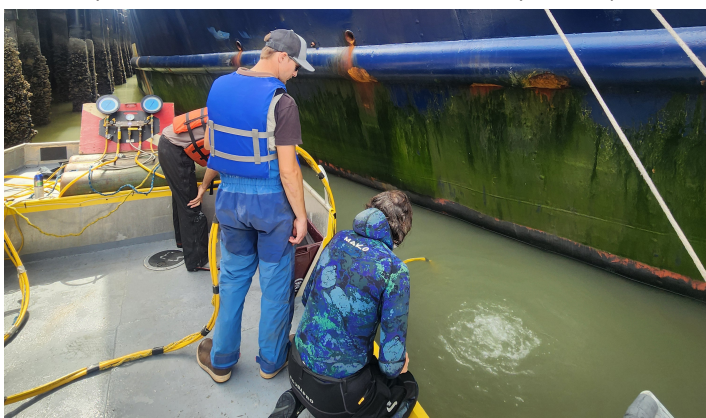
Top to Bottom, Inc. is a trusted name in Bellingham's marine trades, providing comprehensive recreational and commercial vessel services "from top to bottom." The company helps boat owners of every size—from small recreational craft to large U.S. Coast Guard vessels—by offering running gear cleaning, annual maintenance, and haul out services. Their expertise spans bottom painting, electrical, fiberglass, brightwork, detailing, and more, ensuring vessels remain seaworthy and reliable year-round.

Founded in the 1980s by Roger Schjelderup while he was a business student at Western Washington University, the company began with little more than a dock cart and a determination to serve local boaters. Roger's reputation for skill and reliability quickly grew, allowing him to hire staff and expand. Many of those early employees went on to lead other marine service companies in the region such as Bitter End Boatworks and Oyster Creek Canvas, a testament to Top to Bottom's role as both a service provider and a training ground for local talent. In 2022, Roger's son Patrick took over the business, continuing the family legacy of quality service throughout Whatcom County.

Over nearly four decades, the company has adapted to cover everything from commercial diving in Alaska to detailing private vessels at Squalicum Harbor. A recent highlight came when the team was called to inspect a 330-foot Alaskan fishing vessel after it struck a pier. The team handled the emergency call with expert service, and it is jobs like those that keep Patrick excited and energized about the work they do.

Looking ahead, Top to Bottom plans to expand operations into Blaine, anticipating growing demand as the Blaine marine trades area comes back online in a few years. "We plan on setting the standard that all service companies strive for in the harbor. With this example we hope others follow to make our trades community the most trustworthy and high quality in the Northwest," says Schjelderup.

Rooted in Whatcom's waterfront, the team values both the diverse work and the lifestyle balance offered by Bellingham—where mountain biking at Galbraith, poke in Fairhaven, and jazz nights at Aslan are part of the community fabric. With strong local ties and a commitment to excellence, Top to Bottom, Inc. continues to build a legacy of service, skill, and community—true to its name, from the bottom all the way to the top.



Technicians dive on the 330ft fishing vessel. Photo: Top to Bottom

Buoyant Beginnings Graduates First Cohort

By Deb Granger

Buoyant Beginnings Pre-apprenticeship for Maritime Careers completes its inaugural six-week summer workforce training session. The Buoyant Beginnings Pre-Apprenticeship, a partnership with the Whatcom Working Waterfront Foundation and Lummi Nation, provides the specific training needed to begin a career in the Marine Service Industry.

On Friday, Aug. 15, we proudly celebrated the completion of this inaugural six-week summer training program honoring fifteen young-adult 'graduates' and the many employer and community partners participating and contributing to the program's success. Representative Alicia Rule presented Certificates of Completion to each of the students. Buoyant Beginnings, a paid 6-week summer program open to tribal and nontribal young adults ages 18-29 who are unemployed or underemployed and willing to learn, began in the classroom where participants worked hands-on to explore critical skills for marine trades and commercial fishing.

In addition to classroom-based learning, the students participated in many industry tours, job shadows, and interviews with employer partners. As the program continued, participants were matched with a work experience position at one of the many marine companies in Whatcom County. Whatcom county's thriving maritime sector, comprised of thousands of recreational and commercial boating boats each requiring continual maintenance to ensure they're operating safely, efficiently, and environmentally sound, guarantees continual employment opportunities for trained workers.

"Hands-on learning, hearts-on marine legacy, that's the power of Buoyant Beginnings," says Joe Franzen, Lummi Project Coordinator.

"Buoyant Beginnings is grateful to all of our tribal and non-tribal partners, who came alongside to mentor these young people," Deb Granger, Interim Director for the Working Waterfront Foundation recalls.

