



Communiqué

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◆ March 2009

Cowlitz area stimulus projects forwarded for funding

The CWCOG Board, at its February meeting, approved amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that added a series of area projects to be funded by the federal economic stimulus legislation, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The projects have been sent to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for final decision by the a Local Selection Panel. The panel consists of representatives from WSDOT, Transportation Improvement Board, Association of Washington Cities, Washington Association of Counties, Washington Public Ports Association and a representative from the Tribal Councils. Once okayed by the panel, the projects listed below will become part of the statewide TIP which makes them eligible for over \$2.3 million in direct federal funding.

The CWCOG, as lead agency for the Longview-Kelso MPO area and responsible entity for the distribution of federal funds for transportation projects, worked with the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee to derive projects that would meet the act's criteria as being ready for construction. The TAC chose the following projects:

➤ **Surface Transportation Program Prioritized Projects**

<i>Cowlitz County:</i>	Westside Highway/Whittle Creek Bridge Reconstruction - \$225,000
	Hall Road Reconstruction - \$330,000
<i>City of Kelso:</i>	13 th Avenue Overlay - \$290,587
<i>City of Kalama:</i>	First Street, Phase II - \$416,250
<i>Cowlitz County:</i>	Coal Creek Road Reconstruction - \$1,056,593
<i>Total:</i>	\$2,318,430



➤ **Enhancement Program Project**

<i>City of Castle Rock</i>	Cowlitz Dike Trail Restoration - \$66,500
<i>Total:</i>	\$66,500

In addition, a group of second tier projects were selected and are waiting for possible additional funding. All projects were chosen based on their ready to go status. This means that all engineering and environmental work has been completed and the projects can be out to bid by June 30, 2009. Expect to see these projects underway later this spring and summer. Questions regarding the stimulus projects can be directed to Amy Asher or Rosemary Siipola at 577-3041.



COG Annual Meeting changed to luncheon

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

Lower Columbia College – Student Center 12:00 Noon - Cost: \$15

Speaker: Elliot Mainzer, Vice President for Corporate Strategy at BPA

Please contact COG office at 577-3041 or nharris@cwco.org to make a reservation or for more information. Thanks!

◆ Website: <http://www.cwco.org/>

◆ E-mail: cwco.org@cwco.org

COG seeking federal funds for preliminary environmental and design work on the “Scott Avenue Corridor”

The COG has applied for \$2 million in federal funds for preliminary design work on the Scott Avenue Corridor. The project is an outcome of the recently completed Woodland Transportation Infrastructure Strategic Plan. The request was submitted to our congressional elected officials as part of federal fiscal year 2010 transportation funding package. We will not know of funding approval until this fall.

The preliminary design work will further define the specific environmental issues, right of way requirements, and access management for the project. Refined construction costs will be derived and preliminary design work will focus on:

- Elevating I-5 over Scott Avenue to allow for a new east-west transportation link.
- Reconstructing Scott Avenue westerly to bridge the BNSF Railroad.
- Reconstructing Scott Avenue easterly, with intersection improvements at Old Pacific Highway and SR-503.

In addition to the above proposed design work, the City of Woodland is currently working as the lead agency with WSDOT on interim improvements for a two way left turn lane on SR 503 from Hillshire Drive to Gun Club Road. Design work will be completed this year, with construction proposed for 2010.

For further information, contact Jerry Sorrell, Assistant Project Manager at 360-577-3041 or e-mail jsorrell@cwccog.org.



First county wide Youth forum held

A countywide youth forum, held on February 10th at the Cowlitz County Expo Center, provided an opportunity for local youth to express their thoughts and opinions on six different topics. These topics included Youth Health, Future Goals, What Else to Do, Drugs and Alcohol, Violence, and Have a Voice.

Thirty three teens from schools in the region were divided into groups that were facilitated by other local youth to address the issues. Some of the questions that were asked included what is working in your schools and the community, what is not working and what are your thoughts and/or ideas that could be a solution to fixing identified problems.



This event was supported by the Cowlitz Youth Commission, Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition, Cowlitz Meth Action Team, Cowlitz County Health Department, WSU Extension 4-H, and Longview Parks and Recreation. A big thanks! goes to all of the youth and volunteers for their help in making the forum a huge success.



Another successful Meth Action Team banquet held

The Cowlitz Meth Action Team (CMAT) held its 6th Annual Banquet and silent auction in February in collaboration with the Kelso/Longview Elks Lodge. Over 80 community and agency individuals were served dinner by Kelso and R.A. Long high school students. This year's keynote speakers were Bill Moreland of the Washington State Meth Initiative and local resident, Sean Britt, with his story of recovery. Entertainment was provided by the group, *Quintessence*. The fund raising part of the evening featured a silent auction and raffle that raised \$3,000 which will support the countywide Youth Drug and Alcohol Prevention Summit to be held in March of this year.

The Meth Action Team is grateful for the support and donations from the community, area agencies and businesses for contributions to the 42 silent auction baskets. The team also thanks the Kelso/Longview Elks Lodge and the high school students who volunteered to serve dinner and clean up after the event.

