

Tribes oppose Washington state bill to reduce salmon habitat protection

The Washington state combined bill 1886 would replace current critical areas regulations that apply to agricultural lands with a bureaucratic system relying on voluntary measures to protect salmon habitat.

Many Indian tribes, including the Lummi Nation, Quinault Indian Nation, Swinomish Tribal Community, Tulalip Tribes of Washington and Yakama Nation, oppose this expensive new bureaucracy that favors maintaining agricultural "viability" over allowing salmon habitat to recover.

A significant number of streams on agricultural lands in Washington do not meet water quality standards and salmon runs are still listed under the Endangered Species Act. While this legislation allows the agriculture industry to conduct business as usual, Tribal, non-Tribal and sport fisheries continue to be curtailed or eliminated entirely.

This bill, developed by the William D. Ruckelshaus Center at Washington State University, unfairly tips the balance toward agricultural interests and leaves salmon with nothing.

"Now Washington state has water quality regulations in place to protect drinking water and endangered salmon habitat from the activities of developers, foresters and manufacturers," said Swinomish Chairman Brian Cladoosby.

"But there are those who believe they are above the law," he said. "We cannot have the state continue to allow the agricultural industry to avoid regulations while expecting unsuccessful voluntary approaches. When the health of the state's streams, salmon and people are at stake, we must put politics aside. We must instead rely upon science and processes that engage all interested parties, not just agriculture, which doesn't have a trustworthy track record with salmon or water quality."

If this legislation passes, the state would spend \$60,000 to \$120,000 for each of the next five years to pay for local planning groups, composed heavily of agricultural interests, to set voluntary measure of salmon protections.

These groups would set benchmarks with no substantial guidance from the legislation or from science and self-report after as long as a decade as to whether they're meeting those benchmarks. There is virtually no scientific oversight of whether the benchmarks are adequate to protect fish or whether the voluntary measures succeed or fail.

The Legislature's own Independent Science Panel confirmed that in 2000 when it reviewed the state's Salmon Recovery Strategy and stated, "... reliance on historically ineffective voluntary measures leaves an impression that tinkering with failures of the past will restore glories of the past. This approach is likely to result in false expectations and is not based on science."

Tribes have asked legislators to include in this legislation provisions requiring compliance with state water quality standards and salmon recovery habitat objectives, but they were rejected.

In the Nooksack River watershed, current animal waste management practices are not effectively reducing water contamination in Tribal shellfish beds.

"Based on past experience, voluntary actions are not enough," said Merle Jefferson, Lummi Natural Resource Department executive director. "Without continued technical assistance, compliance inspection activities, and water quality monitoring and source identification in the Nooksack River watershed, the likelihood of future downgrades of Tribal shellfish in Portage Bay and Lummi Bay is significantly increased."

