

# the Courthouse Journal

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

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Issue No. 25

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Washington Association of County Officials  
Washington State Association of Counties

The Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (WACME) are offering a “first” for Washington State on October 5 in Wenatchee. WACME is presenting *Finding Missing Persons and Identifying Human Remains – the critical partnership between coroners and medical examiners and law enforcement*. Leading experts on every aspect of the investigation are all on one agenda. They will share the latest developments, technology and resources that are available in the State. There is no registration fee for the all-day course. Please refer to the registration information attached to this edition to the Courthouse Journal for details or contact [khouts@wacounties.org](mailto:khouts@wacounties.org).

## WSAC Centennial Conference Fast Approaching

It’s coming fast. The 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Conference of the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) is nearly here. Entitled “A Century of Service”, the conference will be held from September 26 – 29 at the Doubletree Spokane City Center. Online registration is available now through the WSAC website, [www.wacounties.org](http://www.wacounties.org). We urge you to get your registration completed early since the early registration fee only lasts until September 8 and then full fees will be due. It’s also wise to get your room reservations in as we hear the room block is filling up fast!

The events are all scheduled and ready to go. There are **Three** count them **Three** golf tournaments There will be an absolutely stunning re-enactment of our country’s third president, Thomas Jefferson. We will be greeting a large number of former members and former WSAC presidents so there will lots of opportunity to visit with these experts in life after county government. There will be a number of educational and interactive work sessions ranging from water issues (both the Columbia River Basin and Puget Sound) to interactions between counties and the tribes to an update on the status of Louisiana after Katrina from special guest, Benny Rousselle, President of Plaquemines County, Louisiana. You’ll also have the opportunity to hear what’s happening with the 10-year plans to end homelessness currently underway in every county; the one-stop permitting activities between counties, the Governor’s Office and the Department of Ecology; post-enactment of the statewide no-smoking ban; and a guaranteed lively discussion of I-747, the one percent property tax lid. Special guests also include Sen. Lisa Brown (D-Spokane), Senate Majority Leader and Sen. Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville) at our Friday morning breakfast and from the Department of Social and Health Services, the new Mental Health Division Director, Richard Kellogg at breakfast on Thursday. This is a great opportunity to ask legislative leaders their perspective on the upcoming session and in one of our most challenging human services areas, ask the new Mental Health

**Want to post a job announcement on our webpage?**

E-mail your info: Subject – “WA Counties Job Page” to [bwarden@wacounties.org](mailto:bwarden@wacounties.org)

**What information do you need to include in your e-mail?**

Visit [Employment Opportunities](#)

## The Courthouse Journal

Published weekly (during Legislative Session) and Bi-weekly (other than Session) by the **Washington Association of County Officials (WACO)** <http://wacounties.org/waco> and the **Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC)** <http://wacounties.org/wsac>

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. The weekly / bi-weekly deadline is noon Wednesdays.

Direct inquiries and correspondence to *The Courthouse Journal*, 206 Tenth Av SE, Olympia, WA 98501or [wacounties.org](http://wacounties.org)

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**Julie Kaufman**, Program Manager  
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Director any questions you have about mental health services in your local community and the Regional Support Networks.

Both the districts and the full Association will be electing officers so it is even more important that you all attend and lend your vote to who will be your leaders for the next year. In the full Association, you will be electing a new Secretary-Treasurer as well as voting to approve the movement of existing officers up the chairs to President. Mary Hunt, Douglas County is currently the only announced candidate for Secretary-Treasurer. Leo Bowman, Benton County, is in line to move up to President and Chris Endresen, Kitsap County, is in line to move up to Vice-President. Both the eastern and western districts need new secretary-treasurers as well as new members-at-large for the WSAC Board of Directors. The election for the full Association officers will take place beginning at 2:00 Wednesday, September 27 and ending with the close of the polls at 4:00 PM Thursday, September 28. Voting materials will be available at the Registration Desk. The elections for district officers will take place during the district meetings scheduled from 9:15 – Noon, Tuesday, September 26. If you are interested in running for any of these offices, please let us know as soon as possible by writing a letter of interest. This can be directed to either Bill Vogler, Executive Director or Eric Johnson, Assistant Executive Director here at WSAC.

On both Tuesday and Wednesday, there will be celebratory receptions to honor our 100 years. On Thursday evening the Centennial Banquet will take place beginning with the Engineers Reception at 4:30 and moving to a joint reception with WSAC at 6:30 and dinner at 7:00.

