

# FLSRV Newsletter



Winter  
2022

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**Valley Clean-Up 2022**  
**Saturday, April 23, 2022**  
**Meet at MOOSE PARK**  
**15205 N. Columbus**  
**9:30am**

Michael Kennedy

Friends of the Little Spokane River Valley will hold their annual cleanup day for the Valley on April 22nd following Earth Day. We will apply for our permit to use Moose Park in Gleneden as our gathering place again. If the world is a safer place and people feel comfortable in an outside group we will again use Moose Park for our meeting place.

Our goal each year is to clean up most of the major roads in the Valley from Wandermere to Perry; Shady Slope to the top of the hill; Dartford to Hazard Road; Hatch Road to the pool; and Golden Road, Midway, and Colbert Road including some new area along US 395.

We need your time and continued support to help to keep our Valley clean. This is also a good way to get to know your neighbors. Remember we are meeting at Moose Park this year!!! We will send a notification as we come closer to the day. Remember you can always clean up a little around your own area.

After the cleanup, we are tentatively planning a chili feed that will be held at Bart and Lindell Haggin's home for those who help out. Thanks to all who give time with both cleanup and the cooking!



**Annual Meeting and**  
**Dinner/Auction**  
**Friday, February 25, 2022**  
**Wandermere Golf Club**

Harla Jean Biever

Your board is looking forward to a renewal of our annual get-together. We will enjoy Italian Food as we did in February of 2020.

So, see your long-time friends and your new neighbors. Enjoy the opportunity to purchase wonderful auction items. Please make it a point in your life to come this year and celebrate our beautiful Valley.

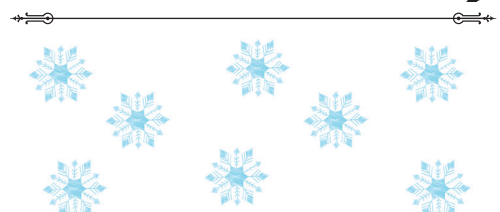
Our speaker will be Ben Peterson, a Forester with the Spokane CD, and has been with the district for 21 years in many capacities. He currently runs the Firewise program and the Spokane Conservation Districts Annual tree sale. Ben is a certified Arborist, and Certified tree risk assessor.

Board members serve two year terms and this year the following are up for re-election: Harla Jean Biever, Michael Kennedy, Dave Maccini, Lance Pounder, Martha Schaefer.

Please make your reservations by returning the form at the bottom of the enclosed membership page along with your money for dinner tickets.

If you have items you would like to contribute to the auction please call

Harla Jean 951-2084



## Membership

*A 2022 membership form is enclosed for your convenience.*

In 2021 we had over 100 member families. Membership money goes into a general fund and provides the resource for printing and mailing newsletters, maintaining our web site, auditing of each years financial records and other miscellaneous expenses.

**We have created these options:**

- Annual family (two membership votes within the area) – \$25/year
- Optional annual family “plus” support – \$60/year
- Optional annual family plus monthly donation support – \$10/month

*Your support is important so please complete the enclosed Membership Form.*

*Friends of Little Spokane River Valley, Inc.*

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## FLSRV Newsletter

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**Friends of Little Spokane River Valley, Inc.**  
 P.O. Box 18191  
 Spokane, WA 99228  
 Phone: 509-951-2084

For article suggestions or comments contact Harla Jean Biever

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### Board of Directors

Martha Schaefer, President  
 Dave Maccini, Vice President  
 Lindell Haggin, Secretary  
 Harla Jean Biever, Treasurer  
 Mark Case, Director  
 Michael Kennedy, Director  
 Kirk Neumann, Director  
 Tina Wynecoop, Director  
 Lance Pounder, Director  
 Jack Bury, Director Emeritus

# FLSRV Summer Event is a Success!

*Dave Maccini*

FLSRV was unable to hold our annual meeting with dinner and auction last February due to the COVID pandemic. We decided to try an outdoor community event and were pleasantly surprised at the attendance and support we received!

Over 100 people attended the gathering at Midway Elementary School on August 20th. Our planned food truck was cancelled at the last minute due to a COVID infection, but we went to plan B and served fresh grilled hotdogs.

The DJ played a nice selection of music, and the Ben and Jerry's free ice cream was the hit of the evening. Boy Scout Troop 218 kept children occupied with several games in the field behind the school.

