



The Merganser



A Word From Your Riverkeeper

Jerry White, Jr.

2019 has been another busy year of protecting your waters from toxic pollution, and 2020 will bring some very important decision points in this struggle. As many of you know, the Washington State water quality standard for toxics has been challenged by industry and their allies. This standard was put in place by the EPA to protect public health from toxins that build up in fish. Now, this public safety protection is in jeopardy of being rolled back. This year, we traveled to Seattle and stood with numerous tribal governments, NGOs and citizens to say do not weaken these protections from toxic pollution. We also published a [guest opinion in the *Spokesman-Review*](#) urging that the current standard stay in place.

Additionally, a new policy called "variances" threatens to give dischargers a "pass to pollute" by weakening the existing toxic pollution limits in our river. A variance would give legal exemptions from meeting the established water quality standards, which limit toxic pollution in your Spokane River. 2020 will see this fight heat up, so stay tuned and rest assured, the Spokane Riverkeeper will be at the forefront of fighting for a clean and healthy river!

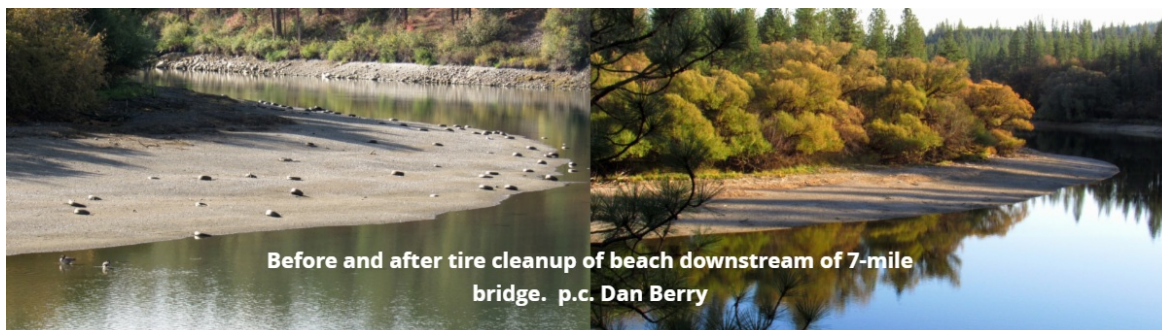
Spoken River 2019 - It's a Wrap!

Thank you Spokane! Your support at our annual benefit, Spoken River, was an incredible endorsement of our work to protect your river, and and rousing

support for your river. We exceeded last year's fundraising by over \$12,000 and just as importantly recognized essential community partners. We awarded the 2019 **River Hero** award to **DR Michel and the Upper Columbia United Tribes**. DR is director of the Upper Columbia United Tribes and we were so thrilled to honor DR and UCUT for their visionary work on the reintroduction of salmon in our Basin and the entire Upper Columbia.

