Supreme Court Upholds Local Transit Authority to Assess Car Licensing Fees

On Thursday, February 14, 2002, the state’s transit providers received a valentine from the Washington Supreme Court. The Court said that Initiative 695 and the Legislature’s subsequent repeal of the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax did not undo the authority of transit districts to levy a special excise tax of up to .725 percent of a car’s value under RCW 35.58.273 and the duty of the Department of Licensing (DOL) to collect it once it is levied.

Writing for the majority, Justice Susan Owens said the “spare legislative history of SB 6865 (Chapter 1, Laws of 2000) does not reveal intent to repeal RCW 35.58.273.” The Court added that the administrative inconvenience to the DOL of collecting the tax does not amount to legal inconsistency between RCW 35.58.273 and SB 6865.

The Court acknowledged “awkwardness created by our decision” but proposed that “it is the legislature's job — not ours — to stem the tide of potential absurd results that might result from impartially applying the plain meaning of statutory language.” It added that “no inconsistency results from a municipality's decision to lay a tax upon itself over and above state taxes imposed by the legislature.”

It is unclear at this point whether the Legislature will attempt to repeal the transit authority’s taxing authority, which could be about $200 million annually statewide.

Awful Reality Begins to Sink In

This was the week when legislators learned that their awful situation was about to get worse. Early reviews of the revenue and caseload forecasts became the major topic of conversation. For the first time the “T” word was seriously discussed as a solution for the state’s problems. Legislators cannot find the additional savings they need without cutting basic human services or education. This is a bitter pill for members who have spent years cutting spending in other areas to improve education and maintain core human services.

At the same time, legislators are becoming more concerned about the county financial crisis. House leadership has kept a bill alive through the various deadlines to provide local option taxes for counties.

Counties face several challenges in realizing the benefit of this support. Cities continue to oppose countywide tax options for (Continued on page 2)

Washington Counties’ Scholarships Available!

County elected officials and employees who have students in their families take note!

The Washington Counties’ Scholarship Fund is offering five $1,500 awards to children of county employees who will be enrolled full-time during the 2002/2003 school year in a baccalaureate program, associate degree program or vocational/technical certification program. Applications must be postmarked no later than April 8, 2002. Complete information, applications and flyers are attached to this newsletter and are also available on the web at www.wacounties.org/waco. Call WSAC or WACO if you have any questions. Please post the flyer and copy the application as many times as you like. Most of all, encourage eligible students to apply!
those rates. Tax rates that are too high to increase trouble passing any tax increase at the consideration. Other counties will have those rates.

This week also saw the first of what will probably be a series of decisions to convert local health districts or joint county-city departments to county departments. Many counties are telling WSAC that they will not be able to replace the lost state assistance. In addition, other revenue losses will force them to make further cuts in their support for local public health. Legislators have been told by their staff that the new federal anti-terrorism funding will replace these lost funds. The latest news on these federal funds shows this will not be the case. Of the $20 million the state will receive, a significant amount is dedicated to increasing state lab capacity. Another portion needs to be spent to provide state emergency capacity and to prepare hospitals to respond to bio-terrorism. That leaves little for local public health, which will lose $24.5 million on an annual basis. For the first time in recent memory, state and local officials are looking at the statutes governing the failure of local public health systems. Those statutes call for the state’s health department to provide services and to bill the county for those services.

Assessor Priority Bill Survives

SHB 2731 revising the evaluation of tax preferences was passed from the House Finance Committee to the Rules Committee February 11. The assessors asked the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to establish a schedule and review each tax preference at least once every six years. The bill was substituted and requires business growth and relocation into the state to be additional factors to consider when tax preferences are evaluated.

A hearing was held on SHB 2731 on February 4. Scott Noble, King County Assessor and Chair of the Washington State Association of County Assessors’ (WSACA) Legislative Committee, testified in favor of the bill as did Ron Newby, Washington Economic Development Association. The testimony surrounded the fact there should be an orderly review of tax preferences. The review would provide the legislature with information on the strengths and weaknesses of individual tax incentive approaches. Some incentives might be increased, so as to encourage economic development in the state. There is no procedure for reviewing tax exemptions that have been on the books for many years. Noble testified that property tax exemptions in particular should be reviewed periodically and that a full review will not necessarily lead to the conclusion that tax incentives should be repealed. The Finance Committee wasn’t sure if a full review was necessary or possible every six years. They did not believe automatic termination of exemptions was a good idea, but that there should be a thorough evaluation of all exemptions.

In executive session February 11, the House Finance Committee gave the substitute version of the bill a do pass recommendation and sent it to the Rules Committee. The substitute language asks JLARC to establish a schedule for review of each tax preference at least once every six years and prepare a report on or before September 30 of the year of review. The report would go to the Department of Revenue (DOR). DOR would then prepare a final report that includes the reports of both the DOR & JLARC before December 30. JLARC would send a copy of this final report to the Finance Committee, Way & Means Committee, the Governor, and to the State Library. In reviewing a tax preference, JLARC shall develop information needed by the Legislature to determine if the tax preference should be terminated, modified, or continued. Upon receipt of the final report, the Finance Committee and Ways & Means Committee shall jointly hold a public hearing to consider the final report and any related data. Following the joint hearing, the committees could hold additional meetings or hearings to come to a final determination as to whether a continuation, modification or termination of a tax preference is in the public interest.

Congratulations! This is a great success for the assessors.

Bills of Interest to Assessors

The House Finance Committee will hold public hearings on the following bills Monday, February 11 at 1:30 p.m.: HB 1627, using revenues under the county conservation futures levy; HB 2495, updating outdated fire district statutes to increase efficiency; HB 2856, adjusting property tax rates for senior taxing districts. HB 2857, authorizing voter approved increases in property taxes in excess of the revenue limit.

(Continued on page 3)
(Continued from page 2)

**Budget, Finance and Taxes**

**Improved CERB Funding Moves Forward**
The Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) is the state’s only economic development infrastructure program. It is a successful program that leverages private investment at a 20 to 1 ratio. The average CERB investment per job is only $2,700.

Interest earnings from the CERB loans and a portion of interest from the Public Works Trust Fund -- up to $1.9 million annually -- are the foundation of HB 2425, creating a permanent fund source for CERB. Interest from both accounts currently accrues to the general fund. HB 2425 and shifts this interest from the general fund to create this CERB funding source. The other fund source would be a one-time infusion of $5 million from the transportation package, if enacted.

HB 2425 has moved from the House to the Senate. Its companion measure, SB 6543, died in the Senate Ways and Means Committee due to concern about shifting even $2 million from the state general fund.

**County Treasurers**

SB 6466, the Treasurers’ Association cleanup bill, is scheduled for a hearing in the House Local Government and Housing Committee on Wednesday, February 20, at 8:00 a.m.

HB 2467, requiring the county treasurer to remit to a taxing district with its own treasurer that district’s pro rata share of the previous month’s taxes by the 10th of the next month, passed the House Wednesday and has gone to the Senate State and Local Government Committee. The companion bill, SB 6437, passed the Senate on Thursday.

