

# Washington Seaplane Pilots Association

*"Nothing like having friends in high places!"*

*June 2019*

**Port Angeles – June 22, 2019**

**Priest Lake – July 12-14, 2019**

**Fall Splash – September 7, 2019**

**BCFPA/WSPA Joint Event September 21-22**

Hello Everyone,

Nothing like having friends in high places! Not only having close friends flying on your wing like my friend Richard here a few years ago, but also in the relationships that we make along the way. We've had a wonderful relationship with other associations as well as legislators to keep our waters open to seaplanes. Did you see the exciting news I sent out May 20<sup>th</sup>?

Speaking of high places, Jamie Madonna a partner in the insurance business has accepted our offer to join the board. We welcome Jamie Madonna who brings a wealth of experience to the table. He's offered a piece for us this month concerning your insurance rates.

A lot of our friends from high places are going to meet again at Priest Lake. Jack Jacobson tells us all about the details of our gathering next month.

I also have to throw in another blurb on safety, hopefully to keep you in high places . . . Just what you wanted right.

## AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS)

What happened May 20<sup>th</sup> has been 13 years in the making. I actually have to update the history page after getting bunch of information from Walter Windus. As many of you know and everyone should be well aware of is that WA actually has laws on the books that go something like this . . . all watercraft coming into WA must be inspected and/or decontaminated before launching in WA waters. Those laws have been on the books for a few years now and NO, seaplanes are NOT exempt. Your seaplane can actually be impounded if an inspection can't be performed! Other than that they've really not known what to do with us and didn't have the staff to deal with it. So, they've been busy working on different ideas over the years, some of those ideas, as we've seen actually included a ban on seaplanes. Yes, I did say that.

What's exciting is that we have been working with the different "Water Managers" to approve our very own Seaplane Inspection and Decontamination program. As of May 20<sup>th</sup> we received approval to do this ourselves in the 4 northwestern states of WA, ID, OR, and MT. While many of you have reviewed the video that's been widely available on our website as well as the SPA website, there were some changes that needed to be made to get the approval. This also applies to the test and the certificate that you printed when you were done. SPA said they will be updating their website in the very near future to link to the new training.

What does the mean to you? You have to again if you've not done it through [www.SeaplaneAIStraining.com](http://www.SeaplaneAIStraining.com). It's really short and sweet, set aside 30 minutes, you shouldn't need anymore. What's really pretty funny is that we can track the tests and it's interesting to see how many try to take the exam without watching the video. Some people have had to take the test 3 or 4 times to get 80%. My son is a pilot, not a seaplane pilot either, but he took the 13 minutes to watch the video and then take the 10 question course. He got 100% the first time. When you're done you may think that the questions were really simple and repetitive, but WDFW and the other water managers really want a few simple things to sink in. Remember, RTFQ!

This past week I went to Spokane for the Columbia River Basin Team meeting. There were about 60 "water managers" there. The Indian tribes, Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Agriculture, and Fish and Wildlife folks from many of the western states including B.C.. Yes, BC is about to get into the game as well. The purpose of my attendance was that Eric Anderson from WDFW was going to present our new training to the group. Those of us that represented the 4 states that have approved the training were expecting to get a bunch of kick back on the program, but it was extremely well received. How well received? I'm glad you asked! Remember the Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker sign. (Red stop sign with the boat on the launch ramp!) Pacific States Marine Fisheries is working to get us our own stop sign logo that will have a seaplane on it!

Now it's up to you. We need everyone to comply! The enforcement people are anxious to come out and meet and greet all their new "Seaplane Friends" - Yes, friends is correct, you see we are the only watercraft group to get this kind of approval anywhere. We are the only non state or federal agency to have this kind of approval. NOBODY else can inspect and approve their own craft! And, if we don't mess it up we'll be removing a HUGE burden from the inspection personnel.

So Please, if you see another Seaplaner out there make sure to ask him/her if they've done the training. If we don't, we'll lose this wonderful opportunity and possibly the privilege of enjoying a lot, if not most of the water in the west. Yes, it's that important.

