

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, August 11, 2026.

Melody Sky Weaver, the City of Port Townsend's Community Services Director, has been appointed by Washington Secretary of State Steve Hobbs to serve as the 31st Washington State Librarian. Sky Weaver started as Library Director for the City of Port Townsend in 2015, and in 2025 became the City's first Community Services Director, overseeing a new integrated department that brought Library, Parks and Facilities, and Arts and Culture under one banner. Sky Weaver's last day in the office will be August 28; she begins her term as Washington State Librarian on October 1.

If you need to travel north or south on Highway 101 today, plan to allow extra time: a semi truck has rolled over on the highway near Milepost 299, approximately one mile north of the Mount Walker Pass area. Though no one was injured, the truck is leaking fuel, and recovery of a vehicle this size will require significant time, equipment, and coordination. Several agencies are on hand to deal with the problem, and traffic delays, temporary stops, and potentially extended closures may be necessary during the recovery operation.

Wildfire season continues to blaze in Washington State. Fires have burned over 700,000 acres in Washington this year, destroying more than 871 homes. Local fire departments are sending personnel to help: Brinnon firefighters Henry Brebberman and Ben Bruner are back from the Skyo Fire, but Brinnon's Lieutenant Jacob Ellis and firefighter Luke Miller of Quilcene Fire Rescue have now deployed to the Backbone Fire, once again working with the Western Washington Type 3 Incident Management Team. After some much-needed rest following his return from the Skyo Fire, Firefighter Ben Bruner will also be joining them at the Backbone Fire.

In addition, three East Jefferson Fire Rescue firefighters and Brush 6 have joined fire personnel fighting the Little Giant Fire. EJFR has also deployed a member to staff the Finance Division for the 140,000 acre Sinlahekin Fire near Tonasket in Okanogan County.

In related news, Governor Ferguson signed an emergency proclamation Monday to temporarily suspend some state laws in order to fast-track the recovery process for those affected by the fires. Now, regardless of income, people in the affected regions who lost their home and do not have insurance can apply for the state Individual Assistance Program, which can help with home repairs and temporary housing. The proclamation also bars eviction orders in the covered jurisdictions for the next two weeks.

Other services available include expanded cash assistance, housing protections, and help with recovering personal identification documents. A full list of available assistance, including for individuals, businesses and healthcare providers, can be found in this link to [the governor's emergency proclamation](#).

WSDOT has announced the proposed closure date for State Route 116 between Rhody Drive and Chimacum Road/Irondale Road. Beginning at 7am Monday, August 24, SR 116 will close to all traffic around the clock between Shotwell Place and Chimacum Creek Drive. The highway will remain closed through the end of

October. Travelers will be able to access the other side of the closure using Rhody Drive, Chimacum Road, and Irondale Road. Signs will lead them around the closure. The closure will allow contractor crews to remove and replace a culvert beneath the highway at Chimacum Creek.

Once the culvert is removed, crews will install a large box culvert. This new structure will remove the barrier to fish. Workers will also restore stream habitat to enhance fish migration. The work is part of WSDOT's ongoing efforts to improve fish passage and foster healthy waterways by removing barriers under its highways. In addition to WSDOT's ongoing work to correct statewide barriers, a 2013 federal court injunction requires the state to correct culverts that create barriers for salmon and steelhead to improve passage within the injunction area in western Washington.

And finally, the intersection of 19th and Sheridan is closed for paving today as part of the Discovery Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Improvements Project. Detours will provide marked routes around the intersection, with message boards, signs, and flaggers to help direct traffic.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker; thank you for listening.