Sampson James, one of the pre-apprentices, was impressed. "Buoyant Beginnings was an interesting introduction into the maritime industry," he recalled, "The amount of information shared with us in six weeks is going to encourage us to try and absorb it all. With a score of nine out of ten, I do recommend the program"

The Whatcom Working Waterfront Foundation Pre-apprenticeship receives support and funding from a U.S. Department of Labor Category 4 Apprenticeship Building America Grant. Read more about USDOL grant funding at Esd.wa.gov/usdol.



Graduates pose with Rep. Alicia Rule, Port of Bellingham and Climate Corp Network representatives after a successful first cohort. Photo: Dan Tucker

Fisheries Update for Alaska and Salish Sea

By Pete Granger

Alaska

The main producing commercial salmon fisheries for Whatcom County fishermen, be they purse seiners, gillnetters, or trollers, are in Alaska. The county has many purse seiners and gillnetters fishing in SE Alaska with others in Bristol Bay, Kodiak, and Prince William Sound.

Bristol Bay gillnetters harvested 40 million sockeye which was 8 million more than predicted. In other fishing areas of Alaska (Kodiak Island, Prince William Sound, and Southeast), some runs are above prediction and some below.

The statewide salmon harvest surpassed 144 million fish through August 16th and now sits at 67% of the annual projection. Harvest volume across all species is consistent with the five-year average.

The pink salmon harvest, while still within the five-year average, has fallen well below (-35%) 2024 year-to-date totals. Catches are down in most areas except for Kodiak. SE Alaska pink salmon catches have been well below prediction. Coho harvest totals are outpacing both the 2024 total and the five-year average. The statewide total reached 45% of the annual projection by Aug. 16th, with expectations of continued harvest through week 36.

The statewide chum harvest is 19% above 2024 harvest, with a 207% increase in Prince William Sound harvest is currently offsetting a 17% decline in Southeast harvest.

Salish Sea

The main fishery for commercial salmon locally is the Fraser River runs. This year the pink salmon run was forecast as the biggest in many, many years at 26 million fish. That fishery is just starting to peak and the catch is substantial. However, the sockeye run, preceding the pink salmon run, forecast for 3 million fish which would not allow commercial fishing time, has surprised everyone and is now forecast for over 9 million fish with more coming. Tribal fishermen – purse seine and gillnet – have seen record catches! Non-tribal fishermen, with less fishing time, have also seen substantial catches. All in all, halfway through the summer season, much larger catches have been tallied than expected. These fisheries will start to wind down the second week of September with Coho and Chum salmon season to start in late September and first of October respectively. So far, processors have been able to handle the large catches, with much of the production being processed by Home Port Seafoods in Bellingham and Bornstein Seafoods in Astoria, OR and the rest being trucked to processing plants in British Columbia.



Fishing vessels at Squalicum's sawtooth docks. Photo: Dan Tucker

Northline Seafoods: Bringing Processing back to Fairhaven

By Molly Blakey

This summer marks a milestone for Northline Seafoods and Bellingham's historic Fairhaven Shipyard. After a successful 2025 Bristol Bay salmon season, the company's flagship vessel, the *Hannah*, has returned to Bellingham, where it will remain moored until spring. More than just a vessel, the *Hannah* represents innovation and a bold new chapter in the story of the Bellingham working waterfront.



The *Hannah* returning to Fairhaven. Photo: Port of Bellingham

A Floating Freezer Like No Other

The *Hannah* is unlike anything else in the seafood industry — a one-of-a-kind, vertically integrated freezer barge measuring 400 feet long by 100 feet wide. Designed to buy, freeze, transport, and store up to 10 million pounds of wild salmon, it combines cutting-edge engineering with rapid at-sea processing technology to create a new model for the seafood supply chain. On board, fish are frozen in -60°F freezers and reach a core temperature of -20°F in under two hours. This swift process locks in freshness and preserves salmon at peak quality, ensuring wild Alaskan fish reach the market with minimal handling and maximum integrity.

The vessel will serve as a cold storage platform for the 2025 harvest at the Fairhaven Shipyard through spring 2026, when it will once again be towed north to Alaska to support the world's largest wild salmon fishery. Built at the Fairhaven Shipyard from March 2023 to May 2024, the *Hannah* departed Bellingham in May 2024 for its inaugural season. In 2025, Northline doubled production from its first year, streamlined operations, and proved the vessel's capabilities.