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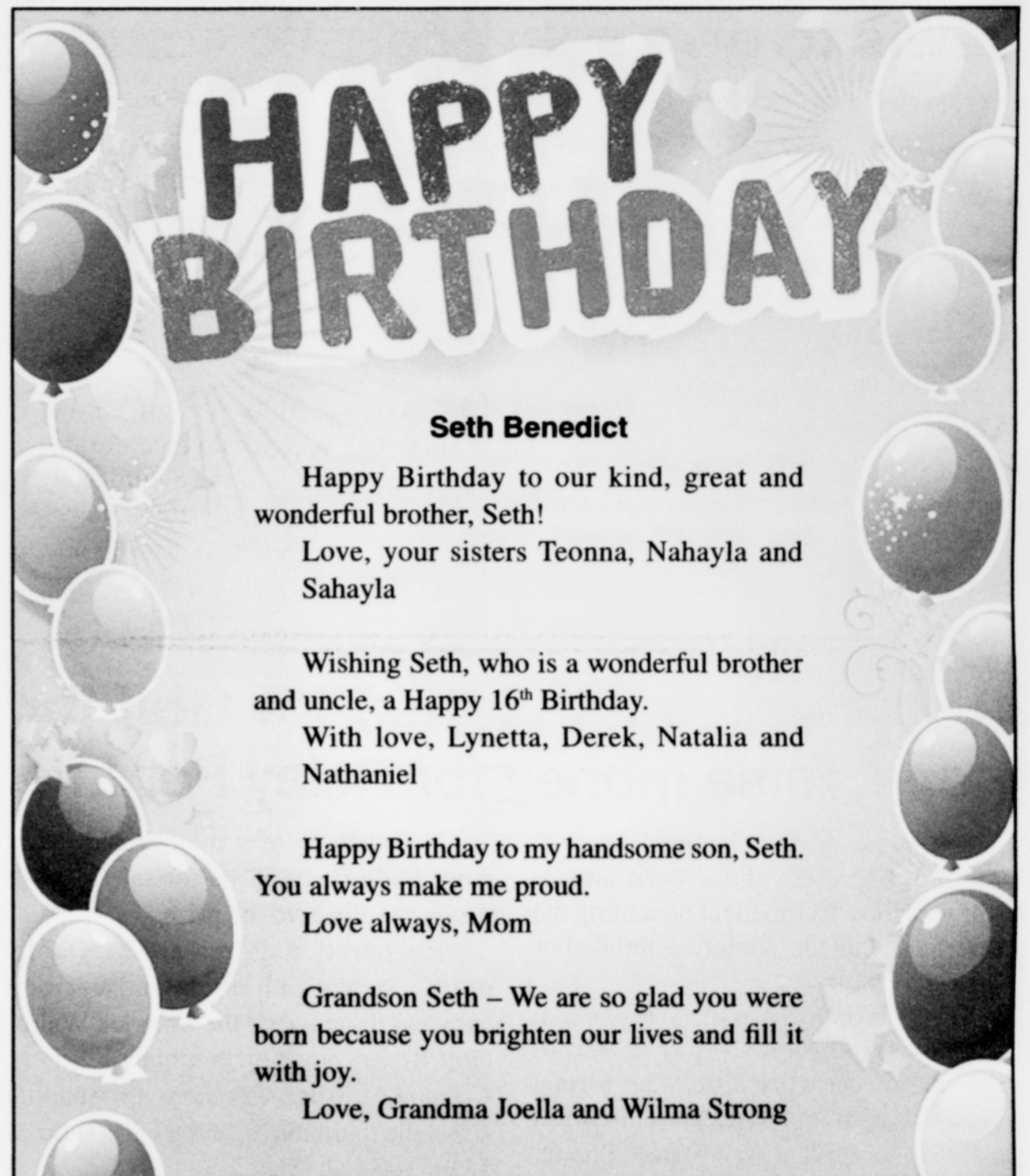
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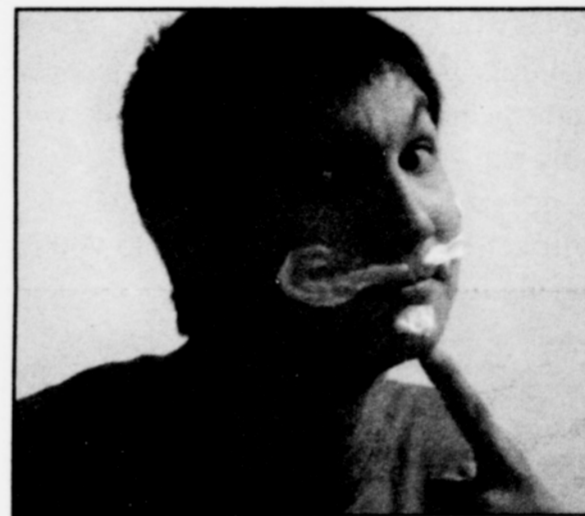
Seth Benedict

Happy Birthday to our kind, great and wonderful brother, Seth!
Love, your sisters Teonna, Nahayla and Sahayla

Wishing Seth, who is a wonderful brother and uncle, a Happy 16th Birthday.
With love, Lynetta, Derek, Natalia and Nathaniel

Happy Birthday to my handsome son, Seth.
You always make me proud.
Love always, Mom

Grandson Seth - We are so glad you were born because you brighten our lives and fill it with joy.
Love, Grandma Joella and Wilma Strong



Happy 18th birthday to Aden Perkins. We hope all your life dreams come true.
Love, Mom and Stuart



Happy 1st Birthday on April 16 to Ella Cree!
Love - Auntie Chasta Cree, Uncle Stuart, Chrissy, Aden and Avery

We would like to wish our nephew, Aden Perkins, a very Happy 18th Birthday. We're so proud of you and hope all your wishes and dreams come true.

With our love - Uncle Marty, Aunt Dawn, Brittany, Gaven and Ella



Happy 15th Birthday on April 4 to Chrissy Joe.
From Mom and Stuart

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