

the Courthouse Journal

W A C O U N T I E S . O R G

March 6, 2009

Issue No. 8
Inside the
Courthouse Journal

Budget, Finance & Taxes
Pages 3-5

Courts, Public Safety,
Law & Justice
Pages 5-6

Elections, Licensing
& Recording
Page 6

Environment, Land Use
& Resources
Pages 6-8

General Government
Pages 8-10

Transportation &
Public Works
Pages 10-11

Association News
Pages 11-12

Boards & Commissions
Page 13

Training &
Upcoming Events
Page 13

Courthouse Ramblings
Page 13

Good Things
Page 14

Attachments
Page 15

Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties

Washington Counties Scholarship Fund

It's time to get your high school seniors and undergrad children to apply for a Washington Counties Scholarship! This year five \$3,000 awards will be given.

All applications must be postmarked **no later than April 1, 2009** and are available at <http://wacounties.org/waco/>.

Update on WACO Legislative Package

by James McMahan, WACO Staff

Each year, the WACO membership produces a 'WACO Legislative Package' comprised of the highest priority legislation among each of the seven WACO affiliates. WACO staff prioritizes their time and attention during the legislative session advocating the contents of the WACO Legislative Package to the Legislature.

As of Thursday, March 5, the WACO Legislative Package stands as follows:

SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

- Implement annual revaluation of real property in all counties of Washington by 2014. **HB 1056** died in the House Finance Committee. **SB 5099** is now **SB 5368**. **SB 5368** passed the Senate and will soon be referred to a committee in the House.
- Improve ballot title information. **HB 1057** died in the House State Government Committee and **SB 5098** died in the Senate Government Operations Committee.

SAVINGS IN GOVERNMENT

- Reduce the number of spring special elections from four to two. **HB 1018** passed the House and is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee. **SB 5016** is on the Senate floor awaiting a vote of the Senate.
- Remove language requiring Auditors to send a ballot request form or official ballot to inactive voters prior to each election. **SB 5017** passed the Senate and is awaiting a hearing in the House State Government & Tribal Affairs Committee.
- Apply the restriction against unfunded mandates to local governments to non-constitutionally mandated court rules. **SB 5240** died in the Senate Judiciary Committee.
- Expand the court authority to enjoin harassing public records requests. **HB 1316** died in the House State Government Committee.

Job announcements & links to County Employment pages at:

<http://wacounties.org/>

the Courthouse Journal

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Washington Association of County Officials

(WACO) wacounties.org/waco

and the **Washington State Association of Counties**

(WSAC) wacounties.org/wsac

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. The weekly / bi-weekly deadline is noon Wednesdays. Direct inquiries and correspondence to - *The Courthouse Journal*, 206 Tenth Av SE, Olympia, WA 98501

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- Urge members of the Washington State Congressional Delegation and the United States Congress to pass **HR 5698**, the Restoring the Partnership for County Health Care Costs Act of 2008. **HJR 4000** passed the House and is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee.

BETTER GOVERNMENT

- Safeguard the Local Government Archives Records Account and repeal the authority granted in the State Capital Budget to transfer funds from the Account for support of the Washington State Heritage Center. **HB 1374** is in the House Rules Committee awaiting a "pull."
- Support the recommendations of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) to develop possible legislation and policies that will most effectively increase the amount of funding provided to law enforcement for boating safety activities, emphasize the activities related to law enforcement; and increase the overall efficiency of the Boating Safety Program (BSP). **HB 1418** is now **HB 2237**. **HB 2237** died in the House General Government Appropriations Committee. **SB 5691** is in the Senate Rules Committee awaiting a "pull."
- Amend several statutes that were not revised with the passage of **SB 5732**, Chapter 105, 2007 Laws, which allows county treasurers to receipt property taxes paid before February 15, updates an archaic statute for the use of a "stamp" and amend statutes allowing for refunds of taxes. **HB 1208** passed the House and will soon be referred to a committee in the Senate.
- Amend miscellaneous county clerk fees in order to make them consistent with the fee schedule passed by the Legislature in 2005: amend the language in the statute from "paper" to "document" to reflect court business which is transacted electronically; and, clarify statutory authority. **SB 5013** passed the Senate and is awaiting a hearing in the House Judiciary Committee.
- Limit the responsibility of county clerks in certain actions and appropriately place it with the parties to the action by amending certain statutes: 1) direct the petitioner in an action to dissolve a public utility district to give notice of hearings; and 2) require the state, rather than the clerk, to publish notice of dependencies. **HB 1003** died in the House Judiciary Committee.

REMINDER: WACO Legislative Committee

by James McMahan, WACO Staff

The WACO Legislative Committee meets every week during the legislative session. Unless otherwise announced, the Committee meets by conference call at 9:00 AM each Tuesday. All WACO members are welcome and invited to participate.

