

Executive Director's Greetings

Dear friends and colleagues,

I have had the pleasure of serving as your Executive Director for six months, working to strengthen our organization to better serve community. We have aligned to become a more cohesive group, utilizing the strengths and talents of our staff, leadership team coalition, board members, and you, our beloved community.

Historically, we have worked to elevate the voice of impacted community regarding the Superfund cleanup and we will continue to do this by making sure those most affected are present at the next phase of the Remedial Design (full river cleanup). We are in a critical phase to fortify our Agenda by adhering to community goals and priorities, and we are evolving to address the disproportionate burdens that impact our Duwamish Valley. To do this, we have adopted a new Mission statement that better represents the work that we do.

Our new mission statement: *DRCC elevates the voice of those impacted by the Duwamish River pollution and other environmental injustices to advocate for a clean, healthy, and equitable environment for people and wildlife. We promote place-keeping and prioritize community capacity and empowerment.*

We know the Duwamish River Valley community is resilient and we will continue to support community-driven efforts by committing our programming to serve this purpose. As the City, County and Port deliver on long-due promises to the Valley, we stand with community to keep them accountable. We see the importance of authentic involvement with our community members, especially those who are not usually at the table, including youth, immigrant and refugee communities. We believe these communities should be defining their own future and solutions to thrive in place.

Please join us to be part of this new Vision: *An empowered Duwamish Valley Community thriving in a healthy and just environment.* Join our new journey and be part of our organization through our meetings, living room forums, boat tours, and one-to-one conversations.

I look forward to working together for justice and equity to mobilize resources for the Duwamish Valley as we build collective power to make our community, our cultures, and our ecosystem thrive. Together we will continue our unique and powerful legacy.

We are always looking for community input, do not hesitate to contact me or my staff. We would love to hear from you! Thank you, Paulina@duwamishcleanup.org



Executive Director and community member Paulina Lopez



AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEWS!

DRCC continues to support the Duwamish Valley Affordable Housing Coalition, which has had a busy year. As with countless communities all over the US, the Duwamish Valley is feeling the pressure of rapidly rising housing costs, lack of affordable and adequate housing, and displacement. The Housing Coalition is seeking ways to prevent displacement and to develop or maintain affordable housing for our neighbors. DRCC supports the belief that action must be taken to allow those community members most at risk of displacement (people of color, low-income, immigrants and refugees, and families with children) to thrive in place. Environmental justice organizations are deeply cognizant of the dangers of "green/environmental gentrification", in which the push for accessible cities has been co-opted, both intentionally and unintentionally, by high-end real estate developers at the expense of low-income residents. DRCC's mission describes a River that is healthy for ALL.

In the past 12 months the Coalition has worked hard to develop a relationship with the City in hopes of pursuing a partnership. They have met many times with Council members and other policymakers to possibly engage in a few different potential property purchases in South Park, which were not realized. The Coalition is currently working on identifying existing properties to make/keep them affordable, and land purchases to build affordable housing. There are many, many options available to the Housing Coalition and they are working hard to lock in a pathway that suits the needs of the community. Find more information on the Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/DVAffordableHousing/> and look out for their next community input meeting or contact Robin@duwamishcleanup.org

What is happening with the River Cleanup?

DRCC has been making sure our community is prepared for the next phase of the cleanup: remedial design in the southernmost two miles of the Lower Duwamish Superfund Site, called the Upper Reach. The remedial design determines exactly where and how cleanup technologies such as dredging, capping, enhanced natural recovery, and monitored natural recovery will be used and details construction requirements, with drawings, contract specifications, and various planning documents. The Environmental Protection Agency has convened a Roundtable and will be meeting at key points during the remedial design stage. The Roundtable includes parties responsible for the design and cleanup, as well as state and federal agencies, affected businesses, and others. It provides a means for the affected community and local agencies to work together on mitigating the impacts of the cleanup on the affected community. This way, community members will have the opportunity to play an active role in the remedial design stage.

