

**South Lewis County Subarea Meeting  
St. Mary's Conference Center  
107 Spencer Rd., Toledo, WA  
January 22, 2009 – 3:00 P.M.**

Ms. Barbara Kincaid called meeting to order at 3:04 and introductions were made.

Ms. Kincaid was interested in getting feedback from the last meeting with WDFW and DOE. At that meeting there was a lot of information presented regarding hydrology and habitat assessment. Ms. Whitten, City of Toledo, talked with Susan Griggsby after the meeting because the city boundaries were not mapped correctly. Ms. Kincaid asked whether any one else had concerns or questions regarding the work presented by the state agencies.

Mr. Dale Merten, Toledo Telephone Company, asked what the next step in the process would be.

Ms. Kincaid stated the first steps would be the mapping. WDFW has completed its broad scale mapping. The next step for them will be to create a mid scale map using guidance from local people for "focal species", a short list of different animals that represent various groups: mammals and birds (no fish or plants). A biologist from the Cowlitz Tribe talked with the local habitat group about including plants, but the modeling program used by WDFW will not include them. It will identify and map areas where the hydrology and geography can support certain species. They will bring a list and show how the movement is mapped in the corridor and how it overlays for the land use and hydrological functions.

Mr. Rupp asked if their work would combine visioning for the area.

Ms. Kincaid stated it would to a degree. WDFW and Ecology combine a report and the purpose is to help this group make decisions on land use decisions regarding the wildlife hydrology in the planning area.

Mr. Merten asked if they will make recommendations.

Ms. Kincaid stated they anticipate having loose recommendations. They won't give mitigations or specific direction.

Mr. Bill Jones stated regarding land development and where roads actually lie and where the best places are to do enhancement, the agency representatives did not point to the map. The most critical item they did not touch on was acreage and what kind of designation would be required and given in such a form. What percentage of land is available to enhance.

Ms. Kincaid stated there was a meeting with team consultants and they were given the County's new critical areas ordinance. We will be looking at the CAO for those ratios. If there is a situation for state requirements, we must get to that issue immediately.

Mr. Larry Hewitt stated the State is quick to talk about enhancement but there is a lot of discussion about what that means, especially in regard to wetland banking.

Ms. Kincaid stated we can keep that dialogue open: areas most suitable for this group and the types of development that are desirable.

Mr. Larry Hewitt stated we want to see very clear rules about wetland banking so we can plan. Water reclamation rules still need to be written.

Ms. Kincaid stated we need to look at wetland banking as a tool and also the transfer of water rights. We need to know what type of mitigation will be required for potential sites.

Mr. Dick Larmon stated the Army Corps of Engineers looks at sizes, too and we need to know what that is.

Mr. Andy Lane stated what we get from the agencies are not guidelines; they are studies.

Ms. Kincaid stated the reports they will give will afford guidelines.

Mr. Phil Smith stated he attended mediation last week. There was discussion about wetland and conservation easements and what could or could not be done. They admitted it was confusing and had to re-look at it. Wetland banking here is way behind. There are successful models in other places and the State recognizes it is behind. The subarea could become a model for this.

Ms. Kincaid stated she attended a wetland mitigation class and they are starting to have that dialogue.

Mr. Rupp stated we need to identify mechanisms that can be put on our books for local codes.

Mr. Smith stated they reached an impasse and said time out. They admitted they didn't know what they were talking about.

Mr. Larmon stated when we start looking at those mitigation details we need to try to get ahead of the game. There is a lot of learning to do.

Ms. Kincaid stated the Chehalis project is a poster project of what is to come for the Corps. She stated she will take these comments back to Ecology and WEFW. Those agencies will be back in February for a mid-scale review.

Ms. Bertucci asked if there will be no plants in the modeling.

Ms. Kincaid stated no, they will be concentrating on Fish and wildlife. If this group feels this is an important feature, we could address it.

It was mentioned that a lot of these animals rely on the plants to survive and the Biologist did mention the oak forests.

Mr. Lane stated that should fall under habitat.

Mr. Smith stated DOE stated he had actually enhanced his property, not only the dirt but creek. It's all tied together.