The Committee reviews recently introduced and active legislation related to any affiliate and considers requests for WACO to take a position or take action on legislation. The Committee also reviews the WACO Legislative Package and

Legislative Committee Schedules and Agendas:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

Bill Information: www.leg.wa.gov

provides guidance to the WACO staff in that effort. Each WACO affiliate, time permitting, has an opportunity to review legislative action from their perspective.

The WACO Legislative Committee conference call dial in number is 1 (866) 393-8073. The PIN is *8093393*. Please announce yourself when you arrive on the call.

Cut-Off Dates

by James McMahan, WACO Staff

Cut-off dates are very important dates for those who live in the legislative world. Cut-off dates are administrative deadlines that the Legislature imposes on itself to control the number of bills that flow through the legislative process.

There are seven cut-off dates in each legislative session. The following lists the remaining cut-off dates for the 2009 legislative session:

Thursday, March 12: Bills must pass their chamber of origin (House bills must pass the House, and Senate bills must pass the Senate); and

Monday, March 30: Bills must pass from policy committees in the opposite chamber (House bills must pass the Senate policy committee(s), and Senate bills must pass the House Policy Committees);

Monday, April 6: Bills must pass from fiscal committees in the opposite chamber (House bills must pass the Senate, Transportation, and/or Ways & Means Committee(s), and Senate bills must pass the House Finance, Transportation, Appropriations and/or Ways & Means Committee(s);

Friday, April 17: Bills must pass the opposite chamber (House bills must pass the Senate, and Senate bills must pass the House).

The 2009 Legislative Session ends on Sunday, April 26.

Bill Count

by James McMahan, WACO Staff

As of Thursday, March 5, there have been 2,785 bills introduced in the 53 days the 2009 Legislature has been in session. Of those, 1,446 are House bills and 1,339 are Senate bills.

House members are introducing bills at a rate of nearly 15 bills per Representative (there are 98 members in the House of Representatives). Senators are introducing bills at a rate of more than 27 bills per Senator (there are only 49 Senators in the Senate).

Of the 2,785 bills introduced this session, 11 have passed the Legislature.

Budget, Finance and Taxes

Property Tax Bill Update and More on Tribal Lands

by Robert Carlton, WACO Staff

A very busy week on the Hill as Bills started hitting the respective floors for votes en masse. Of note to the Assessors, Treasurers, WACO and WSAC was **SSB 5368**, the Annual Reval Bill. It has been a rather lengthy process, but Thursday, March 5 at about 5:30 P.M. it was on the Senate Floor for a vote. Passage out of the Senate was by a margin of 40 yeas, 5 nays and 4 absent or excused. This vote gives us some really good momentum to carry us over into the House for the second part of the process.

Of other interest to Assessors, are [HB 1733](#), [HB 1815](#) and [SSB 5424](#).

[HB 1733](#) can commonly be referred to as the Equine Current Use Bill. This bill would clearly establish that most equine uses would be eligible under the Current Use Statutes. The Assessors are watching this bill very closely because of the tax shift and administrative headaches that this bill will cause.

[HB 1815](#) is also problematic in that it appears to take away any income requirement prior to the application for any farm and ag current use program. Sponsor Orcutt has offered an amendment that makes it slightly less onerous and narrows the scope considerably, but still defers the income requirement.

[SSB 5424](#) is a bill that reduces the interest rate on current use removals from a compounded 84% interest in the seventh year to a simple interest. The bill also changes the requirement of two years notice of intent by the landowner to remove the land from Current Use after 10 years have elapsed from the date of initial approval. Assessors have been tacitly supporting this bill.

Thurston County and the Tribes received a court decision that will potentially and temporarily relieve some administrative strain on both parties. At issue was whether or not Thurston would seize certain personal property owned by the Great Wolf Lodge for alleged delinquent property taxes. U.S. District Benjamin Settle signed an order where the county agrees to not pursuing distraint and sale of the personal property involved pending the final court outcome. In the interim the tax and interest will continue to accrue as will penalties. Please see the full article below out of the March 4, 2009 Olympian.

County Halts Effort to Seize Part of Great Wolf Lodge

by Christian Hill, The Daily Olympian, March 04, 2009

Thurston County has agreed not to seize items from Great Wolf Lodge to pay what it alleges are delinquent property taxes owed by the owner of the hotel and indoor water park while a federal lawsuit is pending.

CTGW LLC, the lodge's owner, sued the county in U.S. District Court in Tacoma in September to stop the assessment and collection of property taxes on the structure, which was built on property in Grand Mound held in federal trust. The 39-acre trust property is not taxed.