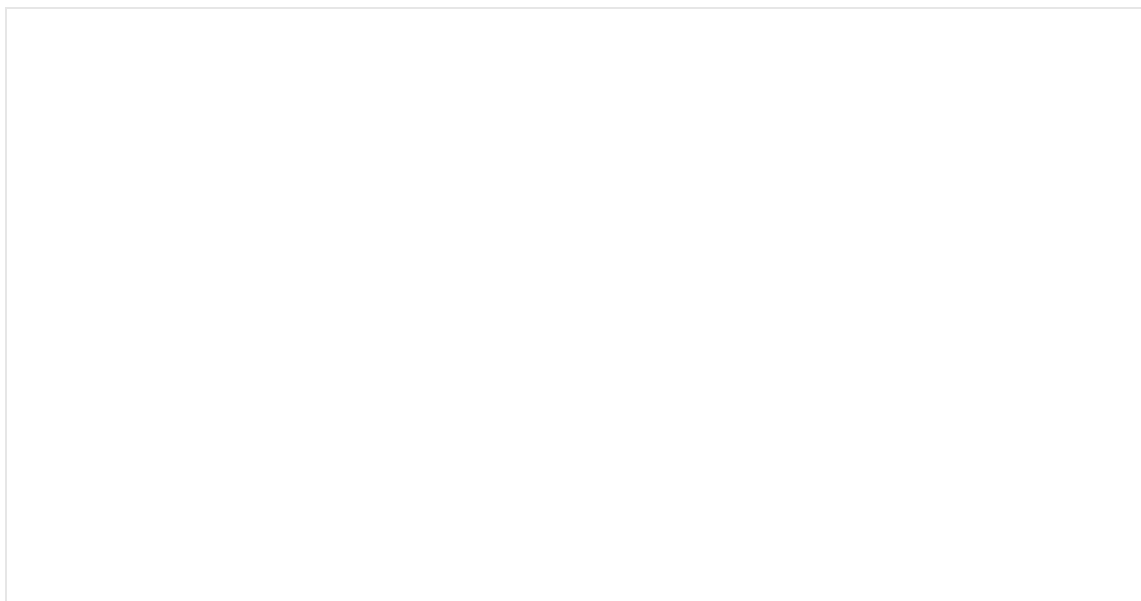


Summer Litter Wrap-up



Our river cleanup program continues to grow beyond our wildest dreams. This year we led or supported **45 cleanups**, with **711 volunteers** collecting **18,250 pounds of trash!** Thank you all who participated and volunteered their time to clean the Spokane River and Hangman Creek. If your group didn't get a chance to participate, please contact us for a slot starting in March 2020! If you'd like to see more photos of the massive tire cleanup pictured above, check out [our facebook post](#).

We also piloted a homeless outreach program this summer as part of our cleanup work -- intern Josh Crowe has the write-up below:





RIVERKEEPER HOMELESS OUTREACH SUMMER 2019 - Spokane...

Figure 4. Collecting the garbage from a camp along the river. A homeless camper bagged the trash, which we then removed via our boat. Conclusions As a first-year pilot this program should be considered a success.

[Read more](#)

www.spokaneriverkeeper.org

Thank you to our amazing 2019 interns!

A huge thank you to our spring interns, Maya Newman (pictured, left), Josh Crowe (center), Anna Belinski (right), and Guilianna Pendleton for their work on science, river cleanup and homeless issues, Water Quality Variances, and water conservation policy, respectively. In many cases, interns receive credits through their universities, and all receive an education about the Spokane Riverkeeper!



Farmers and Water Quality

We have said it before, the solution to solving land-use impacts to water lies, in many ways, in the hands of farmers. This producer and his family's commitment to agriculture, their ethics around the

land and water, their commitment to their way of life, and their willingness to share and listen to others, provides real hope for our region's waterways. At Spokane Riverkeeper, we are committed to listening and learning about agriculture and working for clean water through this effort. We are engaged in conversations with those farmers who care deeply, and are willing to have a real dialogue about the place where water and agriculture meet.



Drips and Drops

- Stay tuned for training and sign-ups for this year's Citizen Science study with Spokane Falls Trout Unlimited.
- Our summer 2018 **Jillian Howell** was hired by Sound Waters as the **Pamlico-Tar Riverkeeper** in North Carolina! Go Jillian!
- We continue our partnership with the **Salish School of Spokane**, working towards a water quality sampling program this winter.
- Outreach Coordinator **Lee First**, riverkeeper extraordinaire, left us in June to start the **Twin Harbors Waterkeeper**, protecting the waters of the Chehalis River and Grays Harbor.
- The 2020 **Wild and Scenic Film Festival** is slated for April 30, 2020. More details to follow!
- All three Spokane Riverkeeper staff attended the **Nimiipuu River Rendezvous** in September, supporting the removal of the four lower Snake River dams for the benefit of recreation, salmon, and the environment.

And Finally...Giving Tuesday is Tomorrow!

GIVING TUESDAY



Giving Tuesday starts tomorrow at 5:00 am! The earliest gifts will be matched, so give early and double your impact!

Giving Tuesday: Give Early to Double Your Gift!

Normally, we ask you to make your donations on our website, which is always a great thing for you to do. But for Giving Tuesday, we're hoping you'll head on over to [our Facebook Fundraiser page](#) bright and early! The first \$7m in gifts worldwide on Facebook will be matched starting at **5:00 am tomorrow**, first-come, first-served. So why not set that alarm, make yourself a giant cup of coffee, and do the right thing for your river! Be sure to share your gift so your friends will give, too!

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The Spokane Riverkeeper is a proud member of the International Waterkeeper Alliance and a program of the Center for Justice.



CENTER FOR JUSTICE