If you have any questions or would like to become involved with the Cowlitz Meth Action Team, please contact Shannon Miller at (360)577-3041 or smiller@cwccog.org.



Preliminary design underway for Kelso's Talley Way Corridor Study

Kelso's consultant, David Evans and Associates (DEA), is refining the preliminary design information for the Talley Way Corridor. Recommendations will be presented to the public next month at an open house, tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 7th at Kelso City Hall.

Study tasks to be presented are:

- Provide a roadway section that is consistent with the land use and will accommodate commercial vehicles, motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
- Provide guidance on implementing the city's access management plan.
- Widen or replace the Talley Way Bridge, considering the traffic demands related to the reconstruction of the I-5/SR-432/Talley Way Interchange and anticipated commercial development.
- Determine the necessary steps to develop a stormwater management plan that considers the airport and other properties that impact the drainage along the corridor.
- Develop the project budget and schedules.
- Develop funding strategies.

The final report will provide the city with an implementation plan that may take up to 10 or 15 years to construct. Finding adequate funding sources will be the challenge.

The City of Kelso has contracted with the COG to manage the corridor study. If you have any project related questions, contact Project Manager Jerry Sorrell at jsorrell@cwco.org or 360-577-3041.



Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition receives grant

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation has granted the Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition \$5,000 to support the Teen Mentor Program in Kalama, Kelso and Longview. The grant will be used for supplies and incentives for the mentors and group activities conducted throughout the school year. The program's goal is to enhance the education and life skills of elementary children through the efforts of a high school mentor. For more information on the Teen Mentor Program, contact Brian McCrady at 577-3041 or bmccrady@cwco.org.



Airport Master Plan alternatives to be presented in April

The regional airport master plan consultants, the URS Corporation, will present an array of alternatives at a public open house which will occur in mid-April. The alternatives will address runway length and approaches, aircraft storage, vehicle parking, utilities and drainage, aviation fuel storage, security of the airport boundaries, and future property acquisition.

Staff from the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) recently met with the Kelso and Longview city councils, the Cowlitz County Commissioners and the Port of Longview to discuss the alternative concepts presented at the January 20 public open house. The consultants and CWCOG also met with the planners from Longview, Kelso and the county to discuss the importance of protecting the airport from land uses that could impact flight operations and safety.

The City of Kelso has contracted with the COG to manage the master plan update. For more information regarding the open house, the master plan update, or the state's long-range aviation planning, contact Project Manager Jerry Sorrell at jsorrell@cwco.org or 360-577-3041.



Economic Development District board meets

The Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) board met on February 28th to discuss updating the 2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The board amended its membership to include the Cowlitz Tribe and welcomed Taylor Aalvik as the Cowlitz Tribe's representative.

The board also reviewed meeting options and updated the Cowlitz and Lewis CEDS committee lists. These committees provide more in-depth review of goals and objectives, strategies, and projects for each county. The EDD board will then review, amend and adopt the updated plan in regional support for funding.

The next meeting for the board will be April 9th in Chehalis at 9:00 a.m., place to be determined. The board will select a chair and co-chair, review projects and plan amendments recommended by the strategy committees and appoint a subcommittee to review by-laws for the CLEDD. Contact Jennifer Keene at jkeene@cwco.org for more information.

Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership update

➤ *Habitat Restoration Project Proposals Now Being Accepted:*

The Estuary Partnership is soliciting lower Columbia River habitat restoration projects for funding through its Habitat Restoration Program. The Partnership's award from the Bonneville Power Administration will fund projects designed to improve salmon rearing and spawning habitats. Proposals are due by 4:00 pm, Friday, April 3, 2009. Contact Evan Haas (503.226.1565 x. 238) for more information.



➤ *New Education Supporter:*

Eileen Fisher, a woman's clothing line, has joined the Estuary Partnership as a new corporate sponsor. Their corporate giving focuses on children and the environment. The firm was excited to help the Partnership get kids outdoors in fun, educational ways. Staff are very appreciative, especially in these economic times.

➤ *Estuary Partnership State and Federal Funding Update:*

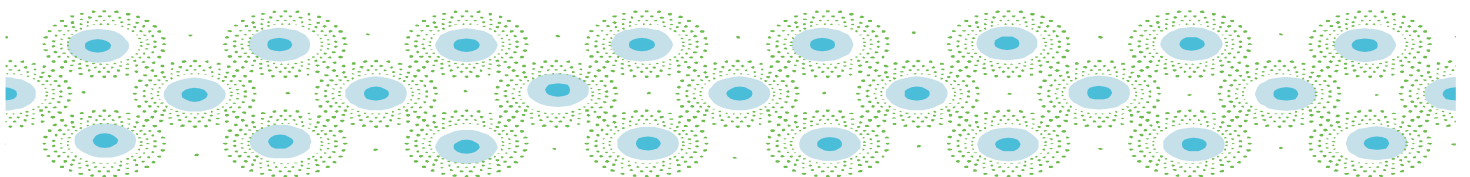
Congress is sustaining funding for the National Estuary Program. The Partnership leverages the NEP funds 15:1, and since 2000, LCREP has raised over \$21 million for the lower river estuary work. 78% of that goes out to local entities for habitat restoration and some monitoring. Since 2000, the Partnership and a large group of partners have restored over 13,000 acres of habitat. With USGS and NOAA, three years of monitoring of toxics and other pollutants has been accomplished. 13% goes to applied learning programs, serving over 94,000 students since 2000. The remaining 9% sustains the organization and all the grant writing and outreach.