It argues that federal law pre-empts such taxation on the building by the county. The owner is a venture between the Chehalis Indian tribe, which has the majority stake, and Great Wolf Inc., a private, nontribal corporation.

The county agreed to suspend collecting taxes assessed against the property and halt the seizure of a portion of the lodge to pay taxes it considers past due until the court makes a final determination. U.S. District Judge Benjamin Settle signed an order Monday.

A lawyer for the tribe did not return a phone call seeking comment Tuesday.

The order does not bar Thurston County Treasurer Robin Hunt from issuing property-tax statements and accepting voluntary payments. It also does not stop the accrual of penalties or interest on the taxes alleged to be past due.

The lodge's owners owe \$115,139.66, including interest and penalties, for taxes assessed in 2007 and payable in 2008.

Thurston County Assessor Patricia Costello said her office decided against billing for property taxes payable this year because of the pending litigation. The lodge falls under a state law that bars the collection of taxes assessed against high-value property involved in a legal proceeding until a court makes a final decision. The resort opened a year ago this month.

"Because this is in court, it was best for us to not bill them until a determination is made," she said.

The value of the personal property is on the tax rolls, and the county would be eligible to receive back taxes if it prevails in the lawsuit, she said.

The lodge owner would have owed more than \$800,000 in taxes this year based on the assessed value of the building, Costello said.

The treasurer's office has the authority to distraint — or seize and sell off personal property to pay delinquent taxes — immediately after they become past due. It notified the lodge's owner it intended to distraint a portion of the resort last summer. A sale had not been scheduled, Hunt said.

The distraint process is different from foreclosure. Foreclosure involves real property and only occurs after taxes are past due for three years.

Hunt testified she was not certain how she'd determine which portion of the resort would have been sold, according to her Feb. 10 deposition filed with the court. She said she'd look "at what is contained inside the building that is most easily removed."

Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice

Clerks' Fee Bill

ESB 5013, the clerks' fee bill, is waiting for a hearing in House Judiciary. County Clerks are urged to contact Representative Jamie Pedersen, chair of the committee, and request a hearing on the bill.

Engrossed Substitute 5013 is the result of a compromise reached in the Senate Judiciary Committee. It does the following:

- 1) Changes "paper" to "document" to allow electronic filing.
- 2) Sets research and ex-parte at a flat \$30, restricting an additional charge for additional hours.
- 3) Increase the charge for the first page only of a faxed document from \$2 to \$5.
- 4) Moves the charge for collection of court-ordered legal financial obligations to the fee schedule. This is not new, it is authorized currently in RCW 9.94A.780.
- 5) Sets a fee of \$100 for the filing of a creditor's claim. Filed claims require the process to counter-claims and cross-claims (similar fee for similar service).
- 6) Waives the filing fee for an abstract of judgment by another county clerk for the collection of unpaid court-ordered financial obligations of offenders.

Now available...

The Integrated Physical Security Handbook

by Don Philpott, Senior Editor, Homeland Defense Journal & Shuki Einstein, International Expert on Mission Critical Facilities Design and Engineering

ASIS Book Review: The 36,000 member American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) awarded this book its highest rating -- 5*Stars. In their review the ASIS expert reviewer stated:..."It is in fact an excellent resource for physical security professionals, and one they can exploit to varying depths depending on their own expertise and the nature and scope of their own security program. The book builds on known information and introduces novel concepts in logical order with reader-friendly definitions and examples, well-researched facts, plausible scenarios, and recommendations for expanding knowledge and mitigating risks. **This is an excellent textbook for novice security managers and a great desk reference for industry veterans.**"

About the Book: The Integrated Physical Security Handbook is a manual for commercial and government building and facility security managers who are responsible for developing their security plans based on estimated risks and threats --

natural or terrorist. It sets out how to manage change and how to conduct crucial threat and risk assessments, the basis for all integrated physical security planning.

Then, using checklists and standard practices, it provides a hands-on, how-to guide that leads you in a user-friendly way through all the steps and processes needed to evaluate, design and implement an effective integrated physical security system.

This book was produced under the leadership of the Homeland Defense Journal and written by a team of nationally recognized A&E and security experts.

The web site www.physicalsecurityhandbook.com provides purchasers of the book an on-line library of over 300 pages of additional reference materials. The cost to purchase the book and gain access to the web site ranges from \$99 (government rate) to \$149 (corporate rate).

A PDF excerpt from the book is available from our web site at www.physicalsecurityhandbook.com. Includes full Table of Contents, Introduction and part of Chapter One.

To examine the handbook, reference center content and background on the authors, please visit our website at : www.physicalsecurityhandbook.com.

Note: Online ordering is available at www.physicalsecurityhandbook.com (We also accept government and corporate Purchase Orders.)