The silent auction was well received, and we raised over \$1700 dollars through the generosity of those who attended! We want to thank all our donors including:

- Diane Conkright • Ty Brown
- Birdy's Sportsbar • Skip Magnuson
- Wandermere Golf Club • Roberta Ellis
- Kirk and Lori Neumann • Miranda Bales
- Judge and Tina Wynecoop
- Jack Nisbet • Karen Suffia
- Sety's Ace Hardware, Wandermere
- Car Wash Plaza • Loren and Chris Dudley
- Northern Quest Resort & Casino
- Irene Ann Byrd • A Taste of Thai
- Valvoine Oil • Peggy Ostness
- Phil Neumann • Boy Scout Troop #218

Special thanks to visionary organizer:  
Dave Maccini

We are hoping to hold our annual meeting and auction in February 2022!



## Oldest Business in the Valley "The Colbert Trading Company"

*Kirk Neumann*

In 1885 the Colbert Trading company was originally built as the general store and post office for the town of Dagoon. There was also a train station and hotel at the back of the store. The general store and post office were owned by the Postmaster by the name of Mr. Colbert. The owner was so well liked and respected that the local town's people renamed Dagoon to the town of Colbert. Since the beginning, the Colbert Trading Company has been a community destination to send and receive mail, purchase groceries, and socialize with neighbors. For over

a century, children have ridden their bikes to the store to buy penny candy and treats. The Colbert Trading Company is now owned by the Jensen Family. Ron Jensen calls it a labor of love to design and remodel the facility for the Colbert Community. Ron and his wife Mary's goal has been to develop the property as a place where everyone can gather and have fun, from kids to grandparents. The Colbert Trading Co. now serves hand scooped ice cream, espresso, pizza, and craft beer and wines. During the summer, live music and outdoor seating is available for your entertainment. To experience some history and local community flavor you can visit the Colbert Trading Co. at 18711 Yale Road, Colbert.

## Philip Neumann Realtor®

[philip.allspokanehomes.com](http://philip.allspokanehomes.com)

Phone: 509.844.6697  
Office: 509.624.4400  
Email: [philip@509s.com](mailto:philip@509s.com)

I was born and raised in Spokane and graduated from Mead High School. Throughout the years, I've gained a collective understanding of the area. I have experience working in construction and sales. In the construction industry, I have been tasked with handling disputes for big companies. I understand the negotiating process. Whether you're looking for a home, an investment, or a commercial property, it's a big life decision and I treat everyone the same. With honesty, integrity, and great communication I plan to make your purchase or selling experience a respectful and positive one. I look forward to working with you and helping provide a great life experience.



706 W Garland Ave Spokane, Wa 99205



# Friends of the Little Spokane River Valley Trails Update

Dave Maccini & Kirk Neumann

The FLSRV has started trail work along Little Spokane Dr. between Midway and Colbert Rd. This section, once finished, will complete a loop going up Colbert Rd. to Meadowbrook Rd, to Hilltop to Pine Needle and down Golden Rd. back to Little Spokane Dr. The first several hundred feet, from Colbert Rd heading south, was completed this fall. Using a sod cutter, the crew removed the layer of sod to prepare the base for the trail. The sections of sod were rolled up and loaded into trailers for disposal. Several trips were required for all the sod to be removed. After the sod and large rocks were removed, the base was smoothed out by filling in the large holes. A conveyor rock truck was used to deliver the 30 yards of gravel for the trail top layer. In all, 450' of trail was constructed.

A big thanks to those who helped, including Greg Heline, Janyce Eckhardt, Kirk Neumann, Sarah Olsen and her family, Mark and Laura Case, Alicia Sullivan, and John Misener and his dog Sadie. Also, thanks to George and Judy Maykowski for allowing us a place to dump the sod and dirt! Go for a walk along the new section before it is covered in snow.

We plan to work on the next section, heading south, in the Spring. To complete the trail will require a budget of over \$500,000 and some extensive engineering and boardwalk development. If you have a rich uncle who wants to help with funding, please let us know!!

If you want to help us with the fun next Spring, please contact us at: [friendsoflittlespokaneriver@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoflittlespokaneriver@gmail.com)



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## Friends of the Little Spokane River Valley, Inc. 2022 Association Membership Form

### Goals of the organization:

- ⇒ Preserve and sustain the unique character of the Little Spokane River Valley, including its open space and natural setting, maintaining lower density zoning.
- ⇒ Protect the areas ecosystem including water quality, wetlands, priority habitat and wildlife, and dwindling native vegetation.
- ⇒ Encourage the development of area parks.
- ⇒ Educate public officials of FLSRV concerns, being pro-active when major issues are at the forefront.