Bruce Hinds  
VP WSPA

## **WHY DOES MY INSURANCE COST SO MUCH?**

Aviation Insurance Rates are on the rise!

For the first time in the better part of 10-15 years, the aviation insurance market is seeing pressure that is driving the rates and therefore the premiums up. Large catastrophic losses such as the California wildfires have cost insurers and reinsurers (insurance carriers that insure the aviation insurers) \$130 billion in 2017. Most reinsurers provide reinsurance to many industries, aviation included. In addition, in the last 9 years, the insurance carriers have seen 5 of those years where the losses paid out have exceeded the premiums collected.

What complicates the environment even further is that one domestic US insurer, Berkley Aviation, pulled out of the aviation market entirely and six Lloyd's of London re-insurers opted out of providing capacity to the aviation insurance marketplace, straining the financial backing available to the remaining US underwriters.

At this point, most reinsurance treaties have been signed and rates have increased an average of 10-15%. Those same reinsurers have been clear that the insurance carriers they insure need to see 15-25% returns. In order to accomplish profitability, the insurers will need to increase their rates and underwriting due diligence. Pre-2019 the insurers were trying to win accounts by lowering premiums, increasing coverages or a combination of both. In addition, insurers were more willing to overlook recurrent training and some pilot requirements. Like ninja loans in the mortgage industry, those renewals are now gone. Not every sub industry in aviation will see similar rate increases but all will experience a certain level.

Those pilots that have a history with an insurer and have a good loss experience will likely fair better than those with a pattern of shopping the market every year for the cheapest rates. If you find yourself searching for a new carrier or are transitioning to a new make/model aircraft, you will likely find it more difficult than it has been in the past to secure coverage and you should be prepared to

pay an average of 20% more than you would for the same risk a year ago. Regardless of your situation, an insurance market such as this requires pre-planning more lead time.

All that being said, the premium increase, while not preferred, will return the overall market to a sustainable financial state and create stability within the aviation insurance industry. You never want to have to call upon your insurer but if you do, you want to know they will be able to cover your loss and stay in business.

Fly safe!

Jamie Madonna, Principal and Aviation Practice Leader  
AHT Insurance

## **PRIEST LAKE 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Priest Lake Splash-in July 12-14, 2019**



Idaho's Crown Jewel, Priest Lake is once again the venue for our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual splash-in. Located in the Idaho panhandle and approximately 20 miles long, Priest Lake is 2,438 feet above MSL. The lake is the perfect combination of pristine waters and beautiful beaches nestled in the Selkirk Mountains; a year around playground for the Inland Empire, Priest Lake offers a variety of activities for both summer and winter. Whether you are flying, fishing, boating or just sun bathing this lake is a special place for everyone that visits.

Our splash-in attracts a variety of aircraft including Grumman Goose and Mallards, Beavers, 185's, Super Cubs, Murphy Moose, Republic Seabee, Kodiak and Lakes. A sight to behold when they are lined up on the tarmac at our venue D-28, Tanglefoot Seaplane Base. Our program for the weekend includes meals on site (Everett Mellish and his famous wood fired pizza oven), and a hosted reception and dinner Saturday evening. We have been fortunate to have excellent speakers this past three years including famed aeronautical engineer Burt Rutan and local historic aircraft rebuilder, Addison Pemberton. This year will be no exception as John

Phillips a NASA astronaut with some 200 days in space will be addressing us Saturday evening after dinner.

Along with the WSPA, Aerocet has agreed to sponsor the event, which will include a free t-shirt. Our vendor notified us this week that they need additional time to manufacture. So if you want a t-shirt you must sign up at the link below by **Friday June 14<sup>th</sup>**. [Sign UP HERE!](#)

We look forward to seeing all of you at the event. Remember to read the procedural tips in the event registration on the WSPA website and think “density altitude” when flying in to the lake.

Safe travels, Jack Jacobson

## SAFETY

When we say “Wheels up for Water” this is Not what we’re talking about!