Elections, Licensing & Recordings

Local Government Archives Bill

County officials are urged to contact all their representatives and urge that **HB 1374** be pulled from Rules and voted out of the House. **HB 1374**, the local government archives account bill, remains stubbornly in House Rules. The bill would reverse a \$4 million expenditure from the account to the Heritage Center Account and repeal all future spending authority given to the Center in the 2008 Supplemental Capital Budget. A \$2.00 surcharge on county auditors' recordings already provides 62% of the expected revenue to build the Center in which local government would use 26% of the space. Costs to the proposed Heritage Center continue to rise and will now require the sale of approximately \$40 million in bonds to meet those costs. Originally, the Governor's proposed budget assumed \$28 million would meet the shortfall.

Environment, Land Use & Resources

Salmon Habitat Conference

A Decade of Salmon Recovery

When: Wednesday and Thursday, April 15 - 16, 2009

Where: [Little Creek Conference Center](#), Shelton

Cost: \$80 for both days. *Conference cost is the same if attending one day only.*

Welcome!

This year's conference has expanded to offer you two full days of learning opportunities from experts in salmon recovery. Through project presentations, panels, and technical workshops, you will have a chance to listen to specialists and meet with your peers, hear their stories, and share information on how to build higher quality salmon projects. A variety of exhibitors will provide information about salmon recovery work. You also can bring your questions to help desks on

permitting, billing, and cultural resources issues. Networking opportunities will be available throughout the day, including a dinner and networking event Wednesday evening.

A Decade of Salmon Recovery

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board has been funding successful projects since 1999. This decade of salmon recovery marks a time to pause and reflect upon the past ten years of recovery work, to consider what has worked, what is not working, and how to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of projects. Out of this reflection, the conference also will offer an opportunity to envision the next decade and beyond of salmon recovery work.

Presentations on Wednesday, April 15

New this year! Each session will include a 30-40 minute moderated discussion at the end of the session. The goal of moderated discussions is to offer participants an opportunity to learn from not only the experiences of the project presenters, but from the experiences of all participants in the room. We recognize that presenters and participants alike will bring a lot of knowledge to this conference. Sparked by the presentations, each moderated discussion will offer a forum for participants to share their experiences, describe their own project issues, identify common problems and brainstorm solutions with everyone in the room. Participants will select sessions out of the following six tracks:

- Marine Habitat Restoration
- Fish Passage and Screening
- In-stream Habitat
- Riparian and Upland Restoration
- Floodplain Reconnection
- Habitat Protection

Presentations on Thursday, April 16

Participants will select sessions from the following list:

- Juvenile Chinook Utilization in Puget Sound
- Salmonid Utilization Survey Results
- Science as a Guide in Salmon Recovery Planning and Implementation
- Got Match? Building a Sustainable Restoration Economy
- Nutrient Enhancement: Another Tool for Salmon Recovery
- Making Small-Scale, Community Based Restoration Work
- Hatchery Reform: An Overview of Process, Principles, Methods and Observations
- Effectiveness of Different In-stream Techniques
- Appraising Habitat Lands for Conservation: Understanding the Appraisal Process
- Long-Term Property Management
- Monitoring for Salmon Recovery: Approaches, Tools, and Integration

Building Better Projects – Salmon Habitat Conference is sponsored by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Since 2000, the board has awarded more than \$358 million in grants for 1,116 projects. This is the second formal conference where project sponsors have the opportunity to come together and learn from each other's successes and challenges.

Open Invitation to Participate in Science & Policy Survey, Meeting

Dear Local Official,

If you are interested in the interface between science and policy, please consider taking this brief 6-question survey to gauge interest in a topic thread at the upcoming Pacific Estuarine Research Society (PERS) meeting, which will take place in Bellingham in early April. The survey should only take a couple of minutes (or less) to complete. You do not have to participate in the PERS meeting in order to respond, but we encourage you to consider attending if it is relevant to your work.

While the focus of most PERS meetings is the presentation of estuary- related research findings, we propose a special session on the topic of integrating science into policy. Session objectives are to: 1) help scientists, resource managers, planners, and policy-makers understand the challenges associated with integrating science into policy; and 2) seek ways to address barriers to integrating science into policy and management.

Uncertainty exists about whether science is being used effectively in natural resource management, policy and planning. Scientists are professionally constrained to serve as “neutral brokers of information,” while being asked to make recommendations for management actions to state and local officials.

Scientific information can be confusing to managers, policy-makers, and the public, who approach issues from a different perspective. Bridging the science-policy communication gap will require: improved translation of science for non-scientists, a common understanding of the scientific process and its limitations, and clearly defined roles of participants in the decision-making process.

