



October 3, 2024

Kenmore Air Receives \$146,000 Grant to Remove Tire Fendering from Seaplane Docks in Salmon Migratory Waters

Kenmore, Wash.— Kenmore Air, with support from the Puyallup Tribe and Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, has been awarded a \$146,000 grant from the state of Washington to remove tire fendering from its seaplane docks at their Kenmore, Lake Union and Roche Harbor terminals, located in critical salmon migratory waterways. This effort marks a significant step in protecting salmon populations from harmful pollutants released by tires, notably the compound 6PPD, which poses a deadly threat to coho salmon and other fish species.

Tires have long been a preferred fendering material for seaplane operators due to their ability to extend below the waterline and protect the tails of floatplanes. However, recent research has shown that 6PPD, a chemical used in tire manufacturing since the 1950s to prevent tire degradation, interacts with ozone to form 6PPD-quinone (6PPD-q). This compound is released into nearby waterways during storm events and can kill coho salmon within hours of exposure.

“We are honored to play a role in helping protect Washington’s iconic salmon,” said David Gudgel, President of Kenmore Air. “When we became aware of the dangers posed by 6PPD-q, we knew we needed to find a solution. Thanks to the Puyallup Tribe and Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, we were able to identify a safer alternative that will be installed at our Kenmore, Lake Union and Roche Harbor float docks by late spring 2025. This grant will allow us to implement the project, protecting more waterways and wildlife. We appreciate Senator Stanford's leadership on moving this proviso forward during the last legislative session.”

Kenmore Air’s efforts began at its Ruston Way seaplane float in Tacoma, where the Puyallup Tribe installed an innovative rubber D-fendering system as an alternative to tires. The rubber material used does not contain 6PPD, making it a safer option for salmon and other aquatic life. After testing the system during the 2023 operating season, Kenmore Air sought state funding to replace tire fendering across all of its docks located in salmon migratory waters.

“The Puyallup Tribe is deeply invested in the health of our salmon and the ecosystems that support them,” said the Puyallup Tribal Council. “By partnering with Kenmore Air and the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, we’re proud to contribute to a solution that will help restore balance in our waters and protect this vital resource for future generations. We thank our partners for their hard work.”

Emily Gonzalez, Director of Law and Policy at Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, also highlighted the environmental significance of this project: “The removal of tire fendering from seaplane docks is an important step in reducing pollution from 6PPD-q and supports ongoing work on [tire removal](#) from waterways that support vulnerable ecosystems. This grant demonstrates how industry and environmental groups can come together to make real progress in protecting Puget Sound’s fragile ecosystems and endangered species like salmon.”

About Kenmore Air

Founded in 1946, Kenmore Air is the largest seaplane airline in the United States, flying over 90,000 passengers annually in its iconic de Havilland Beaver and Otter aircraft. In addition to providing scheduled flights to over 45 water-based destinations throughout the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, Kenmore Air's wheeled aircraft operation, Kenmore Air Express, offers scheduled service between Boeing Field and the San Juans aboard modern Cessna Caravan aircraft. In addition to their scheduled service, Kenmore Air and Kenmore Air Express offer charter service to many other destinations. For more information, please visit KenmoreAir.com.

About the Puyallup Tribe of Indians

The Puyallup People have lived along the shores of what is now called Puget Sound since time immemorial. The Puyallup Tribe of Indians is a sovereign nation of more than 5,000 members and one of the largest employers in Pierce County. It serves its members and community with generosity and is committed to building a sustainable way of life for future generations. Since 2012, it has donated more than \$18 million to local nonprofit organizations through its Charity Trust Board, with Tribal Council donating millions more from its own funding. [Learn more about the Puyallup Tribe](#).

About Puget Soundkeeper Alliance

Puget Soundkeeper's mission is to protect and enhance the waters of Puget Sound for the health and restoration of our aquatic ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. Our vision is for a Puget Sound teeming with diverse marine life and providing safe opportunities for swimming, fishing, recreation and sustainable economic activity. We seek a Sound that supports the lifeways and traditional cultural practices of indigenous peoples; provides all communities with a clean, healthy place to live and work; and once again is home to an abundance of salmon and orca. Puget Soundkeeper, celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year, launched the [Salmon and Legacy Tires](#) project earlier this year after receiving a Department of Ecology Public Participation Grant. Over just 4 days this summer, 90 volunteers removed over 7000 pounds of tires and legacy debris from the upper Duwamish River. For more information, please visit Pugetsoundkeeper.org.