

TO: RBAW Board

FROM: Doug Levy – 5/4/2022

RE: Report from State Lobbyist – **APRIL 2022**

April was a “tweener” month for RBAW advocacy work – just after the 2022 Session of the Legislature wrapped up, and just before Opening Day of boating season beckons in early May.

We chipped away at several key issues over the course of the month, and I will report on them in a moment. First, though, a Mea Culpa for an unintentional omission from last month’s report, when I gave a shout-out to members of the Association’s newly formed **Legislative Committee**. I apologize for not having received and listed Doug Schumacher’s name among that group! The full/alphabetized list of those who will serve alongside Board Executive Officers Steve Finney (*who will Chair*), Andrea Pierantozzi, Wayne Gilham, Loyd Walker, and Linda Newland is as follows: **Jordan Glidden; Bill Gray; Kevin Haistings; Dave Kircher; Doug Larsen; Jim Metcalf; Steve Mitchell, Doug Schumacher**. Thank you!

[Doug Levy](#)

RBAW Lobbyist

Here is an update on some issues we dove in on during the month:

- **Watercraft Excise Tax – Depreciation Schedule:** RBAW and NMTA have retained the Anacortes-based firm of [BST Associates](#) to assist with evaluating the Department of Revenue’s 2022 vessel valuations and their proposal of a revised depreciation schedule. You will recall that we worked hard during the last update of the Depreciation Schedule done by the state Department of Revenue (DOR). Our efforts and our coalition-building led to important adjustments in the valuation rates for newer vessels and those purchased up to 10 years ago. But we felt that the Depreciation Schedule wrongly over-valued older vessels and sailboats. DOR denied a petition on that front filed by RBAW, Northwest Marine Trade Association (NMTA), and the rest of our coalition members. However, DOR is about to embark on another rulemaking for a 2022 update of the Schedule. Many of you will hear more from Paul Sorenson and Brian Winningham, the firm’s principals, as “Rulemaking 23801” gets underway later in May.
- **Relationship-building with Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** We scheduled a meeting with the leadership of DNR’s Aquatics Division during April and had a productive one-hour meeting with Division Director Alex Smith and others on her team as the month drew to a close. We talked extensively about the need to use Derelict Vessel Removal Program funds (*expanded significantly through **HB 1700** passed by the 2022 Legislature*) for cleanups and removals on non-public lands. Thanks especially to Board Member Jordan Glidden of Elliott Bay Marina for contributing important background information and photos that helped reinforce our point and drive the discussion!

- **Laying out RBAW’s concerns over any potential removal of Lower Snake River Dams:** Kudos to all who participated in a focus group session on April 26 with two representatives of Ross Strategic, the firm that is reaching out to a variety of stakeholders on behalf of Governor Jay Inslee and U.S. Senator Patty Murray. The two staffers from the firm – Alec Ege and Ken Ghalambor – heard an earful from our group about the negative impacts that dam removal would lead to in terms of recreational boating, sailing, energy and transportation costs, and much more. Cal Coie, Doug Larsen, Loyd Walker, and Wayne Gilham did us proud!
- **Clean Vessel Act funding for mobile pump-out services:** During April, both at our Board Meeting and after that, we had discussions with Katie Wixom, who runs Pumpout Seattle. While Katie feels she has a pretty good handle on addressing mobile pump-out needs in Lake Union and on Lake Washington, she is also open to ways to augment the Clean Vessel Act funding that passes through to our state from the federal government. We intend to meet with Washington State Parks this spring to explore the idea of state capital funding for mobile pump-outs, particularly as time wears on and Department of Ecology looks at future enforcement of the Puget Sound No Discharge Zone (NDZ). More to come on this front!
- **Applying for some of the 2022 Operating Budget funding (\$300,000) to help minimize or eliminate conflicts on Lake Union between vessels and seaplanes:** At the tail end of April, we talked with both Kenmore Air and the leadership of the state’s Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), which will be administering the \$300,000 (*\$290,000 after a deduction of grant administration costs*). RCO kick-started a “Letter of Intent” (LOI) process in late April, and RBAW was working on an “on-shore” education/safety/awareness proposal as the month ended.
- **A quick update on Lakebay Marina:** DNR has spent much of early 2022 getting boats moved out of Lakebay and trash cleaned up within the marina site. RBAW and RBAW Marine Parks Conservancy President Bob Wise and I are working on a planning process and public outreach timeline with DNR staff (*Michal Rechner, Hannah Blackstock, Brittany Poirson*) that will help crystallize a renovation proposal for the marina. One question, for example, involves what to do with the historic building at Lakebay that sits atop rotting piers. Stay tuned as we work over the next several months and prepare for a major DNR/RBAW Marine Parks Conservancy application for Boating Facilities Program funds in November 2022!