Feel free to share the survey URL with other interested professionals. You may access the survey at: <https://catalysttools.washington.edu/webq/survey/wacoast/70318>. The survey will close at 6pm on Friday, March 6th. Learn more about PERS at: <http://www.pers-erf.org/index.html>.

General Government Issues

SB 5233 and HB 1369 Moving

Two bills to allow officials to have offices outside the county seat have both moved to the opposite house. **SB 5233**, sponsored by Senator Jerome Delvin, is in House Local Government and **HB 1369**, primed by Representative Larry Haler, is in Senate Government Operations. In several counties, the population center is in a city other than the county seat, necessitating the location of services there. The following article appeared this week in the TriCity Herald.

Ex-Judge Keeps Pushing to Move Benton County Seat

by Drew Foster, staff writer, TriCity Herald, March 4, 2009

One man's effort to move Benton County's seat from Prosser to Kennewick is likely to continue despite two bills pulsing through the state Legislature that threaten his argument.

Retired judge Fred Staples has led the charge to move Benton County's seat to Kennewick, saying the county is violating state code by doing the majority of its work from the Justice Center in Kennewick.

State code requires that several elected county officials have their offices in the county seat. Since the opening of the Justice Center in 1984, Benton County has been operating in a gray area, with several elected officials doing most of their business from the Justice Center but still keeping offices in Prosser.

About 80 percent of the county's employees work in Kennewick, which Staples argues amounts to a de facto move of the county seat.

A bill passed by the state Senate on Monday and a similar bill passed by the state House last week could make Staples' argument moot.

The bills would allow counties to operate offices outside the county seat, as long as the elected officials have another office in the county seat. That would be similar to Benton County officials working out of the Justice Center but still having an office in Prosser.

"I guess you could say it clears up ambiguity," said state Sen. Jerome Delvin, R-Richland, who introduced Senate Bill 5233.

Asked if the bills would impede his effort to move Benton County's seat, Staples scoffed.

"I don't think it's going to change anything," he said. " ... No, not one bit. In fact, it rejuvenates me."

Staples first proposed moving the county seat to Kennewick in 1984, he said, after his idea to build the justice center came to fruition. He led the effort behind a November 1984 vote on moving the county seat that failed when it didn't get the required 60 percent approval.

But the notion was resurrected several years ago when Staples began gathering signatures for a petition that would put the question of changing the county's seat before voters. He gained some momentum when the League of Women Voters of Benton and Franklin Counties supported the move.

Staples said he plans to continue collecting signatures despite the legislative efforts. But first, he said, he's filing a lawsuit against the state attorney general, among others. He said the attorney general's office is trying to invalidate petitions he gathered using signatures from voters during a 2007 election.

Even if that lawsuit gets thrown out, Staples says he should again be able to find enough signatures -- up to 25,000 -- to put the county seat move on a ballot.

County Commissioner Leo Bowman said Staples' attempts to move the county seat have "hindered" planned renovations to the county building in Prosser and the possibility of constructing a new building in Kennewick.

The Prosser building needs upgrades to its heating and ventilation systems, Bowman said, along with renovations to its courtrooms. He said the building needs to be handicap-accessible as well.

A new building in Kennewick, which likely would be near the Justice Center, would either house administrative offices such as the assessor, or would be expanded if Kennewick were to become the county seat, Bowman said.

Candidates Start Run for State Legislature

by Michelle Dupler, Herald staff writer

November is more than eight months away, but candidates already are stepping forward for two legislative seats that will be up for grabs in special elections this year.

Two more Republican candidates entered the race this week, with Pasco City Councilman Matt Watkins announcing he will run for 16th District state representative and Pat Hailey of Mesa saying she'll seek a seat in the 9th District.

Watkins is the third Republican to say he'll seek the seat held by Rep. Bill Grant, D-Walla Walla, until his death Jan. 4 from a rare form of lung cancer.

Grant's daughter, **Laura Grant-Herriot**, was appointed to the seat Friday and joined the Legislature in Olympia on Monday.

Other announced candidates are Dayton lawyer Terry Nealey and Walla Walla County Commissioner Greg Tompkins. Nealey ran against Grant in November and lost with 46 percent of the vote to 54 percent for Grant.

Watkins is a software engineer for Lockheed Martin Information Technology and has been a Pasco councilman since 2004.

"During my tenure as councilman, I have focused on regional issues, including water issues, industrial development, recreational facilities and others," Watkins said in a written statement. "I take pride in making sure I fully understand all sides of the issues to make fair, well thought out decisions that will best benefit the people that I represent."

He also is vice chairman of the Franklin County Republican Central Committee.

Watkins grew up on a farm near Eltopia and said he brings a solid understanding of the agriculture that drives the 16th District's economy.