(No it's not a video, so don't be clicking on the arrow - I just stole the sad photo off the internet)

Burke Mees wrote a wonderful feature article for SPA's *Water Flying Magazine* in the March/April issue. I know a lot has been written on the subject of writing your own checklists and how to use them, but this is very well done and includes some great information including a sidebar called *NASA and Checklist Human Factors*. If you've not seen it you must find a copy and read what he has to say.

One point I don't feel is covered well enough, maybe because it can never be covered well enough until it never happens again is what obviously happened in the picture above. It's happened twice in the last two weeks that I know of. While it looks like a landing check list may have been missed or done improperly, duh . . . what else may have gone wrong?

Did the pilot put the wheels down before landing, or did the pilot not put them up after takeoff? Most of us have talked about the many ways of using the landing checklist. Some

people prefer to have different colored checklists for the different surfaces, some use a GUMP check, some use their landing check 3 times. We're human, distractions happen, we may not fly a pattern for landing on water, there's a lot to look for and heck, it's just plain exciting. Something Burke suggests is verifying the wheels are up on a Cruise Check. That's a good move, do you have a Cruise check list? Have you ever missed it? What if you don't cruise? What are the chances you never put it up in the first place?

It's a fairly well know fact that a seaplane landing on any other surface than an "improved surface" is most probably better off with the wheels up! Yup, if it's not a runway or a nice road, you may be better off with the wheels up. So, my question is, why wait until Cruise flight? What if the engine quits after takeoff? What if you don't get to cruise? I really don't use a Cruise Check because I just don't get there much. I'm up and down, I may fly one altitude until I'm out from under part of Bravo airspace then up higher and step climb. Do each of those require a new cruise check? Nothing really changes much other than power and mixture so I'm much better off doing it after takeoff with other configuration changes.

Not to belabor this, but why not just put your wheels up after every take off? Multi Engine pilots put the gear up as soon as they get a positive rate of climb and that's a great habit to get into. Most engine failures happen upon the first power reduction. I don't have a cruise check, but I do have an After Take off Check. Call it what you like, but have one that you will use.

Last point on this is NO EXCUSES - "I'm staying in the pattern" . . . "It's just a short flight to another airport" . . . whatever! If you've ever heard the expression *a good approach makes a good landing*. It's true. Even if you are staying in the pattern to do touch and goes . . . cycle that gear and get yourself in the habit of putting it up. Practicing touch and goes should have the check lists as part of the procedure, all the check lists!

I'm done . . . see you on the water.  
Bruce Hinds

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### June 22<sup>nd</sup> - Port Angeles Aviation Day

While this is not a seaplane event per se, it is a pretty big event for them and they have worked real hard to get approval for big changes to their Seaplane Base. We'll have a couple of amphibians at the airport to talk up the plan.

Kevin Franklin has been working closely with the port planners for the major improvement plan. Did you know they had a SPB? Right now it's just a little float down at the marina that was real tricky to get into and out of with room for one, maybe two friendly floatplanes. Part of Kevin's lost and forgotten SPB project, this will become a major asset for Port Angeles. The plan is to have a large dedicated float, at the east end of the town on Hollywood Beach which is protected in a cove by Port Angeles City Pier and docks. They even have plans to include fuel and access to customs. Also, on the beach in this nice little cove is the Red Lion Hotel.

For this event, Dan Gase from the port will provide transportation for you from the beach if you'd like to play the tides. It appears that the mid day low tide will be about 1400 hours. Check your charts, if you arrive earlier, your floats will be high and dry until sometime later when it will float again and give you time to go visit us at the airport. Kevin said he'd love to coordinate a group to go play on the beach, but if he's the only one he'll just go to the current float over at the marina on the west side.

## July 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> - Priest Lake Idaho

See the write up above . . .

## September 7<sup>th</sup> - Lake Cushman

We're going back the weekend after Labor Day; we may be there the whole weekend or just all day on Saturday. We'll be working on details this week at the board meeting. Here's another opportunity to help out if you'd like. Let us know.

Let's bring back the end of summer event that we've enjoyed for so many years.

## September-21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> WSPA/BC Floatplane Assoc Joint Splash-Out

WSPA and BCFA have a goal to increase interaction amongst members. Notwithstanding the border between us we share all of the same challenges and opportunities.