In addition, we are really excited by the wonderful turn-out by exhibitors and sponsors. Several of our sponsors will be presenting information at two new events entitled “Cracker-barrel Sessions.” These are three presentations in a one-hour time slot focused on best business practices for county government. This promises to be the most exciting and fun conference in our 100 year history. So hurry and get your registrations in now!!!!

## A Message From WACO President Dan Blasdel

Dear WACO Members,

The 48th Annual Conference of the Washington Association of County Officials is fast approaching and this is one you will not want to miss. We have put together a spectacular conference.

I cannot stress the importance of the Annual Conference enough. It is the only time we have the opportunity to come together and discuss better ways to improve our commitment to serving the public. It is a time that the concerns and impacts in one office are considered in the light of the entire courthouse, your county and the state. The end result is the adoption of the WACO Legislative package. It is our chance to build on the on the strength of WACO.

In addition to the training tracks and affiliate meetings, I am especially looking forward to the opening session with guest speaker Vali Hawkins, PhD. She is a certified traumatologist and says, "Being Really Prepared Means Taking Your Own Pulse First." You will be amused and at the same time learn of critical tips you will want to take back to your own office. Vali puts a chuckle into some

**NOTE:** Legislative Committee schedules and agendas can be found at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

very weighty security issues.

David Horsey is another “do not miss” speaker we will hear from at lunch. David is the editorial cartoonist for the Seattle P.I. and will keep you laughing as he tosses a few barbs at both political parties in equal measure.

Last year we introduced a panel discussion with several state legislators. The session was tremendously popular. This year attendees will have an opportunity to meet more eastern Washington legislators as well and learn more of issues on the forefront including tribal taxation and the current status of sales tax streamlining, to name a few. Getting acquainted has proved mutually beneficial.

A highlight for me personally will be the President's Reception on Wednesday evening. It promises to be more fun than should be allowed by law. Steve “The Pretty Good” will have you laughing until your sides hurt.

These are only but a few of the many things happening at this year’s conference. I look forward to seeing you in Wenatchee October 2-6.

*Dan Blasdel, WACO President and Franklin County Coroner*

## Register Now for the WACO Conference!

The 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Washington Association of County Officials will be held at The Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, in Wenatchee, October 2-6. All members should have received both the registration and a draft copy of the agenda by mail and e-mail.

There are several important dates to keep in mind. Most importantly, please make your hotel reservations by Friday, September 8, before our room block is released, so that you can get the conference rate of \$90. The reservations line at The Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel is (509) 662-1234. We would like to have conference registrations in the WACO office by September 12. If you cannot send payment by that time, we can bill you or payment can be sent in separately.

Also due on September 12 are nominations from county officials who wish to be included in the slate of candidates for the WACO Board of Trustees. President-elect, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer will all move up the chairs, so the following positions are open for election this year:

- **Secretary-Treasurer**
- Trustee-at-large **Position 2** (county population from 125,000 to 500,000 – two-year term)
- Trustee-at-large **Position 4** (county population from 12,000 to 40,000 – two-year term)

Letters of intent to run for the Board, along with a resume, should be sent to Nominating Committee members, as well as to WACO, as follows:

### WACO Nominating Committee:

Pam Daniels, Chair  
Snohomish County Clerk  
3000 Rockefeller Ave, MS: 605  
Everett, WA 98201  
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## **WACO Distinguished Service Award**

WACO is accepting nominations for the 2006 WACO Distinguished Service Award. This award was created in 1985 to recognize retired or former county officials who have made outstanding contributions to county government and to their communities. WACO members may nominate any former WACO member whether or not they are from the same county.

In addition to being a former WACO member, consideration will be given to innovations and contributions that the nominee has made within their county; participation in WACO; various committees and organizations in which they were involved (local, state, association or national levels); affiliate participation; and community service. There is a point system consisting of 10 points for each category, and 40 points are needed to qualify for the award. More than one award may be presented in a given year.

Please contact WACO to obtain a nomination form. Completed forms must be mailed back to WACO, marked AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE, no later than **SEPTEMBER 12**. Qualifying nominations will be reviewed by the Award Selection Committee. Award winners are always honored at the Annual WACO Conference on banquet night.

All nominations will remain confidential.

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## ***Budget, Finance and Taxes***

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### **Initiative 747 Decision Stayed by State Supreme Court**

In June, a King County Superior Court ruled Initiative 747 of 2001 as unconstitutional. Initiative 747 limits the growth of property taxes collections to 1% with the exception of new construction and state assessed utilities. The Attorney General had indicated he would be seeking a "stay" of this decision while he appeals the decision to the State Supreme Court. Last week, the Court granted the stay. As a result, the 1% limit remains in place until the Supreme Court rules.

