



January 2010 Newsletter

NWACT is an advisory committee to the Oregon Transportation Commission on NW Oregon transportation needs and project priorities

Representing Counties:

Clatsop County Commission
Columbia County Commission
Tillamook County Commission
Washington County Commission

Representing Cities:

City of Astoria
City of Banks
City of Bay City
City of Cannon Beach
City of Columbia City
City of Clatskanie
City of Garibaldi
City of Gaston
City of Gearhart
City of Manzanita
City of Nehalem
City of North Plains
City of Rainier
City of Rockaway Beach
City of Scappoose
City of Seaside
City of St Helens
City of Tillamook
City of Vernonia
City of Warrenton
City of Wheeler

Representing Ports:

Port of Astoria
Port of Garibaldi
Port of Nehalem Bay
Port of St Helens
Port of Tillamook Bay

Representing Transit Districts:

Columbia County Transportation
Sunset Empire Transit
Tillamook County Transportation

Representing ODOT:

ODOT Region 1 -- NW Area
ODOT Region 2 -- NW Area

Representing Others:

NW Oregon Regional Partnership
Transportation Stakeholders
Citizens-At-Large

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Recent News and Recap of NWACT January 7th meeting in Scappoose, Oregon

January's meeting drew 60 NWACT members and local stakeholders, a record attendance. Members of NW Oregon's Congressional and Legislative delegation attended, as did representatives from the Governor's Office and the Business Oregon Department. Highlights from the meeting include:

Federal Transportation Funding Reauthorization: Hopefully, reauthorization will be passed by both the House and Senate by the end of 2010. It is still unclear as to whether there will be another stimulus bill which would include funding for additional transportation projects.

State Legislature: The February session is expected to take a full month. There could potentially be over 100 bills to review. Given the short time frame, those interested in specific legislation should regularly look at the Legislature's website.

ODOT Updates: There has been an unprecedented amount of construction occurring over the last 6 months. Also, three of the region's major interchanges (Glencoe Road, Staley's Junction and Hwy 101/Hwy 6) are in development planning. A consortium of local and ODOT officials are addressing potential solutions to the flooding issues on Hwy 101 south of Seaside.

Tillamook County Transportation thanked ODOT for supporting a fix of the failing Bailey Bridge in south county, and the City of Rainier thanked ODOT for their repair of the retaining wall east of Rainier on Hwy 30, with almost no disruption of traffic.

Columbia County will have four bridges scoped for replacement in the 2012-2015 STIP, with JP West the priority.

Hwy 26 Dennis Edwards Tunnel: Rehabilitation of the tunnel is required because the tunnel timbers and lining are becoming unsafe. A contractor team has been retained to conduct a constructability review: What must be done, what are the options, what are the impacts of the various options including costs and timing.

Bob Russell, Executive Director of the Oregon Trucking Associations (OTA), was invited to the meeting to provide the freight industry's perspective on rehabilitation of the tunnel. Russell noted that while increasing the vertical clearance of the tunnel to allow passage of oversized trucks may be desirable to provide an additional oversized freight route to the North Coast, it is not a critical need for the industry.

Input from local stakeholders included:

- Given the relatively few oversized trucks currently using the tunnel (latest count: 103/year), it doesn't make sense to spend the extra time and money on lowering the road
- An extended closure of the tunnel would further devastate the local economy following the 2007 storm and recent recession
- Concern that increasing the number of oversized trucks would affect the safety and character of the Sunset Hwy for visitors to the Coast.

The tunnel project is still in the early planning stages, with a preliminary contractor's report due out in February. Another public meeting will be held on the afternoon of March 1st in Seaside to review the preliminary findings.

Contacts for the project are: David Kim, ODOT Region 1 Area Manager: David.Kim@odot.state.or.us or at 503.731.4998 and Larry McKinley, ODOT Region 2 Area Manager: Larry.McKinley@odot.state.or.us or at 503.325.3590.

ConnectOregon III Applications: 16 project applications were submitted from NW Oregon. NWACT will conduct the region's project prioritization at an all day meeting on April 8th at the Tillamook Bay Community College new campus in Tillamook. Additional information about the meeting will be posted on the NWACT website.

Draft 2012–2105 STIP Criteria: In preparation for the next State Transportation Investment Program cycle, updated project criteria is being distributed for review and comment. The draft criteria is available on both ODOT's and NWACT websites.

Energy Innovation Grant Application: A \$5 million application was submitted to the US Department of Energy for a Greening Rural Oregon project. Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Lincoln and Benton counties are collaborating on developing regional transit connections between the counties and to the Willamette Valley. Included in the application is a request for energy-efficient hybrid buses.

NWACT 2010 Election of Officers:

The same slate of officers was unanimously approved for 2010:

Shirley Kalkhoven, Chair
Ron Bline, Vice-Chair
Rita Bernhard—Secretary-Treasurer

NWACT welcomes three new members:

Christy Greagor—City of Banks
Kevin Greenwood—Port of Garibaldi
Jerry Taylor—City of Manzanita

March 1, 2010 Special NWACT Meeting
Chisholm Community Center
Seaside, Oregon
2:30 pm — 4:30 pm

Dennis Edwards Tunnel Update

April 8, 2010 Special NWACT Meeting
Tillamook Bay Community College
Tillamook, Oregon
All Day

Review and Prioritization of ConnectOregon III Applications

May 6, 2010 NWACT Meeting
Camp Rilea
Warrenton, Oregon
1:00 pm — 3:30 pm

Regularly Scheduled NWACT Meeting

For more information on NWACT, its members, meetings, charter/bylaws, and deliberations, please go to NWOregon.org. NWACT meetings are generally scheduled for the first Thursday of every other month at various locations throughout the four-county area.

NWACT meetings are open to the public and accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities. If a sign language interpreter is needed, please call Mary McArthur at 503.228.5565 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.