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May 24th, 2010

Honorable Mayor McGilton and members of the City Council,

We live at the lower end of 149th Place which drains surface water from approximately 16 square blocks of Seahurst. It is collected in catch basins and then piped down to the beach and discharged adjacent to Eagle Landing Park. This park, as we all know, was set aside by the city to preserve the wildlife and natural vegetation of a very significant section of our shoreline.

The catch basins and interconnects were re-worked by the City a number of years ago. Although there is a structure on the beach to absorb the impact of the descending water, and dispersal pipes to pass it to the beach, to our knowledge no oil/water separator or any other filtering device was included in the design and construction.

All this was brought to mind by an article in last Wednesday's Seattle Times, co-authored by David Dicks, executive director of the Puget Sound Partnership, and entitled Puget Sound's Slow Oil Spill (attached). In it the authors state that, "75 percent of the toxic chemicals entering the Sound are carried by storm water runoff." They also point to our rain "which washes our homes, driveways, roads and parking lots, picks up oil from car leaks, toxins, pesticides, fertilizers, and bacteria from pet waste..." and so on.

Questions we have for the City are;

1. How many other locations along the Burien shoreline divert surface water runoff directly into Puget Sound or into creeks that flow into the Sound?
2. What protections are provided on each of them to prevent or reduce the discharge of oil and other toxic materials into the Sound?
3. If toxic materials are not being separated from these outfalls now, what plans does the City have to make future improvements to do so?
4. If upgrades and maintenance are required, what sources of funding can the City call upon?

As residents of the shoreline we are willing to continue to do our part in protecting our environment and only ask that a suitably proportional amount of attention be given within the SMP to this important issue of surface water management and protection of the marine environment.

Sincerely,



CFTR: 06/07/10

Puget Sound's slow oil spill

BY KEVIN RANKER AND DAVID DICKS
Special to The Times

As the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history unfolds in the Gulf of Mexico, it's tempting to rest comfortably on our success avoiding a similar calamity here in Puget Sound.

Our success, so far, is not the result of good luck. The state has vigorously worked to prevent oil spills, providing a rapid-response system, stringent oversight of oil companies, and a tugboat dedicated to rescuing distressed ships before they crash and spill hazardous cargoes.

The bad news is, even though its glistening waters look pristine, Puget Sound is in a crisis most of us don't see: a slow-moving spill of millions of gallons of petroleum and chemicals carried by stormwater.

Our famed Northwest rain, which washes our homes, driveways, roads and parking lots, picks up oil from car leaks, toxins, pesticides, fertilizers and bacteria from pet waste and livestock.

This toxic wash water flows down ditches and storm drains into our streams, rivers and, eventually, into Puget Sound. Scientists estimate that 75 percent of the toxic chemicals entering the Sound are carried by stormwater runoff.

The days are past when we could point to a pipe coming from a factory as the source of our problems. The problem now comes from our own backyards and neighborhoods — roughly 140,000 pounds of toxic chemicals each day.

The Gulf of Mexico oil spill is the equivalent of an environmental stroke. Our own personal oil spill is the equivalent of an environmental cancer slowly eating away at the health of our precious Puget Sound.

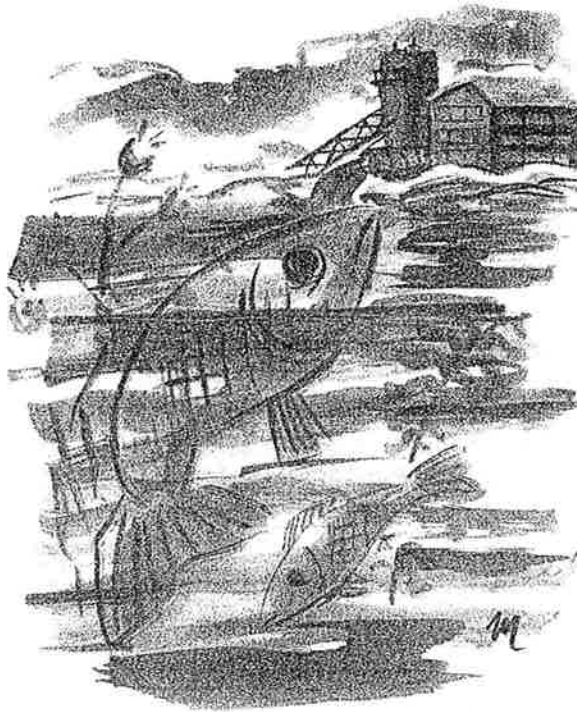
Our oil spill doesn't produce 24-hour news headlines or dramatic images of oil-soaked wildlife. Instead, it produces the slow and chronic destruction of one of our nation's most valuable ecological resources.

As a result, we have 21 species listed as threatened or endangered, more than 500 Puget Sound rivers, streams and lakes that exceed water-quality standards, and dozens of beaches closed due to pollution.

The time to attack this problem is now.

The Puget Sound Partnership has provided a game plan, an Action Agenda for Puget Sound. Through a coordinated, regional approach that challenges each of us to make small but important changes in how we live, work and use the land, we can drive this problem into remission.

The Agenda has already gone a long way to align government action. Fixing this problem means retrofitting municipal drainage systems. It means different



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development standards. It means a fundamentally different approach to managing our water.

Our local communities cannot be expected to bear this burden alone. This year in Olympia, while significant steps were taken, much was left unresolved. We must find a way to fund these critical investments.

Cleaning up and protecting Puget Sound will take time, money and commitment. The current recession may reduce funding in the short term, but it will not diminish our determination or the urgency of our task.

Progress is being made, but this is just a beginning. Puget Sound is too important to us and to our children.

We can be the generation that perpetuated the problem or we can be the generation that solved the problem. The choice is up to us.

Sen. Kevin Ranker, D-San Juan, left, represents the 40th Legislative District in the state Senate, is a senior fellow at The Ocean Foundation and a senior adviser for the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative. David Dicks is the executive director of Puget Sound Partnership.