"The *Hannah* was built to transform how wild salmon moves from Bristol Bay to market," said Northline Seafoods CEO Ben Blakey. "Constructed right here in Fairhaven — a place that remains our home base — it's just completed its second season, where we boosted productivity, refined operations, and solidified its role as both a processing platform serving Bristol Bay's fishing communities and, now that the vessel is back in Bellingham, a cold storage hub supporting our customers."



Bristol Bay whole-round salmon entering the *Hannah*'s freezer. Photo: Caitlin Blaisdell

(Northline Seafoods cont. from page 4)

Revitalizing the Fairhaven Shipyard

Alongside the *Hannah*, another major transformation is underway on the Fairhaven waterfront. Northline Seafoods is revitalizing the Arrowac building owned by the Port of Bellingham, restoring its role as a salmon processing facility and honoring the legacy of the Bellingham Canning Company and Pacific American Fisheries (PAF), founded in the late 1890s. For thousands of years, Bellingham Bay has been a gathering place for fishing. At the turn of the 20th century, Pacific American Fisheries transformed Fairhaven into a global hub for wild salmon—an industry that thrived here for more than sixty years. Today, Northline Seafoods is writing the next chapter, bringing those legacies full circle at the Fairhaven Shipyard.



Bellingham Canning, circa 1929. Now the home of Northline Seafoods.
Photo: J.W. Sandison; courtesy Whatcom Museum



Crews transfer salmon to the *Hannah* in Bristol Bay. Photo: Caitlin Blaisdell

"The Port of Bellingham is proud to partner with Northline Seafoods in bringing salmon processing back to Whatcom County and the Fairhaven waterfront," said Tiffany DeSimone, Port of Bellingham Interim Executive Director and Director of Maritime, "This project not only restores a cornerstone of our working waterfront and honors Fairhaven's maritime heritage, but also creates jobs, strengthens the local economy, and ensures Bellingham remains a vital hub for fishing, seafood, and maritime trades for generations to come."

Pink Salmon in Puget Sound

New this year, Northline Seafoods has stepped in as a buyer for the Puget Sound pink salmon fishery, which occurs every other year. Forecasts point to one of the largest pink runs in recent history. With its freezing capacity, the *Hannah* allows Northline to support Puget Sound fishermen by buying, freezing, and preserving pink salmon for market. "Freezing pinks here in Puget Sound is a natural fit for Northline Seafoods," said Blakey. "We're proud to support the fishing fleet right here in the Pacific Northwest."

"As we ramp up for the largest run of pink salmon in recorded history, we're grateful to Northline Seafoods for their capacity to use their platform to process some of this pink salmon," noted Pete Granger, Reefnet Fisherman and member of the American Fisheries Advisory Committee for the Saltonstall-Kennedy Program. "Their ability to offer a processing facility and a market to our local fleet is a remarkable testament to the 'all-hands-on-deck' approach of Northline Seafoods and the entire seafood industry."

Celebrate at the Slammin' Salmon Social

All of this momentum will be celebrated at the Slammin' Salmon Social, hosted by Northline Seafoods and Bellingham SeaFeast on Sunday, September 14, from 12–4 pm at the Fairhaven Shipyard.

The event will feature a salmon BBQ cook-off between local chefs, free tastings of Puget Sound pink salmon, live music by Bellingham-based The Monk Slippers, and dishes available for purchase from Eva's Wild food truck. Attendees will also have the opportunity to tour the newly renovated Arrowac facility and see firsthand how Northline Seafoods and the *Hannah* are transforming the wild salmon industry.

"The Slammin' Salmon Social is more than just a BBQ," said Kevin Coleman, Executive Director of Bellingham SeaFeast. "It's a celebration of Fairhaven's fishing heritage, our working waterfront, and the people and communities who help make it thrive. It's also a perfect warm-up for Bellingham SeaFeast later in September — giving our community another chance to come together around salmon, seafood, and maritime culture." Admission is free, and all are welcome.

Join us to celebrate a season of returns: the pink salmon run back to Puget Sound, the *Hannah* home from a successful Bristol Bay season, and the return of salmon processing to Fairhaven's working waterfront. Together, these milestones mark not only a homecoming, but a renewed commitment to the people, waters, and traditions that define our community.

The Whatcom Working Waterfront Coalition will have a booth at the event, come and say hello!

Growing Port, Growing Commission?

The Port Commissioners of Bellingham recently voted to propose a ballot measure for November 2025's election expanding the Commission from 3 districts, to 5. The Working Waterfront does not advocate for passing or failing the measure, however we do seek to help our community better understand the positives and potential negatives that the proposal could bring. Assembled below are a few of those opinions and concerns.

