

# Seattle's new seawall is built to help salmon

A sidewalk made of glass

By EILIS O'NEILL  
KUOW

The waterfront is getting a redesign.

From a kayak under Pier 66 in downtown Seattle, the new seawall and pier don't look like what you would expect.

For one, it's not dark under the pier. The sidewalk that covers Pier 66 is now made of opaque glass, and light floods down onto the water.

The design is supposed to be friendlier for fish.

Down here on the waterfront, the Alaska Way Viaduct is months from being torn down. The city is also re-designing this area for migrating salmon, making it more like the shoreline that was here before there was a city.

Here's the thing: juvenile salmon must navigate the Seattle waterfront as they head to the ocean from their natal rivers. Before there was a city here, this stretch of the Puget Sound was a mudflat full of plankton and insects for juvenile salmon to eat and speckled water they could hide in.

Then Seattle built a railroad, and streets and buildings, and a seawall to keep Puget Sound from flooding that new downtown, as well as piers for shipping.

It's a hostile environment for young salmon. The wall provides no food, and the



A view of the new seawall being installed on the Seattle waterfront. It's designed to help juvenile salmon.

piers are confusing to navigate and cast dark shadows on the water.

"Juvenile salmon do not like going in the shade," says Bob Oxborrow, a researcher at the University of Washington who's studying the new seawall. "It's too scary for them. That's where they can get eaten — and there's no food anyway."

There's also a new false seafloor that makes the water seem shallow, from the perspective of a fish traveling near the surface. That also

mimics the mudflats that were here before Seattle was built.

Juvenile salmon prefer shallow habitats, Oxborrow says, because there are fewer predators below — so, in the newly shallow water, "they have the opportunity to not be freaked out."

The wall itself is different, too. Instead of a vertical concrete slab, the new wall has rocks that jut out. Those provide habitat for plankton and other organisms salmon like to eat.

Oxborrow says the design

is completely innovative. The data are not in yet, so it's too early to know how much the wall is helping salmon. Once he and his colleagues crunch the numbers, he says, they'll try to identify possible improvements to make the wall even more hospitable to fish.

And, he adds, the idea is to inspire other cities to follow Seattle's lead: He's already gotten phone calls from cities across the world trying to make their seawalls fish-friendly as well.

## Brown, lawmakers stage walkout supporting Kavanaugh accusers

By AUBREY WIEBER  
Capital Bureau

Gov. Kate Brown and state House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson took to the Capitol steps Monday morning to publicly support Christine Blasey Ford and Deborah Ramirez, both of whom have alleged U.S. Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh sexually assaulted them years ago.

"I believe that sexual assault survivors should be heard, and particularly that there should be an investigation in this particular case, now that there has been a second allegation," Brown said in a later interview.

Brown and Williamson were joined by dozens of lawmakers, mostly women, to take a political stance on sexual assault as part of the greater #MeToo movement. The walkout took place on the opening day of September's Legislative Days, where lawmakers from throughout the state convene at the Capitol to prepare for the 2019 Legislature.

The walkout was short and silent, lasting about four minutes.

On Sunday, Ramirez joined Blasey Ford in making public allegations against Kavanaugh, nominated by President Donald Trump to replace Anthony Kennedy on the high court. U.S. Senate Republicans were attempting to get Kavanaugh approved quickly so he could join the court when it opens its next session on Monday. Blasey

Ford's accusation, followed by Ramirez's accusation, has thrown a wrench into that plan.

The two accusers are asking that the FBI investigate the allegations. Brown, surrounded by lawmakers holding signs, said she believes the alleged victims.

Brown said Kavanaugh should withdraw from consideration of the lifetime appointment.

"I think the U.S. Senate, if they decide to move forward, are doing a disservice to the American people and a disservice to the U.S. Supreme Court," Brown said.

In addition to the walkout, Brown released a video again condemning the alleged actions of Kavanaugh and calling on the U.S. Senate to allow a full investigation.

When asked if she supports victims of alleged perpetrators regardless of political affiliation, Brown said specifics of each situation matter, referencing former U.S. Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., who she said did the right thing by vacating his seat after allegations of misconduct.

"It certainly depends upon the circumstances, right? For example, Senator Franken stepped down. I think it just depends upon the circumstance, and what I think is most important is that sexual assault survivors understand that they are being heard, that there are safe places for them to go."

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group, Pamplin Media Group and Salem Reporter.

# Via truck and helicopter, mountain goats find new home

Relocated from Olympic park

By ASHLEY AHEARN  
National Public Radio

The National Park Service has embarked on a 3- to 5-year plan, in collaboration with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the National Forest Service, to remove all mountain goats from Olympic National Park in Washington.