HB 2571, authorizing port districts with their own treasurer to pay claims by check or warrant, has passed the House, and its companion bill, SB 6559, passed the Senate on Thursday.

SHB 2169, authorizing a fire district with an annual operating budget of under five million dollars to issue its own warrants with permission of the county treasurer, is scheduled for hearing in the Senate State and Local Government Committee, Wednesday, February 20, at 1:30 p.m.

HB 2784, reducing delinquent property tax penalties, and HB 2785, reducing delinquent property tax interest and penalties, did not make it out of the House Finance Committee by the cutoff date and are dead. The fiscal note reflected over $20 million in losses annually to the counties if interest and penalties were lowered.

Property Tax/Current Use Program, HB 2898, restricting the use of additional taxes, interest or penalties received under the current use program to park maintenance, upkeep or acquisition, is dead.

**Online Legislative Information**

If you’re interested in finding out what’s going on in the legislature, the following online resources are available to track bills, research fiscal notes, and listen to hearings.

**Legislative Information.** To track legislation and review Washington laws, go to www.leg.wa.gov. The site also contains point-of-contact information for your representatives and senators.

**Fiscal Notes.** For published information on the fiscal impacts of a bill, check out the Office of Financial Management’s Fiscal Notes site. You can access that site by going to www.ofm.wa.gov/fns/.

**TVW.** To listen to a public hearing, log onto www.tvw.org. TVW’s site also offers live television broadcasts of some of the hearings.
House Juvenile Justice and Family Law Committee to hold hearing on February 21
The House Juvenile Justice and Family Law Committee will be holding a hearing on youth courts, February 21 at 10:00. This bill, ESB 5692, is a priority bill of WACO’s and supported by WSAC as well. It authorizes the establishment of youth courts statewide as a diversion from the juvenile court for minor offenses such as traffic infractions. Similar youth courts already operate in several counties with great success.

E-911 – Keep Those Calls and Emails Coming to Senate
Despite helpful media coverage of the issue this week, the E-911 wireless legislation is not on a fast track to final passage. County officials can help grease the skids.

As the Courthouse Journal goes to print today 2SSB 6034 remains stalled in the Senate awaiting a procedural ruling. Please contact your senators as well as Senate leadership and urge them to pass this important bill. This legislation – 2SSB 6034 in the Senate and HB 2595 in the House – is a WSAC legislative priority and is necessary to improve E-911 funding and service.

The E-911 wireless bill would establish the same excise tax on wireless phones as currently exists on wireline phones, 50 cents per month for the county and 20 cents for the state. This “tax parity” will help stabilize E-911 revenue and ensure E-911 service for emergency calls made from wireless phones.

Currently, when people in Washington state call 911 from a wireless phone no location information or call-back number is displayed to the E-911 call center. The lack of information delays emergency services, and in some cases emergency responders are unable to provide assistance because the caller simply cannot be located. The new revenue from this bill will help counties implement the call-back and location features.

The need for this legislation was highlighted by a February 13 news report on the Northwest Cable News (NWCN) TV channel. That report documented the frightening situation of a Bothell man calling 911 from his cell phone and the call ringing through to a dispatch center in another county, perhaps even Canada. The dispatcher couldn’t transfer his call to the appropriate 911 center and couldn’t automatically identify the caller’s location. The man, unable to get help from 911, drove himself to the hospital with his shoulder broken in three places. He was one of the lucky ones.

Earlier in the week, “The Everett Herald” published an editorial strongly supporting the E-911 wireless legislation. It concluded, “It’s not worth suffering through an emergency or a tragedy to find out we should have invested in enhanced 911 services for wireless users.” That was just two days before the Bothell man suffered through a broken shoulder and a broken E-911 system.

Both the NWCN report and “The Herald” editorial are attached to this Courthouse Journal. NWCN airs throughout Washington State and might be interested in talking with local officials about how the E-911 legislation would help your county respond to cell phone callers. Contact NWCN at viewercenter@nwcn.com.

County Clerk Bills
SB 6401, county clerks, is scheduled for hearing in the House Judiciary Committee Thursday, February 21, at 8:00 a.m.

SB 6417, filing of wills, has been referred to House Judiciary as well, but no hearing has been set. SB 6402, collection of inmate legal financial obligations, has cleared the Senate and been referred to the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee. No hearing has been set.

SB 6458, jury fees, is out of the Senate Rules Committee and on the floor calendar. It has until Tuesday, February 19, at 5:00 p.m. to leave the Senate. County clerks are urged to contact their senators now and urge their support.

Supervision of Offenders
HB 2712, supervision of offenders, was nobody’s “Valentine” on Thursday in the House Judiciary Committee. Only Department of Corrections Secretary Joseph Lehman testified in support of the bill. HB 2712 is necessary to balance the budget. King County Clerk Barb Miner, Cowlitz County Clerk Teri Nielsen and Snohomish County Clerk Pam Daniels testified against DOC’s ability to discontinue supervision of offenders in order to collect legal financial obligations. In addition to drastically increased workloads to county clerks’ offices, they cited potential losses to victims for restitution, the counties for costs of prosecution, and ultimate losses to the state Public Safety and Education Account. Tom McBride, WAPA, and Larry Erickson, WASPC, spoke against the bill for prosecutors and law enforcement.

SHB 2468, DNA offender database, passed out of the House Appropriations Committee last Saturday and is now on the House floor calendar. All interested parties are encouraged to call their Representatives to urge passage of SHB 2468. The DNA database is a WACO priority bill. SB 6473, the companion bill, is in the Senate Rules Committee. Please contact your Senators on the Rules Committee and ask them to “pull” SHB 6473. Two other “database” bills, HB 2405 and SB 6489 died in committee, so SHB 2468 and SHB 6473 will be the vehicles to expand the database.

HB 2407, regional jails, is in the House Rules Committee. All sheriffs are urged to contact their representative and urge them to move HB 2407.

SHB 2702, enforcement of judgments, and its companion, 2SSB 5827, are both moving despite questions by county clerks regarding the life of a foreign judgment. The proponents of the bill satisfactorily answered questions of the State Bar Association but county clerks were, based on a legal opinion, willing to give a foreign judgment a ten-year life from filing, while the proponents purported that foreign judgment could not outlive the life of a judgment in the state where it originated (Idaho judgments are enforceable for six years). SHB 2702 is in House Rules. 2SSB 5728 is the Senate Calendar for second reading.
Floor Action Continues on Human Services Bills of Interest

Week five and six of the 2002 Legislative Session are mainly filled with floor time for the remaining bills that have survived the policy and fiscal committees in their house of origin. One hearing of note during the week of February 11 – 15 is on Feb. 15 in the House Juvenile Justice and Family Law Committee. The committee is holding a work session on hard-to-place youth. These youth include the teens that have filled the media recently with histories of either sex offenses and/or violent offenses. Secretary Braddock, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), has indicated his intention to have a short-term task force of key stakeholders examine this issue and arrive at recommendations by November 2002. Another work session was held in the House Health Care Committee, February 14, concerning state spending on long-term care. Chair Eileen Cody had prepared three bills two of which would require more funding for long-term care and the third would require a study of funding needs over the interim. The committee also took the opportunity to question the nursing home industry representatives about the DSHS report that some of their clients had perhaps not used the appropriation for wages in the 2001 budget in the most desirable fashion according to legislative intent.