Proposed Measure:

(Approved by Commission July 15 for November ballot)

"Motion to adopt a resolution providing for the form of ballot proposition and specifying certain other details concerning submission to the qualified voters of the Port District at a General Election to be held therein on November 4, 2025, of a proposition whether the number of Commissioners of the Port District should be increased from three (3) Commissioners to five (5) Commissioners, each assigned to one (1) of five (5) newly drawn separate districts."

The arguments below represent opinions voiced by members of our community on both sides of this topic. These do not reflect any official views of the Working Waterfront Coalition of Whatcom County, our staff, or leadership.

Pro Arguments

Broader & More Diverse Representation

- A larger commission can represent a wider range of communities and perspectives.
- The Port of Olympia redistricted for five seats, with voter approval in 2022. The stated goal was to improve responsiveness and representation.

Improved Collaboration & Idea Exchange

- Having five members allows for two commissioners to discuss ideas without triggering open-meeting laws that apply with only three seats. **Limitations still exist for what can be discussed and how commissioners can meet.*
- Supporters also claim that it may be easier to contact the commission regarding ideas and concerns when more commissioners are available.

Alignment with Growing Port Roles and Scale

- As Port responsibilities increasingly include airports, industrial parks, environmental cleanup, tourism, affordable housing, and broadband, a five-member body offers more leadership capacity.
- Ports like Seattle, Tacoma, and Olympia already have five commissioners—reflecting their complexity and scale. Those Ports do not all have county-wide jurisdiction the way the Port of Bellingham has.

Con Arguments

Risk of Reduced Transparency & Informal Decision-Making

- Moving to five may decrease transparency. Not all discussions around issues would be 'public' during meetings.
- Under the three-member model, any two-person meeting automatically qualifies as a quorum, keeping conversations strictly in public meetings and on record.

Potential for Increased Politicization

- A larger commission could invite more opportunities for partisan influence or interest-group involvement.
- With private discussions between two commissioners being possible, partisan or private-interest groups may be more influential in discussions.

Higher Costs & Administrative Overhead

- For Port of Olympia in 2022, expanding to five commissioners cost an estimated one-time ~\$381,000 and about \$145,000 annually, plus roughly \$200,000 per election cycle, per their records.
- Additional salaries, benefits, and election expenses are factors that some worry will increase costs at a time when the Port is currently limited in budget.
- Larger commissions and councils can sometimes mean longer decision times, which can delay projects and deadlines.

Port Commissioners head into November Elections

The Port of Bellingham Port Commissioner seats that are up for election this cycle include District 1, and District 2. As the fall moves toward our general election in November, the Coalition is putting together a pamphlet on our candidates that highlight their answers to questions about Port of Bellingham operations, visions for the waterfront, and more.

We're also going to host a Candidate Forum. Open to the public and free, RSVPs for limited space will be required, and the event will happen on October 9th, 2025, at the Squalicum Boathouse. Look for more information on the Coalition's website in the weeks to come.

The Coalition is a non-partisan organization that does not endorse candidates, but we hope to share information and insight with you to help you make informed decisions for Whatcom County. While we finalize our candidate voter's guide for the upcoming two Commission seats, please take a moment to read these introductions from the candidates you'll be voting on in November:

District 1



Michael Shepard - (unopposed)

It has been a privilege to serve as a commissioner for the Port of Bellingham these past 8 years. I ran for office because I know that Whatcom County is an amazing place to live, but increasingly it has become a hard place to afford for many. The Port is responsible for county-wide economic development, and that has been my focus. In my time in office, I have developed a deep appreciation for the people and businesses that make up our maritime trades workforce. I recognize that maintaining a working waterfront does not happen by accident, given all the pressures for development of waterfront property. I am committed to continued efforts to support, maintain, and expand our working waterfronts in Fairhaven, Bellingham, and Blaine. Thank you for your support.

District 2



Ken Bell

We learned a lot of lessons the last few years and with those lessons came change. We begin with a new Executive Director and possibly a new commission structure. All designed to provide better communication, a new vision and a concentrated effort to keep the waterfront working. It is my intent to prioritize the Shipping Terminal and Airport Industrial Park. This is where the Port of Bellingham can provide the most value to the citizens of Whatcom County. We secured a rail connection and now we must make the most of these opportunities. I also believe the Airport has been forgotten for its Free Trade Zone and economic possibilities. This year my wife and I became grandparents, three in all, and I continue to be the CEO of an expanding Contaminated soil clean up company. I fully understand what it takes to make businesses successful. Time to go to work.



