



RECREATIONAL BOATING ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON

The voice of Northwest boating

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Recreational Boating Association of Washington Purchases Historic Lakebay Marina to Preserve as Marine State Park

[SEATTLE, Dec. 12, 2019] – The Recreational Boating Association of Washington ([RBAW](#)) and its 501(c)(3), the RBAW Marine Parks Conservancy, today announced that it has entered into a purchase-and-sale agreement for the historic Lakebay Marina on the Key Peninsula in Pierce County, with the goal of preserving it in perpetuity as a Marine State Park.

The Lakebay Marina, placed on the Pierce County Register of Historic Places in February 2019, has a heritage dating back 135 years. In recent years the marina has faced a variety of regulatory challenges. RBAW feared that the property could be sold for private use and lost to the public forever, so the organization stepped in and began conversations earlier this year about purchasing the property. Fundraising began in earnest earlier this month to raise the \$1.25M for the purchase.

To date, \$275,000 has been raised, with \$250,000 coming from the Pierce County 2020-21 Biennial Budget, thanks to the efforts and leadership of Councilmember Derek Young. RBAW intends to raise the remainder of the funds from the boating community and other governmental and recreation-oriented organizations. The Association is working with 26th District lawmakers on a 2020 Supplemental Capital Budget request.

“Lakebay Marina is an important part of the Key Peninsula’s community history and economic future,” said Councilmember Young, District 7. “I have no doubt the purchase of the Lakebay Marina will facilitate public access to boating and recreation activities throughout the South Sound.”

The sale is scheduled to close in September 2020, at which time, pending approval, the RBAW Conservancy would like to donate the property to Washington State Parks and Recreation for a Marine State Park. The RBAW Conservancy also intends to raise additional funds for needed pier and property upgrades.

RBAW is a membership organization funded by more than 10,000 individual boaters and more than 50 supporting boating clubs. It has a history of foresight, planning, and generosity. One of its initial acts as an Association back in the 1950s was to purchase land on Sucia Island in the San Juans before a developer could turn the island into vacation properties. RBAW then donated it to the State as a marine park. Today uninhabited Sucia is one of the jewels of the State Parks system which is the largest state-managed mooring system in the nation, with more than 40 marine parks and more than 8,500 feet of public moorage space.

“In addition to being an important part of Pierce County’s history, generations of Pierce County residents and boaters from across the region have enjoyed Lakebay Marina,” said Bob Wise, President, RBAW. “We have an opportunity to preserve a facility for generations to come and to create a public asset that will be a major recreational, boating, and tourism draw for the entire South Sound. Keeping a marina like this in the public domain forever would be a great honor.”

Organizations or individuals interested in learning more on how to donate to the purchase of Lakebay Marina should contact Bob Wise at lakebay@rbaw.org

History of Lakebay Marina.

The building which houses the current marina and restaurant began in 1928 as an egg and poultry co-op that once had 370 members, shipped some 150 cases of eggs a week to destinations as far away as the East Coast and served as a social gathering place for residents of the Key Peninsula. The egg and poultry warehouse closed in 1958 and was later converted to a marina. The original pier adjoining the marina, built in 1884, was owned by Carl Lorenz. Lorenz built the area’s first sawmill in the late 1800s and organized a fleet of steamships that would come to be known as the ‘Mosquito Fleet’ to people and supplies between stops on the peninsula and across the Sound. The engine from Lorenz’s flagship steamboat, The Tyrus, now powers the Virginia V, the last example of an operational steamer from the fleet.

About RBAW

RBAW acts as the voice for nearly 240,000 registered recreational boaters in the State of Washington. RBAW officers, board and committees are all staffed by boating volunteers, nominated and elected by its members. RBAW’s main focus is State boating issues and it has a professional lobbyist in Olympia, who makes sure the collective voice of boaters is heard by state lawmakers. www.rbaw.org

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