At its recent meeting, the WSAC Board, by a 6-7 vote, chose not to submit an amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs (which includes Whitman County) at this time. Learn more about the arguments being made before the Washington State Supreme Court on the validity of Initiative 747 and the impact this case may have on your county's revenues at the WSAC Annual Meeting on September 28th at 9:30 am.

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## ***Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice***

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### **Search and Rescue Team Mobilizing for Ernesto**

*(The following article was submitted by Pierce County)*

The Washington State Urban Search and Rescue Task Force has been activated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in anticipation of Hurricane Ernesto's landfall. Most of the 35-member team will depart from Sea-Tac Airport Tuesday morning for Atlanta, and a smaller crew is transporting equipment by truck.

"We are sending a small, agile team similar to the one that went to Mississippi last year," said WATF1 Program Manager Tom Miner. "The team will assist with search and rescue, recovery, communications, and establishment of essential services as necessary." Sgt. Cyndie Fajardo of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department will be the task force leader.

WATF1 is one of a dozen teams to be activated for Ernesto. "The goal is to be proactive," said Pierce County Emergency Management Director Steve Bailey, who is sponsoring chief of WATF1. "FEMA and the local task forces have been working very hard to make sure people and resources are in place before the storm hits. We are proud to be part of that effort."

Sponsored by Pierce County Emergency Management, WATF1 was established in 1991, has 210 members and is one of FEMA's 28 national teams. The task force is made up of members from 38 jurisdictions including Pierce and King Counties and the City of Seattle and is prepared to respond to any federally declared disaster. The team was mobilized for last year's Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; Shuttle Columbia recovery, 2003; Pentagon and World Trade Center attacks, 2001; Olympics in Atlanta, 1996; federal courthouse bombing in Oklahoma City, 1995; the Northridge, CA earthquake, 1994; and Typhoon Bryan in Guam, 1992.

CONTACT: Jody Woodcock, Emergency Management/WATF1, 253-798-7021 or mobile 253-377-0475

## **What on Earth is an LFO?**

Members of the Washington State Association of County Clerks (WSACC) were recently invited to appear before the Legal Barriers and Civil Liability Workgroup of the Legislative Joint Task Force on Offender Programs, Sentencing and Supervision. Snohomish County Clerk Pam Daniels, WSACC President, Skamania County Clerk Rena Hollis and Joel McAllister, Finance Division Manager of the King County Clerk's Office, were there to make the presentation on legal financial obligation (LFO).

The Workgroup is one of four smaller groups that report back to the Task Force, which is led by Senators Debbie Regala and Mike Carrell. Workgroup Co-chairs Jeri Costa, Chair of the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board, and Dave Johnson, Executive Director, Washington Coalition of Crime Victims, had posed several questions to county clerks regarding their collection of legal financial obligations of convicted offenders in order to better understand the process and ultimately find ways to reduce the legal barriers to offenders reentering society. The County Clerks in the 39 counties assumed the responsibility for collection from the State Department of Corrections (DOC) in 2003.

Following are excerpts from their report:

### **What are the barriers to reentry of a felon to the community? The greatest barrier to reentry of felons to the community is the use of commercial collection agencies for court obligations.**

- A collection agency demands money without regard for the offender's ability to pay while still maintaining reasonable life expenses; while a clerk collector wants the offender to fulfill his obligations without having to re-offend to live. County Clerk Collection Programs look at an offender's ability to pay his or her legal obligations in all courts throughout the state while still being able to survive financially.

### **Clerks believe there are many factors to consider when examining whether interest rates on LFOs should be lowered or waived during the period of incarceration.**

- The objective of a sentence is to obtain repayment to the victims and at the same time rehabilitate the offender. There must be a balance.
- Victims are deprived of fair compensation in the form of interest earnings accrued on their outstanding LFO while the felon is serving time. They will have to wait until the felon is released from jail to begin receiving payments on the principal, which due to inflation is a reduced dollar amount. In the case of a theft, the victim may have had to purchase a replacement item on which they paid interest at more than 12% in many cases.
- The offender may be in prison for a different crime, and thus may be getting his interest waived on a case because he is serving time for another conviction. Why should a victim of Crime A wait for fair restitution while the defendant is serving time for Crime B and is capable of paying?
- He/She may be in prison work release, earning a wage but with no living expenses, and thus their victims should be receiving LFO payments and interest due on the same.
- Reducing the rate of interest on criminal judgments alone sends a message to victims that we care more about criminals than we do about victims. The law permits victims to pursue restitution under the civil laws so victims could file civil cases and get the additional interest. The interest rate on civil and criminal judgments should be the same.

