



## Last chance for Congress to save local newspapers with key bill

An average of two papers a week are failing in the U.S. Thousands of cities and counties have little to no local coverage informing voters, binding communities and holding officials accountable.

Soaring newsprint prices are worsening the local journalism crisis.

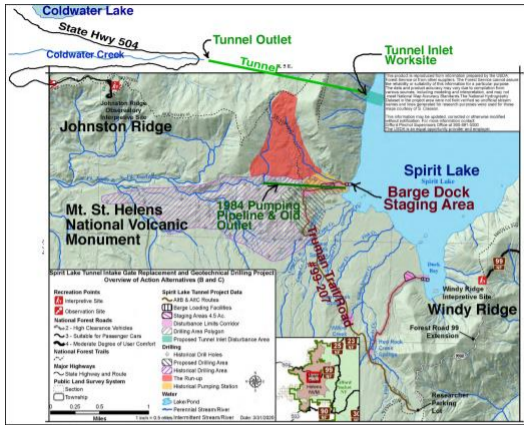
Now Congress has what may be the last chance to stop this hemorrhaging, save thousands of jobs and provide a lifeline to publishers like the Shopper.

A bipartisan proposal for temporary tax credits, to outlets hiring or retaining local journalists, could be included in the budget reconciliation measure the Senate is negotiating.

The potentially \$1 trillion spending package could easily accommodate a local-news tax credit, amounting to less than 0.2% of the total. With the package shrinking, the opportunity to include the tax credit remains but is much slimmer.

Excerpted from [The Yakima Herald-Republic](#), by Brier Dudley, Jul 15, 2022

Info: [shpr.fyi/savenewspapers](https://shpr.fyi/savenewspapers)



To expand map, open:

Info: [shpr.fyi/spiritlakeproject](https://shpr.fyi/spiritlakeproject)

## A regrettable but necessary repair

When Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980, it left a debris “dam” blocking Spirit Lake’s outflow. With the lake naturally continuing to fill higher, it was critically necessary to prevent it from overtopping this dam, which would probably have caused rapid erosion of a deep channel through the soft new volcanic material, allowing much of the lake’s huge volume of water to flow quickly downstream likely causing massive flooding like the flooding that occurred in 1980.

In 1984, a pumping station was built at the old lake outlet location at the North Fork Toutle River to pump enough water over the dam to stop the lake level from raising.

In 1985, a longer-lived solution was constructed: an eleven-foot diameter 1.6-mile-long tunnel was dug from the lake through Harry’s Ridge with inlet three-quarters mile north along the lake’s edge from the old outlet, and with the tunnel outlet into Coldwater Creek a quarter mile east from the current culvert on Highway 504 past Coldwater Lake and before Johnston Ridge Observatory.

Construction worker and equipment access to Spirit Lake for these projects was made, not via rebuilding of the old Spirit Lake Highway up the N. Fork Toutle River, but by constructing a five-mile-long road from 4,000 ft. elevation Windy Ridge Interpretive Amphitheater on Mt. St. Helens 50 miles south of Randle. The five-mile road leads down to Spirit Lake at its old outlet at the N. Fork Toutle River. The new road is named FR#99/Truman Trail #207 Extension. Barges have then carried equipment and workers from there three quarters of a mile north along Spirit Lake’s shoreline to the tunnel inlet where the work has been done.

The tunnel has required repairs several times since it was built.

In recent years, the floor of the tunnel has raised, been “heaved” by the earth, five feet higher leaving the tunnel now only six instead of eleven feet high, raising the level of the lake and reducing the tunnel’s flow capacity. These changes must be repaired.

Improvements are now being made to Forest Road #99 Truman Trail Extension/#207 from Windy Ridge down to the 4.5-acre construction staging area at the natural lake outlet, the former site of the pumping station. The tunnel repair itself will be done next year.

This project will replace one single cast iron tunnel inlet flow gate with redundant tunnel inlet flow gates, dredge 1980s spoils piles where logs get hung up and prevent lake draw down and conduct geotechnical investigations and core drilling within the debris dam to determine safe conditions to control water levels in Spirit Lake more accurately.

The project will presumably also investigate when a new normal river channel can be created along the old Spirit Lake Outlet N. Fork Toutle River channel to return the lake finally to a natural level and open-stream outlet condition. This will eliminate the artificially impounded water volume endlessly threatening flooding downstream and end these extremely expensive and environmentally-insulting maintenance actions.

More info:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57259>.

Yes, the Shopper is in trouble, too!

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**H.R.3940 - Local Journalism Sustainability Act**

Use [National Write Your Congressman](#) [nwc.com](https://nwc.com); sign up with them and then you’ll be able to contact congress easily in the future without entering your address, etc., every time. Or:

**Congresswoman Jaime Herrera-Beutler:** <https://jhb.house.gov/contact/>

**Senator Maria Cantwell:** <https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email/form>

**Senator Patty Murray:** <https://www.murray.senate.gov/write-to-patty/>

**Read this week’s Bible Readings on page 6** which includes Jesus teaching the man who had stored much wealth, **“You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?”** Luke 12:20 NIV

Dave Bunting, July 25, 2022  
Credits in links below items.  
See these columns on my blog [daverant.com](https://daverant.com)