We will be kicking this effort off with a splash out in September to Phantom Lake, BC. Phantom is approx. 15nm NW of Squamish. Phantom Lake (3100' msl and 10,000 feet long) is a popular destination for floatplanes. There is a convenient sandy beach with nearby primitive camping. BCFA seasonally positions a canoe at the camp site.

Nearby float accessible lakes include East



Falk Lake and Kato Lake. These latter lakes, being higher and shorter, are a bit more challenging and suitable for higher performance aircraft.

The general plan for the weekend is as follows;

Saturday, September 21

- Late morning/early afternoon arrival at Phantom Lake
- Camp Set Up
- 1800 dinner (BYOF&B)
- Evening presentation/discussion by BCFA's Mike Thompson on alpine lake flying

Sunday, September 22

- After breakfast optional exploration of nearby lakes for those interested
- Afternoon break camp and depart

### **Customs Clearance**

Multiple options for amphib: Straight floats recommendation is Bedwell Harbor (CAB3), Victoria Airport (Patricia Bay CAP5) or Nanaimo Harbor (CAC8). If unfamiliar with the border crossing process please contact Don Goodman.

### **Frequencies**

Mike Thompson provided the following:

CTAF at Phantom will be: 123.2

Other useful frequencies en-route;

- 118.4 for Vancouver Harbour
- 123.2 for Burrard inlet and Howe sound
- 126.7 for enroute position reporting
- 122.8 for Squamish airport
- 123.5 for Sechelt airport

### **Route**

Recommended approach via Salmon Inlet or Howe Sound. Be very mindful of CYVR and CYYJ airspace and the busy traffic zone between Vancouver and Victoria/Nanaimo.

WSPA Contact – Don Goodman,  
donaldjg56@gmail.com, 360-303-7076  
BCFA Contact – Mike Thompson,  
[mike@thompsonfoundry.com](mailto:mike@thompsonfoundry.com), 604-813-1863

Photos are courtesy of Mike Thompson.  
WOW!!





## SEAPLANE BOATER REGULATION CARDS

Carry this in your plane in case you need to explain the rules to local law enforcement. WSPA will be happy to supply you with cards.



### Safety Card

Although the mandatory boater education law is specific to operation of vessels under state laws, Seaplanes are specifically exempted from the definition of a vessel per RCW 79A.60.010 Definitions: (29) "Vessel" includes every description of watercraft on the water, other than a seaplane  
-- Hoyle E Hodges, WA. State Parks, Marine Law Enforcement Coordinator

### Safety Equipment

A Seaplane is considered a vessel when on the water( USCG), however Seaplanes are exempted from the safety equipment that the USCG requires of boaters by 33 CFR 175.1(e).

*"Seaplane pilots are expected to know and adhere to both the U.S. Coast Guard's (USCG) Navigation Rules, International-Inland, and 14 CFR Section 91.115, Right-of-Way Rules; Water Operations."*

## FACEBOOK AND EVENT HELP ALWAYS APPRECIATED

WSPA is seeking help with Face Book, and event management. Please consider giving back to the seaplane community. Besides, we have some fun with this stuff.

Contact: [admin@washingtonseaplanepilots.org](mailto:admin@washingtonseaplanepilots.org)

## BOARD MEMBERS

President	Stephen Ratzlaff	(206) 250-1625
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For general questions contact: [admin@washingtonseaplanepilots.org](mailto:admin@washingtonseaplanepilots.org)

## FOR SALE

### **SEAPLANE LIFT PURCHASED AND ASSEMBLED IN 2015**

- RGC 7,000 LB Aluminum Boat lift converted to support a platform
- Two Wireless Remotes
- Custom platform with wood
- Deepwater legs [adjustable for a wide range of depths]
- Upgrades include edge guard and 4x pop-up cleats
- Located on SW side of Mercer Island
- New owner will need to take care of moving it to its new home via Truck, Floats, or Barge
- Contact [nevek89@gmail.com](mailto:nevek89@gmail.com)