Property owners in the area *3/4 mile either side of the Little Spokane River from Chattaroy to Dartford, then 1/2 mile either side of the Little Spokane River from Dartford to the Fish Hatchery* are invited to become members. Each membership may include two members of one family. Individuals who live outside the designated area, or any organization, may join as an Associate (non-voting) member.

**Being in agreement with the goals, I wish to join FLSRV.** Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name (or Organization): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail/FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your special concerns about the valley?

What issues or topics would you like discussed at meetings?

<p><b>Check if you are interested in helping with:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Trails Committee</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parks Committee</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter (writing &amp;/or publishing)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sign Design or construction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Board member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Administrative help</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2022 FLSRV Membership Dues:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Annual Family Membership (2 membership votes within area)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$25.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Optional Annual Family "Plus" Support (\$60/year)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Optional Annual Family Plus Monthly Donation (\$10/yr)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Associate Member \$15.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Welcome Sign (Future)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trail Fund Contribution</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL PAID</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$ _____</b></td> </tr> </table>	Annual Family Membership (2 membership votes within area)	\$25.00	Optional Annual Family "Plus" Support (\$60/year)	\$ _____	Optional Annual Family Plus Monthly Donation (\$10/yr)	\$ _____	Associate Member \$15.00	\$ _____	Welcome Sign (Future)	\$ _____	Trail Fund Contribution	\$ _____	<b>TOTAL PAID</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
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Welcome Sign (Future)	\$ _____														
Trail Fund Contribution	\$ _____														
<b>TOTAL PAID</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>														

Friends of Little Spokane River Valley, Inc. is an IRS Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit corporation (a charity). Dues and donations are tax exempt to the full extent of the law. You should check with your tax consultant to be sure this applies to you.

Make checks payable to: **Friends of Little Spokane River Valley**  
Mail to: **Harla Jean Bieber, 2220 E. Colbert Rd., Colbert, WA 99005**

<b>FLSRV Dinner Reservation</b>		Friday, February 25th, 2022, Doors Open 5:30pm, Meeting 6:30pm, Dinner 7:00pm <b>Wandermere Golf Course Clubhouse</b>	
# Tickets requested <b>(\$27.00 Each)</b>	Name(s): _____		
Amount enclosed: \$	Street: _____	City: _____	Zip: _____
Make checks payable to <b>FLSRV</b> . Donations may be tax deductible.			Phone: _____
Send to: <b>Harla Jean Bieber</b> <b>2220 E. Colbert Rd. Colbert, WA 99005</b>		<b>Pick up your tickets at the door.</b>	

## Summer Salmon Swim Again

On Friday, August 6, Spokane Tribal Fisheries released 51 adult Chinook salmon into the Little Spokane River at the Waikiki Springs Nature Preserve and Wildlife Area. This return of native Chinook to the Little Spokane is the first time in 111 years since the construction/obstruction of Little Falls Dam on the Spokane Indian Reservation. That salmon swim in these waters is of deep historical and cultural significance to the Spokane Tribe of Indians. Thanks to a partnership among the Spokane Tribe, Inland Northwest Land Conservancy, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Waikiki Springs area is protected because of its ideal habitat for historically native but long displaced fish like the salmon.



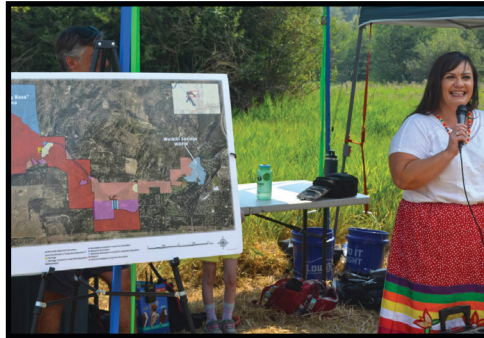
*Spokane tribal elder Pat Moses and Spokane tribal descendent Jake Wyncoop release one of the 51 salmon into the cool waters of the Little Spokane River.*

Tribal leaders Monica Tonasket and Pat Moses shared the deep meaning this release held for the Tribe and offered a blessing for the spirits of the fish and indigenous ancestors who once relied on salmon for their livelihood.