The Roundtable's purposes are to:

- Seek creative solutions to mitigate Lower Duwamish Waterway (LDW) cleanup construction impacts (e.g. traffic, noise, light, impacts on Tribal activities, air quality, water quality, waterfront business operations, fishing, recreation, and quality of life)
- Provide recommendations to the EPA, as well as other agencies and organizations, to develop a successful cleanup design and implementation
- Act as an inclusive, neutral, and transparent forum for input from all stakeholders - Tribes, residents, businesses, industries, labor groups, neighborhood groups, government agencies, waterway users, fishers, and others
- Act as a means of providing good-faith communications, understanding, and information on topics related to the Superfund cleanup/
- Identify opportunities for potential ways to benefit the neighborhoods and communities affected by the cleanup, within the parameters of the Superfund site cleanup.
- Strive to allow all stakeholders and agencies to operate under the same set of facts.

DRCC/TAG has a seat at the Roundtable; in this seat they represent the community's interests. Please contact our Superfund Manager for more details: James Rasmussen james@duwamishcleanup.org

Some new findings discussed at the Roundtable

The Roundtable held its second meeting on May 29. DRCC hosted pre- and post-Roundtable meetings in multiple languages to inform the community and gather feedback on the agenda.

As we move forward, DRCC/TAG will make sure information to be discussed at the Roundtable will be presented in a way the community can understand. We will keep informing community on the process and gather recommendations to bring to EPA. We will continue working with EPA, Ecology, technical advisors and other partners to make accurate information available in multiple languages.

To support these processes, we have made the following recommendations to EPA:
Add a seat for impacted communities in the Duwamish Valley to ensure that they are represented.

- Compensate community representatives for their time.
- Ensure that the steering committee includes a good balance of community and responsible parties.
- Always provide interpretation
- Provide agendas at least one month in advance as opposed to one week in advance.

At the May meeting, EPA informed Roundtable members about recent scientific assessments that show that Benzo (a) Pyrene (BaP) is less carcinogenic than previously thought.

What is Benzo(a)pyrene? Benzo(a)pyrene (BaP) is one of a group of cancer-causing (carcinogenic) polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAH). cPAHs are produced during the incomplete combustion of organic materials (for example, coal, oil, wood, and gas). cPAHs attach to soils and sediment and can build up in some organisms. BaP and other cPAHs are targeted for cleanup in the Lower Duwamish Waterway (LDW), since they pose risks to human health. The risks associated with BaP are used to estimate the risks associated with other cPAHs to understand cPAHs as a whole. EPA is considering changes to the cPAH cleanup levels for sediments in the river, because the cancer risks meet EPA goals at higher sediment cPAH levels. The Roundtable members recommended EPA use of a **public comment process** before finalizing any change to cPAH cleanup levels. EPA will develop a schedule for proposing the change in an Explanation of Significant Differences.

DRCC is reviewing available scientific information to develop a position on this topic.



Reporting to the community about the Roundtable

Duwamish Valley Youth Corps Program

Our youth have been busy this year! In the past 12 months we have engaged more than 200 youth in the Duwamish Valley. We are very grateful to create spaces where our youths' skills and strengths are trained, developed and supported, while providing them with leadership on environmental justice issues. Thanks to our program they have been part of important conversations on climate justice, community planning, urban design, public spaces, trash reduction, stewardship and more. We look forward to their ongoing growth and opportunities as they lead the way through new challenges.



Some of last year's activities included:

- Co-designing and painting a beautiful mural on the corner of 8th and Cloverdale with local artist Angelina Villalobos, to inspire pride and care on a wall that was often covered in gang tags.
- Facilitating the 4th annual Environmental Justice Youth Forum in which about 300 community members learned about the Duwamish Valley Action plan and discussed environmental justice and community priorities. The Forum was well attended by Mayor Durkan, Chief Police Carmen Best and other government officials who share our vision of youth empowerment and involvement. The Youth gave away more than 100 trees that day!
- Ongoing maintenance of neighborhood rain gardens, which helps slow and clean storm water before it enters the Duwamish River.
- Designing and painting a massive mural in the Duwamish Waterway Park which tells the history of the Duwamish Valley. Coast Salish artist Roger Fernandes led many history and design workshops to produce the most pivotal ideas.
- Working for some months with the University of Washington on a "moss study", in which moss samples are taken from yards, moss is tested for particulates and other markers of pollution, and then findings are imposed on a grid map of the Duwamish Valley for data on air quality.
- Successfully upholding a contract with Seattle City Light to perform maintenance on a pole yard on the Duwamish River.
- 35+ youth have been placed in paid summer internships ranging from the Port of Seattle to Seattle Police Department.
- Partnering with Zero Waste WA: our Youth developed and produced videos about pollution and waste control. They created amazing messages calling on the community to be better at caring for the environment.
- Working with DIRT Corps on stewardship in our local parks.
- For the first time this year, our Youth led the Duwamish Alive event in conjunction with the Port of Seattle where Youth were teaching adults how to care for our River!
- Partnering with Metro King County and Latino NW Communication to help develop stories and videos instructing community about the use and benefits of public transportation.

Since last September, DVYC has served over 200 local youth, engaging them with respect and high expectations to grow and improve themselves.

Thank you so much to all our partners who look for ways to partner with our youth!

Interested in joining? Contact our Youth Coordinator Carmen Martinez at carmen@duwamishcleanup.org.

How to Report Environmental Concerns to Dept. of Ecology

Call (425) 649-7000 if it's an urgent situation (like an oil spill) or if you just want to talk to a real person. Our phones are staffed around the clock! After hours, you may be asked to leave a message, but someone will call you back shortly. **Email NWROERTS@ecy.wa.gov**. Emails will be reviewed during office hours. This is a great way to send us photos. **Use the Department of Ecology online form:** http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/spills/forms/nerets_online.html. This will help you make sure you include all the important information.

DRCC Re-launching the Duwamish Valley Clean Air Program

The Duwamish Valley is constantly exposed to pollution sources from industries, automobiles, trucks, and other sources. In the [Cumulative Health Impacts Analysis](#) (CHIA) published by DRCC/TAG and Just Health Action, Beacon Hill, Georgetown, and South Park (zip code 98108) had the highest ranking for air pollution compared to other neighborhoods in Seattle. The environmental exposures identified include the highest citywide air concentration of diesel particulates and benzene. In addition, the Duwamish Valley contains the most contaminated waste sites located within Seattle neighborhoods as well as numerous Toxic Release Inventory sites

In 2014, DRCC/TAG launched the Clean Air project with funding support from EPA's Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Agreement. In a growing partnership that comprised ten organizations, we made considerable progress towards understanding air pollution in the Duwamish Valley and acting to reduce residents' exposure to air pollution. We started this project with three specific goals to (1) Compile existing information on the sources of diesel and other air pollution in the Duwamish Valley, (2) Identify and fill data gaps with new monitoring and mapping efforts, and (3) Take action to reduce exposure to air pollutants and the frequency and severity of asthma among residents. In 2019 we decided to relaunch this Program in order to

- Reduce air pollution (indoor and outdoor)
- Find interested partners/collaborators
- Find funding
- Build community capacity
- Use methods for measuring success

We are currently maintaining one part of the larger program; this is the Healthy Home Assessments program. For this program, we partner with American Lung Association (ALA) and the City's Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) to hire community members and train them to conduct Healthy Home Assessments, in which they advise community members on ways to improve indoor air quality by reducing dependence on harmful chemicals. This work can help reduce asthma. DRCC is working on making our partnership much larger and more resourceful. We will be working with our new partners the ongoing need for continued action, areas of expertise and potential areas of collaboration and paths forward. We plan to re-convene in Fall of 2019. Do you want to be involved? Please contact us at contact@duwamishcleanup.org.



Organizational meeting about air quality

Advisory Council Members

The Duwamish Tribe | IM-A-PAL Foundation | Environmental Coalition of South Seattle | Georgetown Community Council | People for Puget Sound (a program of WEC) | Puget Soundkeeper | South Park Neighborhood Association | Waste Action Project