Ms. Kincaid stated it is important that we understand differences between enhancements, restoration, etc.

Ms. Kincaid stated Mr. Mark Cook would present the transportation piece for this. Mark and Perteet were hired by the County to do a transportation corridor study. This provides a boost; if the Highway 505 study had not been started, this opportunity may not have come about. The County is willing to expand the study and give us some help with existing conditions, mitigations, etc.

Mr. Cook stated the packet has a summary sheet. While we are not contracted to directly support the subarea planning process, we have grown into writing the transportation element. The assumptions of supporting the subarea do not have to be completely consistent, but there is a benefit to see that that happens. We want to bring you up to speed and set the stage for a discussion in the next month as it relates to bringing forecasts to you and understand what will result in the decisions you make. Our corridor group will meet at the end of February.

You did have a discussion regarding the population forecast. We looked at a variety of growth scenarios and what we thought was probably a high (153,000) and a medium (133,000). The basis for population forecasts is how jobs get allocated. It is important for us to know where the jobs are.

When we looked at six scenarios, there was an emerging preference to focus on the median. The basis for that is to look at what OFM issued for high pop (2025 – 122,000) so we took that to 2025 and ended up with 133,000. We populated those allocations in the subarea zoned commercial/industrial. A preliminary study shows that a two lane section is not sufficient for the forecast and looks like there are a variety of potential improvements. We are starting that discussion tomorrow with Gibbs & Olson and will get to the cities and DOT in the next several weeks and lay out our analysis so we can start discussions on future mitigations. We must try to find some common ground for jurisdictions as to a strategy to get mitigations in place. It looks like a widening of the corridor and several intersections that might require signalization. That is another discussion. Then there will be an analysis: is what we are doing acceptable by various

jurisdictions. Once we have a buy-in on our science, they we will bring a preferred packet of mitigations and once those are accepted by jurisdictions, we will do cost estimating and other engineering processes to get projects identified for funding and how will we implement those improvements over that period of time.

Transportations as it relates to subarea is policies that come out of that work and implications of transportation on the comprehensive plan. Timeframe: our contract has a final deliverable at the end of April 2009. We don't know if that is still appropriate; we will be looking at discussions and at the suitability of that timeline.

Our deliverable will have the identified future congestion projections and cost estimates associated with those and an attempt to secure a MOU. The contract has us delivering three transportation strategies.

When legislation first came through, only 40% came through. We need 60% and we lobbied for that change.

Mr. Smith asked if this mitigation is specifically for 505 or if there are issues to future widening of I-5.

Mr. Cook stated we looked at six because there were a couple relating to the REQ; another was what DOT was proposing to do on I-5. They have identified 2025 and we are looking at 2035. Once we get stakeholder direction, it will go fairly quickly.

Mr. Smith asked if the I-5 bridge will be replaced.

Mr. Cook stated when DOT builds, and if they are forecasting highway needs for 2027 and that structure is close to a level of service break, they may need to include it in their widening. The trick is, do you have a population demand which is defensible and is that science supporting the population and suggesting mitigations below those that require structural improvements.

We will be providing the transportation element for the improvement plan for 2014 and 2020, two cycles of County's transportation plan. That gives them 6 years for Toledo and Winlock and another 6 years beyond that so the County will have funding opportunities and better opportunity to factor those into their plan.

Mr. Cook stated as we began this project with 63 funding, we looked at Highway 12 and south and thought we would position it so we could go to the next level. That is why we looked out to 2035. Most plans are for 20 years. The County's current transportation model is 2035. We added land use plan changes from other jurisdictions. We can talk to County decision makers about what 2035 will look like to your network. Lewis County is unique in mandating growth management. There is a huge amount of capacity now; only 74,000 population and there is a declining funding base.

Mr. Cook stated anyone can call him if they need more information. He stated the next South Lewis County Chamber meeting will be advising where we are. Anyone is welcome. We will try to create a simulation model with various alternatives. The Chamber meeting is at Guadelajara Restaurant on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of February, 12:00.

Ms. Kincaid stated economic development is to try to stimulate South County's economy to support its life style. As we try to get our grips on what that means, we asked the Lewis County EDC director to talk to us. What do we mean by economic development?