Isaac Tonasket sang a traditional song and then participants gathered to form a line as fisheries staff netted fish from the truck that brought them from Wells Dam Fish Hatchery to the site. Tribal members, community leaders, environmental advocates, and children helped to release the fish, weighing anywhere from 7-18 pounds, into the cool waters of the Little Spokane.

The Little Spokane River is ideal habitat for salmon because of the Waikiki Springs hillside, emptying 42-degree aquifer water into the river year-round. Coupled with ample shade along the riverbanks, this keeps the water temperature moderate even during the heat of the summer,

allowing fish like salmon to thrive. Because of this area's cultural and habitat significance, State Representative Marcus Riccelli, with support from the Fairwood community and Senator Andy Billig, secured \$1.5 million in state funding, allowing Inland Northwest Conservancy to purchase a 95-acre preserve adjacent to 104 acres already owned and managed by WDFW.



*Spokane Tribal Councilwoman, Monica Tonasket, sharing the Tribe's dedication to the re-introduction of the salmon into their traditional home.*

This release will serve as an opportunity to educate the community about Tribal Fisheries' efforts to reintroduce salmon into the blocked zone of the Columbia River system and allow biologists to study fish behavior as these salmon navigate what was once home waters for them.

This 200-acre area, traditional land of the Spokane Indians and gathering grounds for tribes from all over the Inland Northwest, is open to public enjoyment. Guests to the area are encouraged not to harass the salmon, whose radio trackers will allow Fisheries' staff to learn about their movement and behavior in this environment. While not an official step in the Spokane Tribal Fisheries' reintroduction plan, efforts to bring anadromous fish back into the blocked zone, this release will allow for education about the historical and cultural significance of native salmon. It will also help inform future reintroduction efforts as scientists begin to understand how the fish move through the Little Spokane River and its tributaries. For more information about the Spokane Tribe's efforts on behalf of local salmon, visit their website.

It is heartening to realize that during this unusual year the FLSRV's mission to preserve and protect this beautiful riverine valley continues unabated. 2022 here we come! ➡

## Reducing the Risk of Wildfire and Associated Damage in Areas Bordering The Little Spokane River

*John Olson  
Little Spokane River Estates  
Firewise USA Coordinator*

The objective of this article is to provide a brief background of the Little Spokane River Estates (LSRE) Firewise USA program and to emphasize the importance of wildfire prevention measures to protect homes, property, and riparian areas along the Little Spokane River. Because wildfires do not respect property boundaries it is in everyone's best interest to take prudent action to help reduce the risk of wildfire. To set the stage, LSRE became a designated Firewise USA Community in 2019. Firewise USA membership requires that residents of the Community actively work to reduce the risk of wildfire damage to homes and surrounding properties. As part of our Firewise USA outreach effort, we are communicating with property owners along the Little Spokane River to encourage undertaking activities that can help reduce the spread and damage caused by wildfire. The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reported, as of August 2021, over 630 wildfires in Washington State, adding that 466 of these occurred in Eastern Washington. More than 300,000 acres burned statewide in 2021. A variety of prevention measures can help provide protection against a wildfire's ability to spread rapidly, which reduces the risk of disastrous damage to homes and property. LSRE's community ownership is adjacent to the Little Spokane River and a wildfire occurring along or near this scenic river can cause significant long-term damage to both riparian areas and river ecology. The national Firewise USA® recognition program provides a collaborative framework to help neighbors in a geographic area get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and property.

In 2019, the WA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted a "Wildfire Risk Assessment" for the LSRE Community in conjunction with our Firewise USA Community Designation application. This assessment provided LSRE's Board of

*- Reducing Risk / Continued on page 6 -*

## In the Stream

Tina Wynecoop

Directors with several recommendations designed to reduce the spread of a wildfire and associated residential damage. Highest wildfire risk areas identified by the assessment were generally associated with dense (overcrowded) Ponderosa Pine patches in the understory of larger trees, called "ladder fuels", that are quite common in this region's woodland setting. Ladder fuels facilitate wildfire spread into crowns of larger trees. Thinning-out these ladder fuel areas, especially on drier southwest slopes, when combined with pruning-up the larger trees reduces both the spread and intensity of a wildfire. Working in conjunction with the DNR, LSRE has now completed this type of work on 16 of our resident's properties, resulting in a significant reduction in the risk of rapid wildfire spread in these locations. We continuously work with residents to identify and remedy high risk of spread concerns as well as other potentially hazardous conditions such as pine needle and woody debris removal, and vegetation management around homes.