Pat Hailey also has a farming background and now runs the farm she shared with her late husband, Rep. Steve Hailey, R-Mesa.

He died Dec. 28 from colon cancer and was replaced by Rep. Don Cox, R-Colfax. Cox held the seat for eight years before announcing his retirement in 2006. Steve Hailey was elected to succeed him and held the seat for two years.

Pat Hailey did not apply for the appointment, but said in a written statement she since has been approached by citizens and community organizations about running for the seat.

"I have been encouraged to enter this race by so many people across the district, and it had become harder and harder to turn them down," she said. "When I was in Olympia last week, many of Steve's colleagues in the House encouraged me to run and offered to endorse me. They know I can do the job."

Hailey runs daily farming and ranching activities at the farm she and her husband co-owned in Mesa.

She worked for the North Franklin School District for 10 years and was elected to the school board in 2005. She also is a Republican precinct committee officer in Franklin County.

Susan Fagan, public relations director for Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories in Pullman, also has announced plans to run for the 9th District seat, but only if Cox chooses not to run, she said.

She filed paperwork Feb. 17 with the Public Disclosure Commission.

Fagan is immediate past chairwoman of the Whitman County Republicans and a former staffer for U.S. Sens. Jim McClure, Steve Symms and Larry Craig, all Idaho Republicans.

Fagan said if elected, she'd advocate for market-based health care reform and easing regulations on businesses that she believes hamper entrepreneurship and job creation.

"Quality of life means secure jobs and opportunity for advancement," she said. "The Legislature can do so much to help Main Street by easing the state's burdensome approach to rule-making."

Transportation & Public Works

Public Invited to Comment on Draft Aviation Alternative Strategies

The public is invited to comment on Washington's [draft alternative strategies](#) (pdf 922 kb). The Aviation Planning Council, with support from the Washington State Department of Transportation, has developed these draft strategies as part of the Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS). Also available for public review is the [Aviation System Plan Summary Report](#) (pdf 4 mb), which presents the LATS key findings and policies upon which the alternative strategies are based.

The public comment period on the draft alternative strategies extends from March 4, 2009 – April 17, 2009. Please submit comments on or before April 17, 2009 to allow timely consideration of your issues and concerns by the Aviation Planning Council as it develops its final recommendations.

Alternative Strategies

The draft alternative strategies are designed to address key issues facing Washington's aviation system in the areas of capacity, stewardship, and incompatible land use. These key issues represent major long-term challenges to Washington's air transportation system and impact both commercial and general aviation users across the state. The final set of strategies will ultimately become part of the Washington Aviation System Plan.

How to Submit Comments

[This comment workbook](#) was developed to collect your feedback on the draft alternative strategies. You may type directly onto the form or print it out and write comments. You may mail, fax or e-mail using the contact information listed below or submit them in person at a regional public meeting.

Mail: WSDOT Aviation, Attn: Nisha Marvel, P.O. Box 3367, Arlington, WA 98223

E-mail: marveln@wsdot.wa.gov or Fax: (360) 651-6319

Attend a Regional Public Meeting

Learn more about the Long-Term Air Transportation Study and the alternative strategies and discuss your issues of interest at a Regional Public Meeting:

March 24, 2009 - 4 p.m. - 6 p.m., Tyee Center, 5757 Littlerock Road SW, Tumwater, WA

March 26, 2009 - 4 p.m. - 6 p.m., Ramada Inn, 8909 West Airport Drive, Spokane, WA

The Aviation Planning Council is a 10-member Council appointed by the Governor. The Council's purpose is to use LATS Phases I and II findings, and include public input, to determine:

- How best to meet commercial and general aviation capacity needs.
- Which regions of the state are in need of improvement regarding the matching of existing, or projected, airport facilities and the long-range capacity needs at airports within the region expected to reach capacity before 2030.
- Recommendations regarding the placement of future commercial or general aviation facilities to meet the need for improved aviation planning in the region.

The Aviation Planning Council will consider public comments at its next scheduled meeting on May 7 at the Museum of Flight in Seattle. This is the final meeting of the Aviation Planning Council.

The Council's final recommendations will be submitted to the Governor, Washington State Legislature, and Washington State Transportation Commission by July 1, 2009 in accordance with Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5121.

For more information, visit the LATS Web site at www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/lats.

Association News

NRCS Extends Application Period for Conservation Innovation Grants to March 20

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced the application period for 2009 Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) funding has been extended to March 20. The previous deadline to submit applications was March 2.

"Innovation always has been a hallmark of American agriculture and in keeping with President Obama's focus on science, technology and innovation, these grants will provide an opportunity for citizens to directly engage with promoting a healthy environment and a healthy economy," said Acting NRCS Chief Dave White. "We're extending the application period to make certain those interested have adequate time to submit applications."