Mr. Dick Larmon stated he has been in economic development for more than 20 years and it changes daily and weekly. What is Economic Development? It increases sustainable wealth across the private and private sector to build better infrastructure. How that gets done: Parallel tracks. An example: Microsoft is laying off people. Microsoft is in Redmond because years ago Redmond said they wanted technical jobs in their city. They wanted these kinds of employees and this type of building and they said if someone can bring that they can be permitted in 48 hours. It was done with no transportation plan. It is a nightmare. When you decide where an economy grows, you need to make sure people are safe. We will do what is in context with the information we have. That information changes regularly and the context is different. There is business expansion and retention. Expansion is hugely important. Helping business find new markets and streamline is high on Mr. Larmon's list, as well as retaining businesses that might be ready to fail. A large company downsized recently. They make equipment for another company so we need to find new markets, creating new business. We need sustainable businesses. Old mill sights and old canneries' business goes away and they are empty mill sights and old canneries. Sometimes in small communities, a city goes broke trying to support a business with sewer and water.

We all have a different point of view of what economic development is. Does one view different from someone else's make it wrong? No, it is just a different view.

When we decide how many acres are developable we need to know developable for what. Does it meet the culture of Cader, Winlock, Toledo. We have been hungry for a good economy we are willing to take anything that comes along. We must slow down and look at it. As we go forward, we want to make sure we make the best decisions to sustain what we do, build, manufacture, what goes out and how it goes out.

Ms. Mary Garrison asked if Mr. Larmon could you look at other side of the coin: what about doing nothing? What would that picture look like?

Mr. Larmon stated that would terrify him. You cannot stay the same. What his kids want out of the economy is not what he wants. We cannot stop [growth] as that is how we project into the future. We must sell differently; a lot of business do not have offices any more. What does that do to the footprint of the community? Staying the same is a nice idea but it's not going to happen.

Mr. Larmon stated in Brewster, WA there is a mushroom farm with radar dishes sitting out there. It is an underground complex for internet radio to Asia. There is a command center for launching rockets at Midway where 8 languages are spoken.

Things change very quickly.

Mr. Larmon stated he is concerned about East County. He has been waiting for an expansion to the skiing area. Slingshot Gear builds snowboards and they moved years ago to China. Now there is new technology and he's coming back. He left first; he may be a key indicator of what is happening. Mr. Larmon has contacted sporting people to make Packwood contacts. We must think about that here in South County as well. Skydiving is available here – why not make parachutes here?

Ms. Kincaid stated we need to determine what we want for this economy and then take that to the people who live here and have them help develop a 20 year plan that give us our roadmap to carry it out. We want a plan we can live with and future generations can live with and be prosperous, too. A lot of generations have seen cyclical employment. The "Our Town" books – what the towns used to look like – put things into context of how things have changed: school sizes, etc. We need a good discussion about planning for this area with this group and the public.

There is a bubble chart in packet showing supply and demand for land, how many acres are developable and for what and what kind of education will people need to fill those jobs.

There is also a survey in the packet with goals and policies for all jurisdictions and must include south county. As we have discussions, we need to keep these comments in mind.

Mr. Wagoner stated this work is difficult since we are looking at 20 years out when many of us will not be here and changes will happen no matter how we anticipate. We must capture the theme of what we want and capture the spirit, which is the literal translation of the Cowlitz. We need to provide basis for all jurisdictions to make decisions about what they do in the next few years and not foreclose options for the next twenty years. Goals are important and hard to deal with.

The vision statement we will write together. It will be a general narrative of South Lewis County in 20 years. Today we brought the existing framework for this plan. These are adopted goals. They are regional economic development goals to the County comprehensive plan through the countywide planning policies. What are missing are the goals for the South Lewis County plan, the transportation, land use, housing, environmental protection. These must be tailored to South Lewis County. We would like you to take the handouts and get back to Barb with things that you think don't make sense or don't seem to apply to South Lewis County and the gaps where we need to pay attention. We would like cities to look within the context of their own comp plans.