Property owners neighboring LSRE, and those along the Little Spokane River have wildfire fuel conditions like ours. As part of our Firewise USA outreach to increase a general awareness of wildfire risks and the potential for home and property damage, we would be happy to share what we have learned about the activities that we have employed to create a safer LSRE community. We are focused on communicating with property owners located near LSRE, and along the Little Spokane River to encourage implementation of similar practices to help reduce the rapid spread and resulting damage arising from a possible wildfire.

As a community-based program, we encourage residents along the Little Spokane River, as well as our neighboring property owners, to plan for and participate in events throughout the year that can help reduce the risk of rapid wildfire spread. Examples include spring pine needle and woody debris cleanups, thinning dense pine understories, pruning dead branches from larger trees, requesting DNR's Free Fire Safety Checkup and maintaining wildfire safe zones around homes. Additional information about the National Firewise USA Program and more detail about LSRE's program can be obtained at NFPA - Firewise USA® and by contacting John Olson, LSRE Firewise USA Coordinator at boardsrehoa2@gmail.com .

It is good to look back on what might have seemed on the surface to be a very quiet 2021 for FLSRV. The pandemic had not slowed progress one bit!

- Monthly board meetings switched from in-person gatherings to Zoom meetings.
- The February annual meeting held at Wandermere Golf Course club house was cancelled; yet with board member Dave Maccini vision and planning, it was reconfigured and held responsibly outdoors in late September at Midway Elementary School.
- FLSRV's ninth annual hike, led each year by author and naturalist Jack Nisbet, was not deterred by the pandemic. A large group joined him at Fishtrap Falls and Hog Lake west of Cheney. The brisk April winds sweeping vigorously across the Columbia Plateau cleansed the air of possible contagion. The wind blew our hats off in a salute to our faithful guide. It was a good day to learn new things, and we did! [There will be a hike in 2022.]
- The old Shady Slope sign disappeared and then reappeared months later on its long-time perch on the old Douglas Fir tree. It took some sleuthing to find out what happened to it, but it is refreshed and replaced to its accustomed place. Our community's locals, subscribers to the Next Door Neighbor app, worried and wondered and then supplied the answer to the mystery of the missing namesake sign - a beloved icon on the winding road into the Little Spokane River valley.
- Again, lots of roadside rubbish was picked up on 2021 Earth Day. It would be nice if this was a "once and done" event, but with board member Michael Kennedy's organization skills, volunteers set out to tidy up our Little Spokane River Valley once more. We have neat and caring volunteers and are very grateful to each one.
- FLSRV continued to support Spokane Conservation District's water quality testing study in Little Deep Creek, Deadman Creek, and Little Spokane River. Each month a trio of FLSRV members tests for all sorts of technical things that affect and describe the health of the LSR watershed. December's testing was rewarded with views of an American Dipper bobbing, twirling, and swimming underwater. It is a rare treat to watch the bird retrieving insect larvae in plain view while oblivious of our presence on the water's edge. We noted in the December monthly report that the two tributary streams' flows remained low. The much-needed fall rains had begun to saturate the drought-stricken soils before moisture could add force directly into the vast watershed's streams.

- Several meetings were held by the board's trail-planning sub-committee who envisioned, researched, applied for permits, worked directly with landowners, designed and began construction of the newest link in the trail system – from Colbert Road to Midway Road. As you already know the trails have connected people with nature and continue to expand the pedestrian trail system. The trails provided a healing outlet during the pandemic and the activity on them was significantly increased. The FLSRV website has a printable trail map to download.
- Our board continues to oversee the popular WSDOT's "Children of the Sun Trail" litter removal area located between Highway 395 and Highway 2.
- A first-time event with "deep historical and cultural significance" took place on a sunny afternoon in August 2021 at Waikiki Springs Nature Preserve and Wildlife Area below Mill Road (affectionately nicknamed "The Middle of the Little".) The Spokane Tribe of Indians, WDFW, Inland Northwest Land Conservancy as well as the Friends of Fairwood facilitated the introduction of Chinook Salmon in the Little Spokane River downstream from the Dartford bridge.

[Special thanks to Inland Northwest Land Conservancy for permission to share their [slightly edited] article:]

<https://www.inlandnwland.org/summer-salmon-swim-again/>



## Open Pit Mine Update

Doug Power

Director, Dartord Austin Neighborhood Assoc.