The Conservation Innovation Grants are aimed at helping achieve and promote innovation in critical areas such as water quality, energy, climate change and pollinator habitat. NRCS administers the grant program. Grants will be awarded through a nationwide competitive process and can range up to three years in length. Up to \$20 million is available for this National competition. Applications will be accepted from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

The fiscal year 2009 NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants categories are:

- Natural Resource Concerns Category—up to \$5 million is available for proposals addressing natural resource issues such as air quality, water quality, wildlife habitat, forest management, nutrient management and other ways to address and meet Federal, State and local environmental requirements.
- Technology Category—up to \$6 million is available for proposals in new technologies that promote such areas as animal waste management, erosion control, grazing land productivity, irrigation water use, fertilizer use, energy use and carbon sequestration.
- Grant Leveraging Category—up to \$4 million is available to help leverage grant projects that enhance and protect the environment more by doing so in conjunction with other agricultural production and forest management projects.
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Category—up to \$5 million is available for proposals addressing natural resource concerns in the Chesapeake Bay watershed such as erosion and sediment control, carbon sequestration and water quality.

Project proposals must describe the geographic area and the natural resource concern or concerns being addressed. Applicants also must describe the innovative technologies or approaches which will be used. Other requirements are identified in the announcement of program funding. NRCS will provide technical oversight for each project receiving an award however; each grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully complete the project

NRCS plans to fund projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations. The grant is not a research program, but rather a tool to stimulate the adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that have been studied sufficiently to indicate a high likelihood of success and are likely candidates for eventual transfer of the technology to the public.

NRCS can match up to 50 percent of the project when at least 50 percent of the project's total cost (cash and in-kind contributions) comes from non-Federal sources. The federal contribution for a single project cannot exceed \$2 million.

Applications must be received in the NRCS National Headquarters by close of business March 20, 2009. Applications should be sent to: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Conservation Innovation Grants Program; Financial Assistance Programs Division, Room 5239-S; 1400 Independence Ave, SW; Washington, DC 20250. To view the complete announcement of program funding, go to <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/>. To apply electronically, go to <http://www.grants.gov/>.

For more information about NRCS conservation programs online, go to <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>, or visit the nearest USDA Service Center in your area. Since its inception in 1935, the NRCS conservation delivery system has advanced a unique partnership with state and local governments and private landowners delivering conservation based on specific, local conservation needs, while accommodating state and national interests.

Boards & Commissions

Governor Appoints Building Code Council Members

Congratulations to Commissioner Angie Homola, Island County, and Commissioner Bob Koch, Franklin County, recently appointed by Governor Gregoire to serve three year terms on the State Building Code Council. WSAC appreciates your interest in representing counties on this statewide rule setting council.

Training & Upcoming Events

Washington Counties – [wacounties.org/Calendar of Events](http://wacounties.org/Calendar%20of%20Events)

County Training Institute – www.countytraininginstitute.org

Local Government Performance Summit Scheduled

City and county government leaders from across the nation are meeting this April to exchange best-in-class performance management techniques that have lead to greater strategic accountability and transparency.

Join your colleagues at the [2009 City and County Performance Summit](#) in April 1-2, 2009 to learn strategies to accomplish more with reduced resources during this tough economic cycle.

Courthouse Ramblings

The *2009 Directory of Washington County Officials* was recently published and has been sent out. Please note a correction on page 12. Ferry County District 3 Commissioner **Bob Heath** is a Democrat (D).

* * * * *

Niko Knezovich, son of Spokane County Sheriff **Ozzie Knezovich**, placed second in the State Wrestling Tournament in his weight class. Niko is a student at Reardan High School. Congratulations!

* * * * *

Life-long Ellensburg resident **Hugh Merle Colwell** passed on Monday, March 2, 2009 at age 89 after a short illness. Hugh was elected four times as the Kittitas County Assessor (serving from 1976 to 1987) and served as President of the Washington State Assessors Association.

In his youth, Hugh was one of the first Kittitas County residents to earn the rank of Eagle Scout and attended the first Boy Scout National Jamboree in Washington, D.C. in 1937 where he saw President Franklin Roosevelt. Colwell served as a civilian secretary for the Army Corps ers on Umnak Island in the Aleutians during the Second World War. He went to work as an appraiser for the Kittitas County Assessor's Office in 1958. Over the years, Hugh served as Chief Appraiser and Deputy Assessor, before being elected County Assessor in 1975. Following his retirement in 1987, Hugh was recognized for outstanding service by the Washington Association of County Officials. Our sympathy goes to his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren who survive him.