Coming up in week six as we enter the second half of the session are several hearings of interest to human services. The House Health Care Committee will be hearing the mental health ombudsman bill from last year, SB 5522, February 22 at 1:30. The Regional Support Networks (RSNs) remain concerned about this bill, which would transfer the responsibilities for ombuds services from the RSNs to an independent contractor run out of the Office of Community Development (OCD). There was no fiscal impact indicated for this bill last year except for costs at OCD. Unfortunately, the requirements in the bill would require additional funds from the mental health budget that would have to come from direct client services. Also of interest to the RSNs is SB 5886, which changes the number of experts required for competency evaluations under chapter 10.77 RCW. This bill will be heard in the House Judiciary Committee on February 21 at 8:00. The Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee will hold hearings on February 20 at 1:30 and February 21 at 3:30. The Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee will hold hearings on February 20, February 21, and February 22, all at 8:00. Both Committees are awaiting the referral of bills from the House and have not announced their agendas.

Supported Employment Workshop in Pierce County

The Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) announces a two-day workshop on job placement for Wednesday, March 27 and Thursday, March 28 from 9:00 – 3:30. The workshop will be held at the Pierce County Developmental Disabilities Office, Conference Room A, 8811 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma. The two-day training will focus on skills needed for successful placement in the workplace. Discussions will include job development and marketing for natural supports; job analysis for success; breaking down a task; integrating learning styles; and how to teach using precision training. The cost is $100.00 for both days including lunch. Space is limited so register early with WISE at 206-343-0881, ext 100.

HIPAA Administrative Simplification Regulations Training on March 6

The Washington Community Mental Health Council announces that they will hold a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Administrative Simplification Regulations Training on March 6 from 8:30 – Noon at the Radisson Hotel, SeaTac. The presenters will be Mark Gary and Anne Redman, attorneys with Bennett Bigelow and Leonard, P.S. The HIPAA Administrative Simplification regulations establish new federal rules that community mental health clinics will need to follow to protect the privacy and security of individual health information. These rules also create new standards that apply to certain electronic health care transactions. The training will provide an overview of the legal issues confronting clinics under HIPAA, including a comparison of key provisions of HIPAA with Washington law, including rules regarding mental health records. Regional Support Networks are encouraged to attend. For additional information, please contact the Council at 206-464-7965 and speak with Linda Ruffer.

The Developmental Disabilities Council Announces Two Requests for Proposals

The Developmental Disabilities Council is announcing two requests for proposals (RFPs). One RFP is the 01-03 Inclusive Communities Project. This project is to increase the capacity of communities to more fully include people with developmental disabilities in the activities they sponsor. It is a four-year project. The Council has a total of $240,000 available and funding for an individual project may not exceed $40,000. The other RFP is for the 01-04 Local Leadership Project. This project is to increase the number of self-advocates, family members and community members who are trained in leadership skills and systems advocacy across the state. It is a five-year project. There is approximately $300,000 available over the five years and each project may not exceed $10,000. Bidders conferences on both RFPs will be held in Spokane on April 3, Yakima on April 5, and Seattle on April 8. For additional information, please contact Clare Billings at 360-586-3565.
Governor Names Clallam Commissioner to Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Stephen Tharinger, Clallam County Commissioner, has been appointed to a term on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board beginning Feb. 1, 2002 and ending July 15, 2006. The board awards grants and loans for salmon habitat projects and salmon recovery activities. A technical review team assists the board in making funding decisions.

In addition, Brenda McMurray, of Yakima, was reappointed to a four-year term.

Instream Flow Setting Guide Out for Comment
The Department of Ecology is seeking advice and comment on a new guidance document designed to help watershed-planning groups make stream-flow recommendations so the creeks and rivers in their area always have enough water for fish. People have until March 29 to submit their comments to Ecology.

In 2001, amendments to the watershed planning process under chapter 90.82 RCW encouraged local watershed planning groups to recommend stream flows for state creeks and rivers. Planners have the option of making recommendations for their local basins, using the guidance from Ecology or turning the task over to the state agency. Any stream-flow recommendation, whether it comes from Ecology or from a local watershed-planning unit, ultimately must be set by Ecology through the state rule-making process.

Ecology currently is evaluating funding requests from 31 different planning units to help them make stream-flow recommendations for their watersheds. Under state law, Ecology may award up to $100,000 to each planning unit, but the agency also is required to provide guidance on how to set stream-flow levels.

Entitled “A Guide to Instream Flow Setting in Washington State”, the draft document provides basic education on stream flows and descriptions of different approaches planning units might use to recommend flow thresholds. It also outlines potential environmental effects of each approach and discusses various flow assessment tools.

The guidance document will provide a framework for how flows might be set. According to Tom Fitzsimmons, Director of Ecology, “These will be guidelines, not mandates.”

The department already has set regulated stream flows in 18 of the state’s 62 watershed basins. All but one were adopted before 1986.

Three Shorelines Bills Remain Alive
Shoreline management legislation remains under consideration by the Legislature. SHB 2305 would exempt ongoing agricultural activities from the scope of the shorelines rules. It is on the House floor calendar ready for action.

One amendment states that SHB 2305 does not impact critical areas designation and protection under the Growth Management Act and another would delay the effect of SHB 2305 until the adopted guidelines for shoreline master programs become effective

SSB 6767 and SHB 2623 both would raise the dollar threshold for what constitutes development requiring a “substantial development permit” and require an adjustment to the threshold for inflation every five years. Under SSB 6767, the threshold would be raised to $12,500. Under SHB 2623, the threshold increases to $5,000. The current dollar amount is $2,500.

Stormwater and HPA Bills Gaining Ground
Several House Bills addressing stormwater management and the administration of the Department of Fisheries’ Hydraulic Projects Approval (HPA) program remain in play.

SHB 2847, by Rep. Mike Cooper (D-Snohomish County) would establish a stormwater advisory committee to work with the Department of Ecology the implementation of Phase II stormwater planning, the use of the new stormwater manual, and the interaction between state and local stormwater management programs and other programs addressing water quality.

Three bills, SHB 2866 by Rep. Mark Doumit (D-Wahkiakum County) and SHB 2757 by Rep. Phil Rockefeller (D-Kitap County) both address the HPA program.

SHB 2866 is intended to clarify that the Department of Ecology and not the Department of Fish and Wildlife is the lead agency for stormwater permitting.

SHB 2757 is intended to set a fee for HPA permits and also would establish an advisory committee to review the entire HPA program and recommend efficiencies and improvements.

SHB 2866 is on the House calendar.

SHB 2757 remains in the Rules Committee at this time.

GMA Rural Economic Development Bills Move Ahead
Legislation clarifying that small-scale businesses are allowed to be sited and expanded in the “limited areas of more intensive rural development” in Growth Management Act (GMA) planning counties has passed the House and now resides in the Senate Economic Development and Telecommunications Committee.

