

TO: RBAW Board

FROM: Doug Levy – 1/2/2022

RE: Report from State Lobbyist – **DECEMBER 2021**

RESPONSE NEEDED: For Thursday, Jan. 6 Board Meeting (*Doug will attend via Zoom*)

Hello and Happy New Year, everyone! I hope everyone managed to both enjoy the holidays – and stay warm and safe – as snow and ice and cold temperatures battered most of our state as a final curtain call to a chaotic 2021. Here are some of the issues we were working on as the year drew to a close:

- **Lakebay Marina:** On the final day of 2021, the purchase and acquisition of Lakebay became official! A lot of work lies ahead to plan the buildout of this historic facility, to gather community input on *what* they want to see, and to figure out how future improvements should be phased and funded. Lakebay was made possible in large part through the gritty, painstaking, and never-say-die work of RBAW's 501(c)3 Marine Parks Conservancy, and future donations are needed to support the work of the Conservancy in taking on future challenges! It's just a few clicks away and you can start here: [RBAW Marine Parks Conservancy](#) . By the way, please see the attached Dec. 29 news article in *The News Tribune/Gateway News* with wonderful comments by Bob Wise on the journey to acquire Lakebay and the generational benefits of keeping this facility in public hands: [State agency buys historic Lakebay Marina for \\$1.6 million | Tacoma News Tribune \(thenewstribune.com\)](#)
- **2022 Legislative Session Ahead – Please do a “Save the Day” on your calendars for the RBAW/NMTA “Day at the Legislature” on Jan. 18** - RBAW members received the formal Event invite on 1/7/22 so check your inbox. Registered attendee's will receive detailed agenda, meeting links and "Talking Points" to be used to underscore our 2022 priorities: [2022 RBAW Leg Reg Priorities 20211130.pdf](#). We hope you can join us, please register today!! We are now just a week away from the Monday, Jan. 10 opening day of the 60-day, 2022 Session of the State Legislature.
- **DNR's Derelict Vessel Removal Program – bill to enhance, stabilize, and sustain funding:** We now have a bill number for the 2022 “Agency Request” legislation we are working on with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to enhance, stabilize, and sustain funding for the Derelict Vessel Removal Program (DVRP). A link to **Senate Bill 5598**, being prime-sponsored by Sen. Liz Lovelett (D-Anacortes/40th Dist.), is here: [5598.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#). As we have noted, this bill would redirect up to \$7.5 million (25 percent) of the Watercraft Excise Tax that goes into the General Fund and instead use it toward the Derelict Vessel Removal Program. We succeeded in helping to craft bill language that steps up efforts to remove vessels from non-public lands, to devote more funding toward the Vessel Turn-In Program (VTIP), and to do more work to move toward a full vessel recycling program in the future.

- **Watercraft Excise Tax Depreciation Schedule:** Just before the Christmas holiday, and days in advance of the Jan. 1, 2022 date on which a new rulemaking is to take effect, we submitted a petition letter from RBAW and eight (8) other organizations/entities challenging the Department of Revenue’s rulemaking for the adverse impact it will have on vessels purchased 14 or more years ago by boat owners. A big thanks to Paul Sorenson and others at BST Associates for the data collection that helps make our case. I’m attaching with this report a copy of our petition letter, the BST Associates data, and a statement of BST’s qualifications.
 - **Funding in Governor’s proposed 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget (\$300,000) to help minimize conflicts on Lake Union between vessels and seaplane landings/takeoffs:** Last month, we let all of you know that with the reopening of the Canadian border in both directions, Kenmore Air is restarting service from Lake Union to Vancouver, B.C. That has the airline wondering how to best ensure the safety of the takeoff/landing zone they depend upon, especially in warmer months when more and more boaters, kayakers, and stand-up paddleboarders than ever before fill the waters of Lake Union. We have had multiple discussions with Kenmore Air representatives and *support* the funding/intent of a provision they worked to include in Governor Inslee’s proposed 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget. Here’s the description of the funding, which would be for marine safety grant monies to be administered by the Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO):
\$300K general fund state is provided solely for the purpose of motorized and non-motorized boater education and outreach on Lake Union, with a specific goal of preventing boater and airplane conflicts on the lake during peak recreation season. Funds are to be made available to appropriate local government or federal government agencies, or appropriate non-profit organization.
 - **Boating Safety Legislation being introduced and heard during Week 1 of Session – HB 1707:** Kudos to our Treasurer Loyd Walker, who has long been an active member of the State Parks Boating Programs Advisory Council (BPAC), for alerting us to the filed bill number and scheduled 8 a.m. Friday, Jan. 14 hearing on what will be **House Bill 1707: [1707.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#). HB 1707**, prime-sponsored by House Community & Economic Development Committee Chair Cindy Ryu (D-Shoreline/32nd Dist.), would stipulate with respect to human-powered vessels under 12 feet, *“a person may not operate or occupy a kayak, canoe, or stand-up paddleboard on the waters of this state unless the person is wearing a personal flotation device approved by the United States coast guard while the kayak, canoe, or stand-up paddleboard is underway.”* The bill includes several exemptions, including a Tribal exemption that, Loyd reports, has triggered some concern among BPAC Members. I am preliminarily preparing to testify that this approach is one RBAW largely supports. More to come as we get closer to the hearing date!
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