A graveside service will be held on Saturday, March 14 at 12:30 p.m. A wake to celebrate Hugh's life will be held at the Ellensburg Best Western Lincoln Inn & Suites at 1:30 p.m.

Good Things

Grant County celebrates centennial!

by Cameron Probert, Herald staff writer

About 1,000 people came to the courthouse in Ephrata to celebrate Grant County's 100th birthday Tuesday.

The event was the first in a year's worth of events celebrating the county's centennial. People gathered under two tents, along C Street Northwest and on the lawn of the courthouse for the main presentation at noon.

Along with the installation of the flags, invocation and opening remarks, Connor Sears and Thomas Pheasant rang the bell in front of the United Methodist Church of Ephrata 100 times. Thomas' father Tom Pheasant timed the bell ringing. Sears is a fifth generation Grant County resident, said Bev Mayer, a centennial committee member. The Pheasants have lived in the county since 1956.



The Grant County Courthouse was decorated for use as a stage during the centennial celebration event Tuesday. Photo by Bill Stevenson/Columbia Basin Herald

"These are some long-time families," Mayer said. "That's why we thought we wanted to (use) them."

Dignitaries gave speeches on the courthouse steps about the start, transition and status of Grant County today. Grant County Commissioner Cindy Carter wanted to pay tribute to the people of the county. She said the vision of the people made the county the place it is today. "One hundred and thirty years ago, in 1879, a government official said this about our area, 'A desolation, where even the most hopeful can find nothing in its future prospects to cheer,'" she said. "Well, let me tell you what we have to cheer about. The Columbia Basin Project was the nation's largest single reclamation project with 2,300 miles of canals providing water to 550,000 acres and 6,000 farms."

She said Grant county is the top agriculture county in the state and it's a destination for vacations and for business. "Recently, we have seen unprecedented growth," she said. "One-hundred years ago our population was 8,700. Today we are nearly 85,000 ... We have a global presence, the server farms, the technology, the agricultural products, the industries that are located here in Grant County serve the world." What impressed Carter the most was the perseverance and sacrifice of people who settled in the county. "This is the greatest place in the world to live and raise a family," she said.

Former Grant County commissioner LeRoy Allison said the county has seen a lot of changes in the past 100 years. From rail travel being the quickest mode of travel to the ability to fly to any destination in the world. "What you see today is a representation of the last 100 years," he said. "From top hats and coats with tails, hoop skirts and beautiful bonnets to the current day dress ... It's all beautiful. It's beautiful because you are here." He echoed Carter saying the county's residents make the difference, from the farmers to the manufacturers.

"These are all groups of people who have a 'can do' spirit," he said. "We are living in a time of global marketplaces where opportunities are bound only by our imagination ... Please buckle up for Grant County's next 100 years."

Ephrata Mayor Chris Jacobson said if the first mayor of Ephrata could see the changes in the county since its formation, he would be amazed and impressed. "When I see pictures of Ephrata during its early days, I'm not so sure I would have wanted to be part of the county then," he said. "It seems like there were some pretty hard times." The early history laid the foundation for the county's successes during the past 100 years, he said.

The keynote speaker for the event was state Archivist Jerry Handfield, who said the county made its namesake, former President Ulysses S. Grant, proud. The county is a crossroads for the state and the country from the American Indians using the Columbia River to the creation of the data centers, he noted. "Britain, France, Russia, the United States, have all been interested in Grant County," he said.



Photo left to right: Accountant Dave Firebaugh, Auditor Bill Varney, Commissioner Richard Stevens

While some things have changed in the past 100 years, others haven't. In 1909, baseball was in the middle of scandals, the Lincoln penny was issued, censorship of films began and Wall Street was having problems. "In 1909, the people of Grant County were recovering from the panic of 1907," he said. "It all started with someone trying to corner the market on the copper market and then surprisingly banks started folding." This led to the creation of the Federal Reserve system, he said.

Handfield pointed to changes in Grant County, such as three railroads, Interstate 90, Grant County International Airport, Columbia Basin Project and data centers. "We still have baseball scandals," he said. "We still have electric cars. We're getting back to where they were in 1909. We still have problems on Wall Street." He said the county is

one of the most connected counties in the country.

"For tomorrow, we'll still have teddy bears," he said. "We'll still have baseball. We'll still have hundreds of new ideas for Grant County ... You need to be congratulated for what you have accomplished."



One morning in Ferry County...

Hay!...be a deer and meet me at the courthouse for breakfast, won't you?

Attachments

Welcome to the U.S. Communities Purchasing & Finance Agency

(U.S. Communities) website <http://www.uscommunities.org/>

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), the National League of Cities (NLC), and the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), jointly sponsor the

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Ray Burnett,
Commissioner of Purchases and Supplies
Kansas City, MO.