As part of that plan, more than 75 mountain goats arrived in Washington's North Cascade mountains by refrigerated truck in recent weeks, before being transferred to helicopters for the ride of their lives.

The mountain goats came from Olympic National Park, where they are a non-native species that has wreaked havoc on the fragile alpine ecosystem and harassed hikers.

The goats crave salt and enzymes found in human sweat and urine and some have come to see humans as delicious, walking salt licks. A male mountain goat killed a hiker in Olympic National Park in 2010.

Roughly half of the 700 goats in the park will be relocated to the North Cascade



A nanny goat and her kids near a popular campsite in Olympic National Park. The National Park Service wants to move goats to the North Cascades, where they are a native species. Ashley Ahearn/National Public Radio

mountains, where the goats are a native species. The rest will be killed. The Park Service will only be relocating goats captured in the most remote parts of Olympic National Park, where they have not become habituated to humans.

Mountain goats are native to the North Cascade mountains, though the population has been declining since the mid-1900s and experts aren't sure why. Ruth Milner has been studying mountain goats in the North Cascades with

the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife since the 1990s. She said relocating goats from the Olympic Peninsula to the North Cascades is a win-win.

"It's kind of the perfect storm of their (Olympic National Park's) need to remove goats and our need to have goats returning to the Cascades," Milner said. The population of mountain goats in the North Cascades now hovers at roughly 3,000, down from a recorded high of 10,000 goats.

"This translocation effort isn't going to solve the problem," said David Wallin, a professor in the environmen-

tal sciences department at Western Washington University. "But we figure we can move 300 to 400 goats over and that's a 10 percent bump in the population (in the North Cascades). Our hope is that will help jump start the recovery." The infusion of goats will boost the genetic diversity of the dwindling North Cascades population.

This is not the first time the Park Service has attempted to get rid of the mountain goats in Olympic National Park. In the 1980s several hundred goats were captured and relocated across the West, with limited success. But wildlife managers saw improvements

within the Olympic National Park after the relocation.

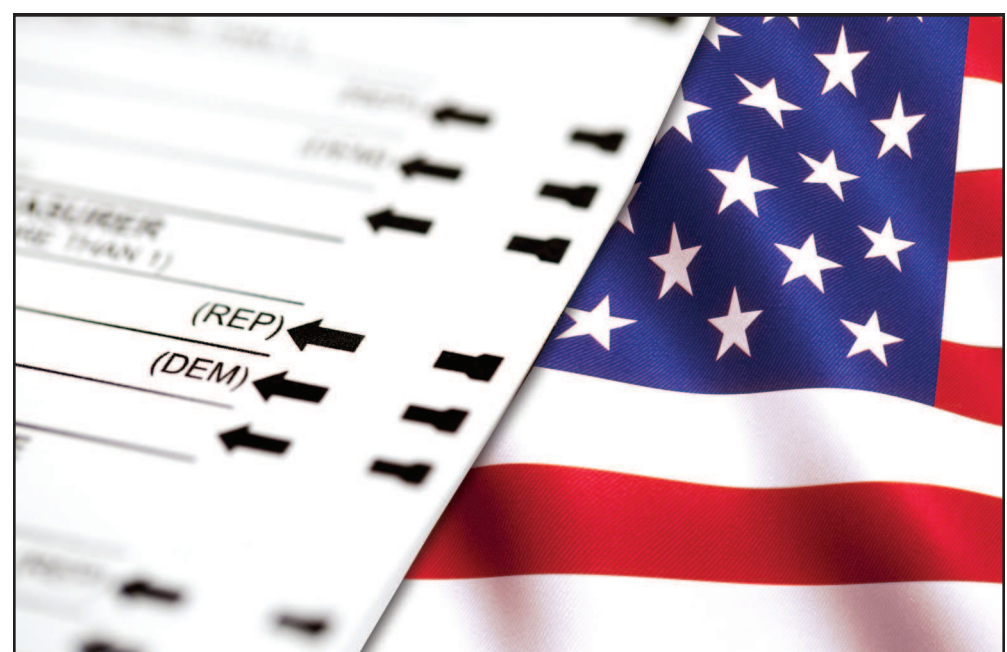
"We saw the ecosystem bounce back," said Patti Happe, a wildlife biologist at the park. "When you get a group of goats hanging out in an area they move around and trample the soil and fragile vegetation. Goats have this habit that they like to dust bathe. They form these wallows and create big patches of exposed soil, and with erosion they get bigger and bigger."

But not all the goats were removed at the time. Since then the population has rebounded, and continues to rise at a rate of 8 percent per year.

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