Last year a local landowner and Spokane County attempted to enlarge the size of an open pit mine on Austin road just east of Dartford road. The mining site sits within the drainage for the Little Spokane River. Even with strong opposition from the neighbors, Spokane County Commissioners approved the zoning change to increase the mine size. The neighbors banded together and formed the Dartford Austin challenge the zoning change with the Washington State Hearings Review Board. Our legal challenge was successful and the zoning change was denied by the state of Washington. In the course of our research for the challenge we found a Spokane

- Open Pit Mine / Continued on page 7 -

County Hearings Examiner ruled years ago that no excavation was allowed on the now working site of the open pit mine. The landowner still holds a reclamation permit from the Department of Natural Resources and continues to remove sand from the mine. We have been speaking with both Spokane County Building and Planning and the Department of Natural Resources about the site being allowed to continue mining now that we have uncovered the prior legal ruling. Neither agency is responding to our inquiries. We believe they are intentionally avoiding us due to the unpleasant legal position they have put themselves in by allowing mining in contrast to the earlier ruling. As for now we are continuing our efforts to communicate with both government agencies to find a path to end the illegal mining that has been taking place in our neighborhood for years.

### A gift for the Spokane River this Season! Plans for a New Approach to Cleaning up Toxics

*Jerry White, Jr.*

- Today is a huge victory for the Spokane River, aquatic ecosystems and the public. Under a brand new settlement agreement (called a Consent Decree) between the Sierra Club, Center for Environmental Law and Policy, the Spokane Tribe and the EPA, our rivers will receive a legitimate, legal, clean-up plan for PCBs. Our communities have waited since 2006 for this plan - called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).
- Spokane Riverkeeper has actively supported this concept for years as well documented in public presentations, letters to agencies that are now public record, and our resignation from the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force (commonly viewed as a TMDL "alternative").
- This clean up plan will be developed by 2024 and will address polluted sections of the Spokane River in Lake Spokane, The middle and upper River and the Little Spokane River.
- In developing this plan, the clean up of PCBs will be returned to a lawful, legally-binding Clean Water Act standard that demands specific limits for pollution dischargers. This plan will be one that the public can trust, that will restore regulatory order, and that will contain legitimate goals, timelines, and outcomes.

## New Development Could Harm Our Watershed. Why are County and State Agencies Looking the Other Way?

*Sarah Ben Olson*

This is Part 2 in a series on former Kaiser properties. To read Part 1, visit: <https://www.flsrv.org/legacy-of-kaiser-aluminum-continues-to-impact-watershed/>

North Spokane property has a filthy backstory: its stormwater flowed directly into the Little Spokane River watershed, with PCB levels over 250 times Washington's Human Health standards. PCBs are man-made carcinogens that accumulate in the fats of animals and people. Manufacture of PCBs was banned in the U.S. in 1977, because of their potential to cause cancer. Hazardous PCB levels in Deadman Creek spurred an emergency removal by the EPA in 2020. The federal agency cleared asbestos and PCB-containing material from two former Kaiser properties. Although the EPA carted off toxic waste, it has not done any to monitoring for PCBs in the soils, or the groundwater. In 2020,

Ecology approved a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Little Spokane River that does not include PCBs as a monitoring requirement. Ecology effectively tied its own hands, making it impossible for the agency to require stormwater testing for PCBs. Without a PCB TMDL, the agency is also unable to enforce cleanup of polluted properties. Studies show an association between dietary PCB exposures and developmental effects. EPA has classified PCBs as a probable human carcinogen. <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-09/documents/polychlorinated-biphenyls.pdf>

Now, a Development Agreement Greenstone filed for this property obscures the history of the site. In its Environmental Ordinance Forms, Greenstone claims possible impacts to groundwater and air quality "do not apply" to their project. The property's groundwater flows to a protected watershed, including private wells; it is upwind of neighborhoods, and three public schools.