SHB 1395 is scheduled for hearing there on Monday, February 22, 2002 at 1:00 p.m.

In addition, SSB 5107, allowing rural counties to develop agreements with their cities to use alternative methods to achieve GMA planning goals, has moved from the Senate to the House.

SSB 5107, sponsored by Senator Tim Sheldon (D-Mason County) passed the Senate last year but died in the House.

Parks Management Bills Still Alive
Legislation to amend Chapter 35.61 governing Metropolitan Park Districts (MPDs), to make it practical for cities and counties, or a combination of them, to create MPDs continues to move forward.

SHB 2557 has passed the House and SB 6330 is in the Senate Rules Committee.

Two measures to amend the conservation futures tax legislation to allow a portion of it to be used for parks maintenance and operations or for salmon recovery also continue to move forward.

SSB 6331 allows use of up to 25% of the funds for development, maintenance and operation and SB 5104 allows for an increase in the conservation futures levy from six and one quarter to ten cents per thousand and would allow 10% to be used for operation and maintenance.
GMA Bills Make Progress
In the week following the cutoff date, several bills amending the Growth Management Act (GMA) moved further along toward possible passage.

SB 6405 has passed the Senate and will now go over to the House. This bill would allow GMA comprehensive plans to be amended more frequently. Under current law, comprehensive plans may only be reviewed and amended once a year. This bill would allow a city or county to establish, if it wanted to, a procedure for reviewing and amending their comprehensive plans once every six months.

EHB 2498 was passed by the House, and is headed to the Senate. This bill says that those counties previously authorized to establish two planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas are allowed to continue to do so until 2007, so long as additional conditions are met: that counties and cities must agree on cost and revenue sharing; that land bank plans must consider future alternatives within the urban growth area and annexation of land outside the urban growth area; that the size is capped at 10% of the total gross floor area of the buildings in the industrial land bank.

2SHB 2697 is still before the full House waiting on its final vote. This bill adds economic development as a required element of GMA planning, focusing on goals of promoting the retention and expansion of business opportunities. An amended version of this bill also adds a parks and recreation element, and a null and void clause that would kick in if not funded one year in advance.

Several GMA bills that were heard this session did not survive cutoff, and remain dead in committees. These include: SB 6410, the companion bill to EHB 2498; SSB 6057, the companion bill to 2SHB 2697; and HB 2519, 2580, and 2581, which increased concurrency requirements for local comprehensive plans.

Two-year Vehicle Licensing
SB 6494, establishing a two-year vehicle licensing program was passed out of the Senate Transportation Committee during executive session on February 12. There were two amendments proposed. The first was put forth by Senator Benton and would have doubled the transaction fee received by county auditors and sub-agents. The amendment failed. The second amendment was proposed by Senator Kaiser and would have allowed for payment of two-year licenses over a two-year period. Senator Kaiser withdrew the amendment before a vote was taken. As the bill now stands county auditors would receive $5.00 for each transaction, sub-agents would receive $5.50 and the Vehicle Licensing Services Account fee was increased from 50 cents to $1.00.

Elections, Recording and Licensing

Bills of Interest to County Auditors
HB 2297, a Clark County priority, which allows the county auditor or deputy auditor to perform clerical or ministerial duties of another county office, or vice versa, passed out of the House and is now in Senate State and Local Government Committee. Companion bill SB 6465 passed out of the Senate on February 13.

HB 2453, veterans’ records is in the House Rules Committee.

HB 2556, increasing recording fees, is in the House Rules Committee.

SHB 2060, imposing a $10.00 surcharge on recording fees for low-income housing is in House Rules Committee.

Changing the Date of the Primary Election
2SHB 1230, changing the date of the primary to the second Tuesday in June and moving other election-related dates back to accommodate the primary date change, is in the House Rules Committee. Auditors with members on that committee should call their representatives and ask that the bill be pulled. Section 19 of the bill moves the prohibition on soliciting or accepting campaign contributions to the day the regular legislative session ends (rather than thirty days after, as in current statute). This would also mean that there would be no blackout on accepting contributions during special sessions. The Public Disclosure Commission has expressed concerns about this provision, as has prime sponsor Representative Dave Schmidt. Rep. Schmidt has indicated that he will
Kitsap home rule charter fails
The voters of Kitsap County rejected a proposed home rule charter by over 55% in the February 5 special election. The charter would have created a council-executive form of government. The freeholders had met for two years in preparing the charter, but in the end it was opposed by the county Democratic party and supported by the county Republican party. The cities of Poulsbo and Port Orchard supported the charter while the City of Bainbridge Island opposed it. Interestingly, both proponents and opponents have stated that they would still work for a new charter. One of the more controversial elements of the charter was election of council members by district rather than county-wide.

Pierce County was the last county to successfully pass a charter, in 1981. There have been many attempts in the intervening years with no success.

Death Investigations
SSB 6745, a surcharge on death certificates to fund a statewide registration system, appears to have died in the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

SSB 2919, a bill to keep state toxicology reports confidential, is currently in the House Rules Committee. County coroners, sheriffs, medical examiners and prosecutors are urged to contact their House Rules Committee members as soon as possible and then contact all representatives to ask they pass SSB 2919.

Firewise Community Workshops
Homeowners, planners, city and county officials, building and development professionals and others concerned about reducing the wildfire risk in their communities are invited to one of seven regional Fire Wise Workshops being sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in the next three months. The workshops are free and open to the public, however a pre-registration is advised as space is limited. This is an opportunity for individuals and communities to learn how they could reduce unnecessary losses from wildfire.

Last year Washington state spent over $36 million fighting wildfires. Four fire fighters lost their lives fighting wildfires and many homes were destroyed. Fire Wise is a program designed to assist homeowners in fuel reduction and wildfire protection. “Our experience in past Washington wildfires has shown there is a 50% greater chance of a home surviving a wildfire if proper landscaping precautions are taken,” said Commissioner of Public Lands Doug Sutherland. The following workshops offer a great opportunity to learn more about those precautions and other steps communities can take to become more fire safe.

The workshops will be held on the following dates at the locations below:

Mount Vernon
Best Western Cotton Tree Inn
Thursday-Friday, March 14 &15

Fife, Best Western Executive Inn
Thursday-Friday, March 21&22

Yakima, West Coast Gateway Hotel
Wednesday-Thursday, April 17&18

Chelan, Campbell's Resort
Tuesday-Wednesday, April 23&24

Spokane, Quality Inn Oakwood
Thursday-Friday, May 16&17

Special one-day workshops:
Longview, Monticello Hotel
Saturday, March 9

Vancouver, University Inn
Saturday, March 23

To reserve a spot, call DNR at 1-866-807-9491 or visit their website for more information at www.firewise.org/wa

Courthouse Ramblings
More Benton Officials Shift to GOP
Two more Benton County officials, Coroner Floyd Johnson and Assessor Barbara Wagner have declared that they will switch to the Republican Party. Last week, the Courthouse Journal reported that Sheriff Larry Taylor was joining the Republican party, and the announcement about all three officials was made at the Annual Lincoln Day dinner, an annual Republican fundraiser in Pasco. During last year’s Lincoln Day dinner, Benton County Auditor Bobbie Gagner changed to the Republican Party. This leaves Prosecutor Andy Miller as the lone Democrat among the elected officials in Benton County.