Carly James

I am a small business owner, accountant, artist, and musician who's lived and worked in Whatcom County for over two decades. I own and operate a successful shop with locations in downtown Bellingham and on the waterfront at The Granary, where I have seen firsthand the challenges and opportunities facing our local economy. I understand how important it is to balance growth with protecting the jobs and heritage that define our waterfront. The Port's decisions today will shape our community for generations, and I am committed to ensuring it remains a thriving, working waterfront that serves both our maritime industries and the public. My strength as a leader is listening. Together, we can deliver long-overdue progress on the waterfront redevelopment, airport, shipping terminal, and county-wide infrastructure improvements.

Bellingham SeaFeast set for September

By Dan Tucker

Every fall, Squalicum Harbor becomes the vibrant heart of the waterfront as Bellingham SeaFeast brings together the community to celebrate its deep maritime roots. This **free, two-day festival**—happening **Saturday and Sunday, September 27–28, 2025 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**—is more than just a shoreside gathering. It's a tribute to the region's working waterfront, commercial fishing culture, culinary heritage, and the community's connection to the sea.

SeaFeast is a seamless fusion of sea-to-table dining, maritime heritage, and cultural expression. Attendees can indulge in local seafood specialties served steps from the bustling harbor—including Lummi Nation fire-pit salmon, raw oyster bars, and bites from local vendors—all while enjoying a beer, wine, and cider garden with harbor views.

Maritime traditions are showcased through hands-on exhibits like kids' boat-building workshops, U.S. Coast Guard rescue demos, boat tours, and behind-the-scenes industry experiences like All-American Marine tours. The festival also offers arts and culture experiences, from live music and maritime-inspired crafts to educational booths, buoy-painting workshops, and activities for all ages.

This year, the festival is also excited to host additional experiences, such as a VIP Lounge, where guests can relax and enjoy the best views and foods of the festival, or a dinner that gets sourced right from Dockside Market that day and cooked with you aboard an elegant and classic wooden cruiser.

Rooted in community and conservation, SeaFeast extends beyond its flagship weekend with year-round programming. These initiatives include seafood cooking demos, ocean stewardship workshops, beach cleanups, a collaborative Community Net Project, and a podcast exploring waterfront stories, called "Love Your Waterfront", a collaboration with the Whatcom Working Waterfront Coalition.

Bellingham SeaFeast is only possible with community support, and this year, alongside the Community Net Project, the call is out to 'Fill the net' for SeaFeast. Help them reach the \$60,000 goal and be a part of this vibrant community by visiting and hitting the donate button at:

www.BellinghamSeaFeast.org



The Lummi salmon grilling pit is a highlight each year as guests line up for high-quality salmon, grilled to perfection over an open fire. Photo: Bellingham SeaFeast

From the desk of the Coalition President

By Kendall Whitney

I was sitting on a call last week with Senator Patty Murray's staff regarding impacts of tariffs on our waterfront industries along with Ron Wille, President of All American Marine, Kirk Desler of Corvus Energy, Matt Hardin of Northwest Diesel, and Dan Tucker, our Executive Director at the Working Waterfront Coalition, and I was thinking to myself "Wow, we've got a LOT going on."

The Working Waterfront Coalition is communicating with one voice on behalf of our maritime industries to support the economic vitality of our working waterfronts, and this recent call was just one example of many of where we're having an impact, reminding our elected officials of the importance of our maritime industries, which have a global reach and a very deep impact here locally.

With upcoming local elections, we're working on candidate forums and voting pamphlets that evaluate the potential expansion of our port commission. It is important that all of us keep tabs on these election issues as they will have a big impact on how our local waterfronts work.

Another project that the Coalition has been invited to participate in by the Port is an interactive signs project, which will highlight our maritime industries and a heritage of working waterfronts that goes back to time immemorial. Working with local tribes, who are vital parts of the history and future of our waterfronts, along with our maritime industries, the signs will have QR codes leading to videos educating the public about how our waterfronts work. This is another way for the general public to know how important our maritime trades are.

Our waterfronts are a nexus for commerce, trades, and the soul of our region. Our Coalition is a reminder that our waterfronts work for us all and that by communicating with one voice we are stronger.

Upcoming Coalition Events

WWC Q3 Board of Directors Meeting

Sept 10, 708 Coho Way, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m..

Blue Drinks Q3

Sept 24, Community Boating Center, 5:30 p.m.

Port Commissioner Candidate Forum

Oct. 9, Squalicum Boathouse, 5:30 p.m.

The Working Waterfront Coalition of Whatcom County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

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On the Waterfront published by


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