Spokane County planners told me it is the State Department of Ecology's job to flag potentially harmful projects at the zoning stage. Staff at Ecology say they examine development proposals for risks- but not until a rezone has been approved. Both agencies seem at odds regarding responsibilities to regulate development and protect the community. The Commissioners need honest environmental disclosures, and informed guidance from the EPA, to make decisions about the safety of developing this polluted site. Kevin Schneidmiller assured me Greenstone would show "due diligence" and test the 300 acres it plans to develop. Yet, Greenstone and Kaiser Investments Company haven't done any testing to prove the property is safe for development. Neither Spokane County nor Ecology are calling for testing now, before a rezone proposal is approved. Without evidence to the contrary, the public must assume the property is still contaminated and demand proof that development won't cause harm. Ecology Fails to Monitor Water Quality

in Little Spokane River Watershed Violating the Clean Water Act. The Department of Ecology has been neglecting to monitor the Little Spokane for pollutants for over a decade. It has not tested for PCBs in the watershed since the EPA's 2020 emergency Removal action. Regular testing of water bodies is mandated by law. According to the Washington Dept. of Ecology Website, "the Clean Water Act requires states to perform a water quality assessment every two years to track how clean the rivers, lakes, and marine water bodies are."

Ecology has known for years that PCBs are a persistent contaminant in the watershed. In a 2019 EPA Memorandum, Brooks Stanfield described the Little Spokane as "listed as impaired on the State of Washington's 303(d) list due to the high concentrations of PCBs" (emphasis added.) However, no testing in the Little Spokane watershed is being conducted to check for continued PCB contamination. Ecology's most recent testing for PCBs in Deadman Creek was in 2018, only at the spot the Kaiser Smelter stormwater system drained into the river. No other testing for PCBs has been conducted in the watershed since 2016. Curtis Johnson, from Ecology's Water Quality Program, stated the agency has not done a comprehensive water quality analysis of the watershed in 8-10 years. This would appear to be in violation of Ecology's monitoring responsibilities under the Clean Water Act.

Without monitoring, the health of the watershed, and the people who use it, could be in jeopardy. Whatever gets into the groundwater can make it to the river. The polluted land that once belonged to Kaiser Aluminum is only 150 feet above our aquifer. Contaminated groundwater from the Superfund NPL site flows northwest 1.5 miles, then discharges (outflows) into the Little Spokane. Today, elevated levels of cyanide and fluoride are still being recorded at those outflow points. Yet, no one has surveyed the soils of the former Kaiser properties for the pollutants that are poisoning our watershed. Fluoride and cyanide are only two of the toxic chemicals related to Kaiser's activities here. PCBs are another. But Ecology isn't looking for them in the soils, or in our river.

We need to know if toxic chemicals are present in the soils. If they are, developers must be held accountable to protect our watershed. It isn't too late to make a public comment on Greenstone's rezone proposal. Your comments can request a public hearing regarding environmental concerns. Or, you can mention Greenstone's lack of disclosure about potential hazards in its Environmental Ordinance Forms. Contact the planner involved by mail: ATTN: Tammy Jones Spokane County Building and Planning. 1026 W Broadway Ave Spokane, WA 99260 Tammy Jones can also be reached by phone: 509-477-7225 State that the email is related to: CC-01-2021 Reference the file number with the parcel: no. 36096.9063 Or, Contact Commissioner Josh Kerns: [Jkerns@spokanecounty.org](mailto:Jkerns@spokanecounty.org) 509-477-2265



Friends of  
 Little Spokane River Valley, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 18191  
 Spokane, WA 99228



**Friends of  
 The Little Spokane River  
 2022 Hike With Jack Nisbet**  
*Saturday, April 30*  
**TRAUTMAN RANCH**

Trautman Ranch is a 275-acre Spokane County Conservation Area located between two disjunctive parcels of Riverside State Park on the south side of the Spokane River just below Nine Mile Falls.

The ranch, currently managed by Washington State Parks, rises from river level to a series of gravel benches left by the Ice Age Floods. Parks personnel have recently undertaken extensive thinning and trail-building operations there. On our moderate hike we will pass through a variety of habitats and discuss State Parks' plans for future management and public use of this keystone connecting area.

We will meet at the Carlson Road Parking area and trailhead just above the Nine Mile Falls Ranger

station at 9:00 and be back there by noon. Bring sunscreen, water, snacks, good hiking shoes, and tick repellent. For further directions go to:  
[spokanecounty.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/Trautman-Ranch-Conservation-Area-71](http://spokanecounty.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/Trautman-Ranch-Conservation-Area-71)



Please detach, indicate how many people are in your party and complete the rest of the registration form. Send it, along with a check made out to FLSRV with your payment of \$25.00 per person by April 10, 2022.

**Mail to: FLSRV. P. O. Box 18191, Spokane WA 99228**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 per person Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_