State funding is tight and is expected to be the same as past years. State funds help secure the NEP funds, providing the capacity to deliver programs and leverage the habitat, monitoring and other project funds. State funds support about 50% of the education programs; the remainder is supported by private sector support.

➤ *New Habitat Restoration Coordinator Hired:*

Chris Collins joins the Estuary Partnership as Habitat Restoration Coordinator, focusing on the Pile Structure Program. Chris has extensive experience working in the lower river and Columbia Basin. He has managed large complex habitat restoration projects and the development of a mitigation bank for the Oregon Department of Transportation, authored a number of biological assessments, and provided technical support to the Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan and the NE Oregon Salmon Recovery Plan. Chris joins us from Parametrix, Inc. where he's worked as a Project Manager/Fisheries Biologist since 2003. He has a MS in Environmental Management from Duke. Chris will work with the Estuary Partnership Science Team, BPA, the US Army Corps of Engineers and other key partners. He can be reached at Collins@lcrep.org.

☐ **Contact LCREP at 503-226-1565 for more information,**



TITLE VI and ADA Notice to the Public

COG ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the American Disabilities Act of 1990 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disabilities in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, call program coordinator at (360) 577-3041.

2009 CALENDAR

Mar			
16	12:00	Cowlitz Meth Action Team	CC Department of Corrections
18	1:30p	Cowlitz <i>Housing First!</i> Coalition	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
18	4:00p	Regional Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation	CC Conference Room öBö
19	4:00p	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition ö General	Kelso Presbyterian Church
19	5:00p	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition ö Exec. Council	Kelso Presbyterian Church
25	12:00	COG Board Meeting and Annual Luncheon	LCC Student Center, Lgv.
26	1:30p	Cowlitz Area TAC Committee	CC General Meeting Room
Apr			
14	8:00a	Wahkiakum Information Forum	River Street Building, Cathlamet
15	1:30p	Cowlitz <i>Housing First!</i> Coalition	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
15	3:00p	Housing Advisory Committee	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
15	4:00p	Regional Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation	CC Conference Room öBö
16	4:00p	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition ö General	Kelso Presbyterian Church
16	5:00p	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition ö Exec. Council	Kelso Presbyterian Church
20	12:00	Cowlitz Meth Action Team	CC Department of Corrections
23	12:00	COG Board Meeting	CC General Meeting Room
23	1:30p	Cowlitz Area TAC Committee	CC General Meeting Room
May			
1	7:30a	Regional Information Forum	÷
13	2:00p	Southwest Washington RTPO ö Annual Meeting	Cowlitz PUD Building, Longview
18	12:00	Cowlitz Meth Action Team	To be announced.
20	1:30p	Cowlitz <i>Housing First!</i> Coalition	CC Department of Corrections
20	4:00p	Regional Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation	CAP Altrusa Room, Longview
21	4:00p	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition ö General	CC Conference Room öBö
21	5:00p	Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition ö Exec. Council	Kelso Presbyterian Church
28	12:00	COG Board Meeting	Kelso Presbyterian Church
28	1:30p	Cowlitz Area TAC Committee	River Street Building, Cathlamet
			CC General Meeting Room

COG Board meeting highlights

- ❖ **Amended** the 2009-2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program to add projects for Cowlitz County, Lewis County and the Washington State Department of Transportation for consideration of potential federal economic stimulus funds and for federal fiscal year 2010 appropriations;
- ❖ **Authorized** COG staff, in consultation with area public works staff, to amend Transportation Improvement Programs to include all planned projects that are considered for federal economic stimulus funds, to designate projects as ösecuredö as stimulus funds and procedures are decided, and to notify the COG board via email of projects that are approved by the state DOT panel;
- ❖ **Presented** a plaque to Dave Andrew, expressing thanks for his two years of service to the COG as Chairman;
- ❖ **Were informed** by the director of the fourth quarter budget report; that the director, on behalf of the COG board, signed the Woodland Transportation Infrastructure Strategy Plan in support of pursuing funding for improvements; and agreed to hold the COG Annual Meeting at noon on March 25 at the Lower Columbia College Student Center;
- ❖ **Heard a report** from Marcel Goulet, US Bank, about the program in which Cowlitz County is one of eight pilot communities in the U.S. participating in the U.S. Treasury Department's initiative to increase access to financial services and education for low/moderate income persons and families to improve financial literacy.