New U.S. Marshal in Western Washington
Washington State Patrol Captain Eric Robertson is the new U.S. Marshal for the Western District of Washington. His appointment was made by the Bush administration and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. As a legislator from the 31st District for nearly four years during the mid-90’s, Robertson was a good friend of local government. One of the bills he sponsored during that time was the Forensic Investigation Council funding and legislation.
February 28
Urban County Caucus Meeting, 6:30 pm, Olympia

March 1
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 1-5
NACo Legislative Conference, Washington Hilton & Towers Hotel, Washington, DC

March 14
WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee, (All Day Meeting), SeaTac

March 14
Urban County Caucus Meeting, 6:30 pm, Olympia

March 15
WSAC Board of Directors meeting, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 15
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 14
Urban County Caucus Meeting, 6:30 pm, Olympia

March 15
WSAC Board of Directors meeting, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 20-22
ACHS, Tacoma, Pierce County

March 21
Puget Sound Regional Council, General Assembly Meeting, 3:30 - 8:00 p.m., Bell Harbor International Conference Center, 2211 Alaskan Way, Seattle

March 21
WA Counties Risk Pool Meeting

April 4
Retro Pool Meeting, Best Inn/RV Park, Ellensburg

April 7-13
National County Government Week

April 11-12
WSAC Western District Meeting, Rosario Resort, San Juan County

April 23-26
Washington State Association of County Clerks’ & Superior Court Administrators’ Joint Conference, Ridpath Hotel, Spokane

April 25-26
WSAC Eastern District Meeting, Sun Mountain Lodge, Winthrop

April 24-26
Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys’ (WAPA) Annual Spring Training Program, Icicle Inn, Leavenworth

May 6-10
Washington State Association of County Auditors’ Annual Conference, Red Lion, Port Angeles

May 22-24
WIR, Yellowstone County, Billings MT

May 15-17
ACHS, Spokane

May 20-23
Washington State Association of Sheriffs’ & Police Chiefs’ (WASPC) Spring Conference, WestCoast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee

June 10-14
International Association of Coroners’ & Medical Examiners’ Annual Conference, WestCoast Grand Hotel, Seattle

June 16-19
Government Finance Officers’ Association (GFOA) Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado

June 17
WSALPHO Meeting in conjunction with WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue

June 18
WCIF Board in conjunction with WSAC Summer Conference, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Bellevue

June 16-20
Washington State Association of County Assessors’ Annual Conference, Rosario Resort, Orcas Island

June 18-21
WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue Inn and Bellevue Hilton, Bellevue

June 18-21
Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Annual Conference, Yakima

June 19-21
Washington State Association of Prosecuting Attorneys’ (WAPA) Summer Training Program, Campbell’s Lodge, Chelan

June 22-26
National Sheriffs’ Association Annual Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma

June 24-28
Washington State Association of County Clerks’ Annual Conference, Best Western Suites, Walla Walla

June 24-28
Washington State Association of County Treasurers’ Annual Conference, Lakeview Inn, Bellingham

July 12-16
NACo Annual Conference, New Orleans Parish, New Orleans, LA

July 17-19
ACHS, Clark County

August 22
WCIP Board/Rate Setting Session, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. SeaTac

September 12
WSALPHO Meeting, Spokane

September 18-20
ACHS, Leavenworth

September 19
WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee (All Day Meeting), SeaTac

September 30 - October 4
WACO/WSAC Annual Conference, WestCoast Wenatchee Hotel, Wenatchee

November 14
WCIF Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Eastern Washington Location

November 18-21
Washington Association of Sheriffs’ & Police Chiefs’ (WASPC) Annual Fall Conference, Red Lion Hotel at the Quay, Vancouver

November 20-22
ACHS, Seattle
LEWIS COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGER. Salary: $43,606 - $44,973 per year. Job description and complete application packet available at: www.co.lewis.wa.us or you may contact: Lewis County Solid Waste, 1411 S. Tower, PO Box 180, Centralia, WA 98531. Office: (360) 740-1451 or FAX (360) 330-7805, email: cldpartee@co.lewis.wa.us. Incomplete application packets will not be considered. Position open until filled. Lewis County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATOR FOR SKAGIT COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT. Assures that developmental disabilities, mental health and chemical addiction treatment services are available to Skagit County residents. Plans and develops programs and services in the above areas via sub-contracted providers. Oversees contract development, management and monitoring of sub-contracted providers as well as managing and monitoring state contracts. Assures that services are top quality, best practice. Provide information to the community regarding availability of services Salary Range: $3,729.86 to $3,997.00 per month. Visit our web site: www.skagitcounty.net Closes 4:30 pm 02-20-02.

ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR. Kitsap County Public Works - Road Division. $64,105.60 - $81,806.40/annually (2001 Salary Rate). Plans, organizes, and manages the activities of the Road Division of the Public Works Department including the administration and management of the functions of Engineering Services, Transportation/ Traffic Operations/Maintenance, and Road Operations/Maintenance, to achieve goals within budgeted funds and available personnel. Oversees the development of divisional workloads and staff assignments, reviews progress and makes recommendations, directs changes in priorities and schedules as needed to assure work is performed in a timely and efficient manner according to appropriate guidelines, procedures, and legal regulations. Provides leadership and direction in the development of short and long-range plans, goals, and objectives for assigned operations. Makes recommendations regarding the development of capital improvement projects and priorities in annual and long-range capital improvement programs. Administers contracts associated with improvements to road and transportation facilities. Provides division and County representation on various committees and before special interest and community groups. May serves as the County Engineer. Bachelor's degree in civil engineering or closely related field, and five years of progressively responsible professional/administrative experience in planning, design, operation and construction of public works facilities, including two years of supervisory or management responsibilities; or any equivalent combination of experience and education which provides the applicant with the desired skills, knowledge and ability required to perform the work. Registration as a professional Civil Engineer in the State of Washington is desirable. (Required if designated as County Engineer). For additional information and application materials, please visit our website @ www.kitsapgov.com or contact the Kitsap County Personnel Department, (360) 337-7185, ext. 0. All application materials must be received by 4:30 pm on March 1, 2002.

ASOTIN COUNTY, FAMILY AQUATICS CENTER PROJECT MANAGER. The purpose of this position is to provide professional level project development and management oversight from site selection through construction and full project commission. Minimum of five years demonstrated experience with responsible charge in managing public sector large-scale (multi-million and multiple-contract) building and public works projects. B.S. degree in Construction Management, Mechanical Engineering or Civil Engineering preferred. Licensed in the State of WA as an Engineer-in-Training or Professional Engineer preferred. ICBO Certification suggested. This is a county position that is covered by personnel contract and ensures effective management in a county setting. Ability to effectively communicate with the public. The salary range impacts on the finances and operations of the Port. Successful applicants will have significant experience in upper level management and will be able to demonstrate competency in the requirements listed above. Minimum requirements for the position require a college degree and five years of management experience. The candidate must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, demonstrated leadership abilities, and fiscal management capabilities including knowledge of public financing. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. The deadline for applications is March 15th, 2002. Submit resume in confidence to: Port of Edmonds, C/O Trarer Smith & Co., CPA’s, 110 James St., Suite 106, Edmonds, WA 98020.

WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, in Bellingham, WA, is seeking a Program Coordinator for HIV Outreach and Education. This position plans, develops, implements, coordinates and evaluates (Continued on page 11)
Health and Human Services projects and programs in the area of HIV outreach and education. Plans and conducts educational programs and presents data and information at public meetings. Qualifications include requirement of a Bachelor's degree in nursing or behavioral sciences AND three years of progressively responsible experience in providing public or community health services. Spanish language fluency is desirable. Hiring range is $18.84 - $20.74 / hour, DOQ. Whatcom County offers excellent employer-paid medical, dental & vision benefits for employee and family, generous vacation, sick & holiday leave. WA State Retirement system. Optional deferred comp & Flex 125 available. Application period closes 2/22/02. For required application packet contact Whatcom County Human Resources, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 107, Bellingham, WA, or call (360) 676-6802. For detailed job announcement visit our website at www.co.whatcom.wa.us or call the jobline at (360) 738-4550. Equal Opportunity Employer.

ACCOUNTANT, SPOKANE, WA. Seeking professional to perform accounting functions for the Financial Department within the Spokane County Auditor's Office; requires related BA & knowledge of govt or cost accounting principles & practices; $2,930-$3,954/mo + exc bene; closes 2/22/02, 5:00pm. Complete desc & app materials available at Human Resources, 1229 West Mallon, Spokane, WA 99260; (509) 477-5750, TDD; www.spokanecounty.org; Equal Opportunity Employer.

MANAGEMENT, BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE. Executive Director at rural Community MH & CD Outpatient Center in northeast Washington State. Prefer Masters in social/behavioral sciences with 3 yrs. management experience or Bachelors in related field with 5 years experience in behavioral healthcare management. 2 offices, 57 staff, $3.3 million annual budget; County pop. 40K; Salary $52-$58.6K DOE + benefits. Stevens County Counseling, Colville, WA, 1-866-708-4597 (Wa. toll free) or (509) 684-4597, Fax (509) 684-5286, e-mail: ghanks@co.stevens.wa.us; area info. at www.colville.com or www.co.stevens.wa.us, deadline 3/31/02; position open 7/1/02

WHATCOM COUNTY FINANCE DEPARTMENT, in Bellingham, WA, is seeking a Budget Analyst or Sr. Budget Analyst, DOQ. This position assists in planning, issues instructions, and coordinates the preparation and compilation of the county budget and related material. Requires knowledge of Governmental accounting (including BARS), management theory, internal controls, administrative systems, qualitative and quantitative research and analysis, and fiscal management. Senior Budget Analyst level leads and balances team and individual responsibilities and functions more independently. Hiring range for the Budget Analyst is $3,342-$3,611/mo., DOQ, and for the Sr. Budget Analyst is $3,635-$3,928/mo., DOQ. This position requires a Bachelor’s degree in public or business administration, accounting, finance or closely related field. In addition, the Budget Analyst requires four years of progressively responsible experience in accounting, including two years preparing detailed, organization-wide budgets, and a current CPA is preferred. The Sr. Budget Analyst requires six years of progressively responsible experience in accounting including three years preparing detailed, organization-wide budgets and must be a current CPA. Whatcom County offers excellent employer-paid medical, dental & vision benefits for employee and family, three weeks vacation, generous sick & holiday leave. WA State Retirement system. Optional deferred comp, Flex 125 plan, and long term disability available. Application period closes 3/4/02. For required application packet contact Whatcom County Human Resources, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 107, Bellingham, WA, or call (360) 676-6802. For detailed job announcement visit our website at www.co.whatcom.wa.us or call the jobline at (360) 738-4550. Equal Opportunity Employer.
Bill Would Lock in Benton Seat

This story was published 2/2/2002

By Chris Mulick
Herald Staff Writer

OLYMPIA -- Sunnyside Sen. Jim Honeyford is pushing a bill that would prevent the seat of Benton County government from ever leaving Prosser.

If approved, Senate Bill 6550 would write a postscript to what has been a historic but dormant dispute between Prosser and Kennewick that began before the county was formed in 1905.

It's been more than 17 years since a controversial measure to make Kennewick the seat of county government was defeated. Most voters, 54 percent, supported the measure in 1984, but it needed 60 percent approval to pass.

Though officials initially expected the issue to reappear, the Legislature changed state law the following spring to prevent counties from staging more than one such vote every eight years. There's been nary a peep about it since.

"It's a dead issue around here," said Prosser Mayor Herb Schmidt. "I've heard nothing."

Honeyford introduced his bill just to be sure. It would prevent the county seat from being moved in any county with a courthouse that is listed on either the state or national registers of historic places.

Fourteen counties fall into that category, including Franklin, Grant and Columbia counties.

Honeyford this week told the Senate State and Local Government Committee that his appreciation for history moved him to propose the plan.

But the bill actually is more of a gesture to a town he'll no longer represent beginning next year. Once the Legislature approves a plan drawn up by the state's Redistricting Commission, Prosser will move from the Yakima Valley's 13th Legislative District to the 8th, which is dominated by Kennewick, Richland and West Richland.

"I'm concerned once they're in another district there will be a movement to move down the road," Honeyford said. "It would be devastating to the community."

It not only would deprive Prosser of the cultural value of being the county seat, but also would vacate the courthouse, shifting valuable jobs out of town.

Moving to Kennewick would appear attractive for obvious reasons. Closer to its population base, county government could consolidate its operations and realize greater efficiencies in dispensing services. Most new county facilities, including the jail and other offices, have opened in Kennewick in recent times.

In 1984 the measure to move the county seat to Kennewick would have headed off plans by commissioners to approve $2.1 million remodeling project for the courthouse, the opening of which largely suppressed a similar dispute in 1926.

Then-Benton-Franklin Superior Court Judge Fred Staples led a controversial petition campaign to put the measure on the ballot, in part because he believed splitting the administration of services between Prosser and Kennewick to be against the law.

"I knew what we were doing was illegal as hell," Staples said Friday night from his winter home in Arizona. "I was just trying to make it legal."

He said he's not about to weigh in on whether the county seat should be moved today and said he wishes he hadn't been in the position to push for it before.

"I didn't want to do it at all," he said. "I knew damn well it would cause me a whole lot of trouble, and it did."

Current county Commissioner Max Benitz of Prosser sent written testimony to the Senate committee this week saying preserving the county seat offers a symbol of stability and that a historic courthouse shouldn't be abandoned so easily.

"This building plays a significant role in the history of the area and its people," he said.