Ms. Kincaid asked that ideas are returned by the first of February.

Mr. Greg Waddell, BHC Consultants, started on page two of the handout. He stated you can't have economic development by itself. You must consider capital facilities, infrastructure, housing and education. That is why we have comp plans: to look at all those things and tie them together. The hard part of this process is to develop a strategy. A vision is the next step and then goals and policies. Strategy will be very important. These are the adopted goals and policies.

County Comp Plan Goals:

Cap facilities

Econ Dev –

Housing

Land Use – driven by economic development

Transportation

Utilities

CWPP and Cowlitz-Lewis Comp Economic Development Strategy Goals: (page 1)

Goals 1-8

CWPP – policies meant to apply to the county and relationship to cities and towns. These CWPPs are: urban growth, reduce sprawl, transportation, multi-model, housing – affordable and varieties of densities, economic development, property rights, permits, natural resource, open space and recreation, retention of same; protect environment, quality of life, citizen participation; public facilities; preserve historic features – buildings and places. These are all adopted. Remember this when you do your homework; when you develop goals for South Lewis County we want to hit on all of these.

Mr. Lane stated the CWPPs are out of the GMA – 13 of the 14 goals. If we are thinking of modifying, we need to add rather than delete.

Mr. Wagoner stated these are non geographic specific because they cover more than one County. Are there areas within South County that the plan should be specific about what should happen? He did not want to suggest examples, but there is a big difference between the square miles we are dealing with. What do you think is most important? We need to determine the goals and rank them.

Ms. Kincaid stated that is what subarea plans are intended to do – to look at a specific geographic area and tailor the goals.

Mr. Wagoner asked the group to tell what is not in this package and what is important to be in the package.

Mr. Larry Coyle stated our economic development has been null and void for 65 years. When the freeway came through we argued for two or three years – it wiped out economic development for Winlock and Toledo. The planning came from Washington DC. He stated he is very pleased to see groups like this doing this type of planning. There is a stimulus package coming out. What will we be doing two years from now?

Can we utilize the stimulus money? No. The state says we have two years to get what money we can. We have to be at the starting gate and ready to grab a stimulus package. He believes we must get this done now, fast or slow but something. Maybe we overstepped our boundaries. We need to take steps now, not 25 years from now. We will need development in 25 years but we must flow with the change and we cannot be stagnant.

Mr. Larmon stated planning usually falls short of implementing. The first round of stimulus money is gone. We need to do something active and push what we can. We don't want the science to get us bogged down when we know what the answers are.

Phil Smith – don't assume anything with this stimulus money.

Mr. Larmon stated the Lewis County Economic Development banquet is February 5 and Dick Thompson will be the speaker. Mr. Larmon wants to be on the top of his list for this stimulus package.

Mr. Larry Hewitt stated we have been pushing for the stimulus package for an extension of sewer from Winlock. This may have dropped off. We were assured of getting it at one point. GMA presents an enormous challenge for us. It's easy for the governor to say that office will support us and then the money goes elsewhere. We must demand it and keep at it. We need our fair share.

Ms. Kincaid stressed that we look at the big picture – short term and the future. We can't do just one or the other. In our homework, context is important. She encouraged Mr. Coyle to look at the stagnant situation.

Ms. Kincaid stated we must focus strengths of this area – nationally there is scary stuff going on. How do we develop the strengths and not focus on weaknesses?

Mr. Smith stated economic stimulus does not need to be just monetary. For example, the Growth Management Hearings Board lifting the moratorium would be huge. It might be a good idea for the homework assignment to include a sentence about what each Steering Committee member believes should be done to help stimulate the economy for South County.

Ms. Kincaid stated that is a good idea. These statements will help give us some differing perspectives.

Mr. Merten stated he expects there will be funding for broadband, about \$6 million. If Toledo Tel gets the funding, fiber will be available to every phone customer.

Mr. Coyle thanked Mr. Merten. There is fiber optics inside St. Mary's now.

Ms. Kincaid stated this is a huge bonus to South Lewis County.

The next meeting will be February 19, 3:00 P.M. at St. Mary's Center. Ms. Kincaid will e-mail homework assignments.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.