Honeyford may have his work cut out for him to get the bill to Gov. Gary Locke's desk. Some legislators have raised concerns about what would happen should such small, rural towns become depopulated and whether the bill would encourage the continued use of old buildings that aren't suited to meet modern technological needs.

Meth Building Its Hell's Kitchen in Rural America

The New York Times/February 6, 2002

By Timothy Egan

Granite Falls, Wash., Feb. 2 -- Just about every day, Sheriff Rick Bart is called about a crime that makes absolutely no sense, even within the universe of lawlessness.

There was the teenage boy who burned down his grandmother's house, the two men who climbed over a razor-wire fence into a railyard to steal a tanker car of ammonia gas, and the father who walked away from his small children, leaving them crawling around in a house full of acidic chemicals strong enough to burn through the floor joists.

Sheriff Bart, of Snohomish County in western Washington, knows what is behind the horror stories.

"Meth," he said. "It touches every part of our lives in this county. I'd say it's getting to the point where 80 percent of all our calls are somehow related to meth. It's just out of control."

After becoming the drug of choice among rural whites in the Midwest, parts of the South and most of the West in the 1990's, methamphetamine has ravaged a number of rural areas of the country and has yet to hit its peak in use, law enforcement officials say.

"I would call it the No. 1 drug problem in rural America," said Asa Hutchinson, administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

A synthetic stimulant that can be made in a portable cooler with ingredients bought at the corner drugstore, methamphetamine is known as a blue-collar drug, easy and cheap to produce.

California, because of its size, has the biggest meth problem in the nation, but Washington has been a close second, based on meth laboratory seizures and treatment requests.

Meth arrived here in Granite Falls, a former logging town 45 miles northeast of Seattle, about seven years ago. Since then, it has seeped deeply into the community, doubling its reach in the county every year, the police say. In the case of Sheriff Bart, meth has touched his family.

(Continued on page 13)
And his neighborhood. His nephew is battling meth addiction, and a 19-year-old woman who once lived next door used the drug as well. "We've got a meth plague," Sheriff Bart said.

The number of meth laboratory seizures in Snohomish County alone last year was more than such seizures in New York, Pennsylvania and New England combined, according to Federal law enforcement figures.

At the main shopping center in Granite Falls, the Red Apple supermarket stopped selling sinus medication for a while because meth addicts were stealing it to get at its synthetic ephedrine, a main component of homemade meth. Next door, at the Pharm-A-Save, bright yellow notices are posted on shelves, warning that no more than three packets of sinus medication can be bought at one time.

Lacy Brooks, 26, drives around in the rain, her skin twitching, her mind racing, her nails bitten to a pulp. She has been trying to shed her addiction and is awaiting counseling. But she also carries a grocery list under the seat of her car, with all the ingredients for cooking meth.

"Solvents from the paint store, lithium from batteries, Sudafed -- I know a lot of this stuff could kill me," Ms. Brooks said in an interview. "But I also know that it gets me through. There are times when I don't feel normal without meth."

Another Snohomish County woman, Bertina Perry, 33, has been drug-free for two years, but she still shudders at her low point. "I took a pocket knife and tried to lance an abscess in my mouth," she said. "I was doing my own dentistry. Lucky I didn't kill myself."

Because meth is concentrated in rural areas and in specific parts of the country, the number of Americans who use it seems relatively small. According to the government's annual national household survey on drug use, there were 387,000 regular users of meth last year.

Still, there are 50 percent more regular users of meth today than there are crack addicts, the study said, and people ages 18 to 25 are four times as likely to be using meth as to be using crack.

Experts do not know exactly why whites in rural areas and some suburban ones prefer the drug. But in places where heroin is taboo and cocaine is still considered exotic, meth is accepted.

"When we go into the schools in Granite Falls and ask students at assembly how many of them have tried meth or know somebody who has, a majority of the hands go up," Sheriff Bart said. Even accounting for normal adolescent exaggeration, other county officials say meth is pervasive.

Nearly two-thirds of all the crimes in Snohomish County, which is about half the size of Connecticut, can be tied to meth, said Jim Krider, the county district attorney. That includes murders, burglaries, robberies, domestic assaults, traffic accidents and credit card thefts.

"These people on a meth binge get paranoid, their brains are literally getting eaten, and they will do any thing to keep the high," Mr. Krider said. "But our solution is not to lock everybody up. If they agree to treatment -- and it takes about a year to effectively treat someone -- they can avoid jail."

But providing treatment has proved difficult. With the flood of addicts and budget cuts, waiting lists are long: fewer than one in five people eligible for treatment can get in, officials say. Snohomish County jails are also full.

As a result, meth addicts follow a circular course through jail and back onto the streets. The police, pharmacists and paint-store owners all know who the heavy users are, the strangers with familiar faces.

Almost two-thirds of referrals to social workers in Snohomish County for domestic violence or abandoned or neglected children are related to meth, said Cammy Hart-Anderson, who supervises social workers here.

"It's really depressing," she said. "Our phones never stop ringing."

The chemical byproducts of meth laboratories have become a big environmental problem in Snohomish County, and elsewhere in the West. According to the state, the number of toxic meth laboratory sites in need of immediate response nearly tripled to more than 2,000 in the last two years.

At the abandoned laboratories, often a trailer, a vacant house, a campground or the back of a car, officials find acid, flammable solvents, sodium hydroxide, lithium and ammonia, often accompanied by pressurized cylinders like fire extinguishers or scuba tanks.

"We see it everywhere," said Paul O'Brien, the leader of a spill response team for the Department of Ecology. "Sometimes they'll just dump it by the side of the road. It gets washed down into streams and kills salmon or poisons other forms of life."

Sheriff Bart said he was particularly worried about the attempted theft of a rail car full of pressurized ammonia.

"Those guys could have blown the whole neighborhood up," he said.

What frightens him even more, however, is how meth has become inescapable. "Up here, at times it seems like it's in everybody's backyard," the sheriff said. "One guy at Rotary told me his son was cooking meth at his office, back in the corner. And then my nephew, this drug just took him over completely. What can you do? I can only lock up so many people."

Experts do not know exactly why whites in rural areas and some suburban ones prefer the drug. But in places where heroin is taboo and cocaine is still considered exotic, meth is accepted.
**Background**—City, County, Tribal and State governments in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana have been working for over two years to help distressed resource-dependent communities in the Inland Northwest, a region consisting of 97 counties and 14 tribes in Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington, Idaho, and Western Montana. Over the past decade a collection of federal resource management policies and other factors, have had intended and unintended adverse consequences on this regional economy. Therefore, we feel it is reasonable to ask the federal government to help mitigate the consequences of its decisions on local economies and communities. The federal government can do this by working with the States and local communities to invest in their continued social and economic vitality.

**EDA Grants**—Over the past two years of the Inland Northwest project, the four states have applied for and received two U. S. Economic Development Administration grants to help determine the economic vitality of this 97 county region. The first grant established that all 97 counties had some level of economic distress with 53 of the 97 (55%) of the counties with low or very low economic vitality. The phase 2, EDA grant completed the socio economic analysis started under phase 1. It also reviewed 164 local economic development plans to help identify major categories of need region-wide. Also under the phase 2 grant the states conducted 14 community forums across the four states, attended by over 800 people to validate the findings and get input on needed economic development strategies. The resulting economic strategy including an executive summary, final report, technical data and 11 community profiles can be obtained on our web site: www.wacert.wa.gov. The States have also submitted a pre-application for a Phase III grant which would create a small central staff located in the Inland Northwest region to establish full time coordination between the four states, the tribes and the many local governments and communities for this project. We should know the outcome of the full application by April 2002.

**Support for the Inland Northwest Economic Adjustment Strategy**—The Inland Northwest Economic Adjustment Strategy has been gaining considerable support from around the four-state region. The four Governors recently signed a Resolution and Memorandum of Understanding “encouraging the Administration and Congress to provide federal financial support of the communities and tribes in the region to make strategic adjustments toward a more sustainable future.” Endorsements from organizations within each state have been received from city and county associations in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, as well as the Oregon Public Ports Association and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.

**What are we asking for**—We are asking for federal economic adjustment assistance for communities, businesses, workers and individuals in this 97 county region who need help in adjusting to a very different economy than the old natural resource dependent one. We think that this can best be done through existing federal and state programs, although we would take federal economic assistance in any form the federal government chose to offer it. We don’t know exactly how much we are asking for. In a “strawman” budget request by the U. S. Office of Management & Budget, we proposed about $113 million per year for five years or $540 million. While this is a large number it is less that half what the federal government spent for the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative in Western Oregon, Western Washington, and Northern California. We will be revising these figures, as we talk further with OMB, and congressional delegation.

**What’s Next with the Federal Government**—Our goal all along has been to obtain federal fiscal year 2003 funds for the Inland Northwest project. Now is the time to make that happen. We had hoped for inclusion in the President’s FY 2003 proposed budget. That did not happen, but it is still possible to get the Administration’s support for funds dedicated to the Inland Northwest project in individual agency budgets. Next is working for inclusion of funds for the Inland Northwest project by congressional appropriations committees. We are working on both strategies for FY 2003 funds. Since last June, we have met with Administration officials from the Office of Management & Budget, the White House Council on Environmental Quality, the Undersecretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources, the Economic Development Administration and the U. S. Forest Service. We have received friendly, but non-committal responses from these officials. We plan to meet with them again in late February or March.

A four-state delegation met with all seventeen congressional offices from the Inland Northwest region last July. Every office expressed some level of support, but we have yet to find a real champion for this project in the four-state delegation. There are a number of Inland Northwest members with considerable clout in Congress such as Senators Baucus, Craig and Murray. We are looking to one of these members to lead the effort for funding for the Inland Northwest Economic Adjustment Strategy. We have and will continue to work hard on congressional support because we believe that we cannot succeed without it.

**What can you do to help the Inland Northwest Project**—Let your members of Congress know that this is a priority for you and your constituents and that you want their help in obtaining federal funds in FY 2003. Additionally we need more expressions of local support. A resolution from the County Commission or Board of Commissioners or City Council, or Tribal Council will help. We also could use some more volunteer locally elected officials to serve on the Advisory Committee with Bill Hinkle, Jennie Dickinsen, Pam Kelley, Jim Kuntz, and C. Mark Smith.

**For Further Information**—Call Karin Berkholz, 360.725.4025, or email her at karinb@cted.wa.gov. Web Site is www.wacert.wa.gov.
# WA-CERT

## Promoting rural economic vitality

### SCOPING TRAINING

**Thursday, February 28, 2002**

9 AM – 3 PM

Location: 1835 Black Lake Blvd SW (USDA Forest Service and Rural Development Offices)

### PURPOSE

This training is on the three levels of project scoping: assessment, scoping and technical teams. Participants will learn techniques for conducting each level of scoping, and apply those to real-life projects. The training session will feature several dynamic guest presenters, and conclude with each participant conducting an assessment of a local priority project listed in the WA-CERT System.

### INTENDED AUDIENCE

State and federal agency staff engaged in local community and economic development, projects and projects related to community health and safety, county and tribal WA-CERT list coordinators, local and county economic development council directors and staff, public port authority directors and staff, and special purpose district directors and staff.

### COST

There is a nominal cost for participation in this session: $15.00 which includes all training materials and a box lunch (three choices: ham sandwich, vegetarian sandwich or roast beef sandwich) RSVP by Friday, February 22, 2002 using the attached form. Direct questions to Jeane’ Wise at 360.725.4029 or jeanew@cted.wa.gov

### AGENDA

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<tr>
<th>TOPIC and PRESENTER</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome – Martha Choe</td>
<td>9:00 – 9:10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introductions by all participants</td>
<td>9:10 – 9:15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting the Stage – the evolution of scoping – Karin Berkholtz</td>
<td>9:15 – 9:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>9:30 – 10:00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stretch Break</strong></td>
<td><strong>10:00 – 10:10</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoping Level One – <em>The Assessment</em></td>
<td>10:10 – 10:45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test the technique – all participants</td>
<td>10:45 – 11:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debrief – questions and comments about <em>The Assessment</em></td>
<td>11:00 – 11:10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoping Level Two – <em>The Scoping Visit</em></td>
<td>11:10 – 11:40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test the technique – all participants</td>
<td>11:40 – 12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debrief – questions and comments about <em>The Scoping Visit</em></td>
<td>12:00 – 12:10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td><strong>12:10 – 1:00</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoping Level Three – <em>The Technical Team</em></td>
<td>1:00 – 1:20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>1:20 – 1:50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stretch Break</td>
<td>1:50 – 2:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test the technique – all participants</td>
<td>2:00 – 2:20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debrief – questions and comments about <em>The Technical Team</em></td>
<td>2:20 – 2:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recap</td>
<td>2:30 – 2:45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next Steps: <em>Your homework assignment</em></td>
<td>2:45 – 2:55</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graduation</strong></td>
<td><strong>2:55 – 3:00</strong></td>
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WASHINGTON COMMUNITY ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION TEAM

WA-CERT
Promoting rural economic vitality

SCOPING TRAINING - FEBRUARY 28!!!!
Thursday from 9 AM – 3 PM
Location 1835 Black Lake Blvd SW
(USDA Forest Service and Rural Development Offices)

Purpose: This training is on the three levels of project scoping: assessment, scoping and technical teams. Participants will learn techniques for conducting each level of scoping, and apply those to real-life projects. The training session will feature dynamic guest presenters, and conclude with each participant conducting an assessment of a local priority project listed in the WA-CERT System.

Participants: State and federal agency staff engaged in local community and economic development, projects, and projects related to community health and safety, county and tribal WA-CERT list coordinators, local and county economic development council directors and staff, public port authority directors and staff, and special purpose district directors and staff.

Cost: $15.00 registration fee to cover training materials and a box lunch.

For more information contact: Jeane' Wise at Jeanew@cted.wa.gov or (360) 725-4029

Name/Title: _________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _______  Zip Code: ______________

Organization: ________________________________________________________

Make check payable to: 

CTED-EDD
PO Box 42525
Olympia, WA 98504-2525