**The question the work group asked about “reduction of collection rate (25% of Gross)” is not clear.**

- If the question is about garnishments, when a civil wage garnishment is imposed the Court could take up to 25%, but not all counties use garnishment as a collection option. Some use jail as a remedy for non-compliance.

**Should the state take their costs first?**

- From the wages of prison inmates, the state can take up to 80% and 20% can be sent to counties where the offender may owe multiple obligations. The State takes incarceration costs and past due supervision fees from any money the prisoners have or earn. Clerks believe that victims’ rights to restitution should have priority over the states recovery of costs. The victims should not receive little or nothing while a person is incarcerated while the state is taking their costs off the top of the inmates’ incarceration earnings.

**What funds should be used for victim compensation or LFOs?**

- The Clerks’ consensus is that family money paid to incarcerated offenders should be subject to the same percentage collection as earnings and contributions. Incarcerated offenders should not be able to ignore their victims.

**Legal financial obligations should not be separate from other conditions of a sentence.**

- They are a penalty assessment just as incarceration, community service, or work crews are penalties. It is part of the punishment imposed by the court. It is the duty of our society to see that victims of crimes are compensated. The costs imposed on taxpayers by the legal system should be reimbursed by convicted offenders in an amount determined by the court to be equitable and feasible. We cannot underestimate the rehabilitative value of costs, fines and penalties that must be completed before a defendant has satisfied the judgment of the courts. Completing all the terms of a sentence instills in an offender a feeling of accomplishment.

**What are the components of an LFO?**

- **Restitution** – 100% to victims. Restitution is paid to victims before any other assessment is collected.
- **Assessments** –
  1. Crime victims’ compensations- Mandatory \$500.00 per case. This assessment goes 100% to the state.
  2. Drug Fund- Fees Vary – Mandatory for some case types. This assessment goes 100% to the state.
  3. Lab Fees – Assessment Varies. This assessment goes 100% to the state.
  4. DNA Testing - Mandatory \$100.00 per case. This assessment is never paid to the victim.
- **Fines and fees** - Fines: Split 50% to State and 50% Local
- **County costs of prosecution**- Money that the county has expended to provide hearings, and trials for persons charged with felonies. The court has ordered repayment of these costs as penalty assessments. These costs include attorney’s fees, sheriff’s service costs and county clerk filing fees. 100% of the court costs are paid to the county.

**What is statutory interest – simple interest @ 12% annually.**

- Interest is paid to victim before interest to the state and county.
- Split on the interest on penalties other than restitution: 25% AOC, 25% PSEA, 25% to clerk and 25% to County General fund. Offender may request that interest be waived if he/she has paid regularly for 24 months or the judgment principal has been paid.
- Some judges will waive the interest due to the county and state but not the interest due the victims.
- Interest on Criminal Obligations is not treated like interest on civil obligations. All criminal payments go to principal first and the last thing paid is the interest.
- Interest accrues until the principal is paid then the interest does not increase because we cannot charge interest on interest as is done on civil obligations. That is called compounding interest.

**How much of total payments goes to principal and how much to interest?**

- Your questions about what is paid each year to the principal and how much is paid in interest cannot be answered by clerks. AOC may be able to provide a report. Our records indicate that interest to the state and to

the county is about ten percent of the total dollars collected. Restitution to victims is about 40% of the dollars collected (this figure includes interest on their restitution).

**How much money is collected and what is the cost to counties to collect that money?**

- Total collections have been reported to the Legislature in December 2004 and December 2005. Copies of these reports are being submitted today under separate cover from this letter. You will note that there are large uncollected LFO debts. The large uncollected amounts include obligations for incarcerated felons, people whom DOC are supervising and those who have been deported, can't be located or on outstanding warrant status. Although the clerks' offices share responsibility for attempting to collect LFOs, we have separate budget information on costs for the clerks' programs.
- Chelan County has offered this example to address the question regarding the costs to counties for collection of legal financial obligations.

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. 2005 Total Dollars Collected | \$800,000 |
| 2. Paid to victims              | 300,000   |
| 3. Cost of program              | 100,000   |
| 4. Paid to state                | 120,000   |
| 5. Paid to county               | 280,000   |
- The \$280,000 that was paid to the county reimbursed the county for a portion of public defender contracts (over \$1 million budgeted annually), sheriff's arrest and service fees, and county superior court personnel costs (judge, court reporter, prosecutor, deputy clerk, crime victims unit and jury costs).
- Law and Justice costs for most counties are approximately 70 to 80 percent of their total current expense funds budget; it is clear that \$280,000 is a small reimbursement to counties for the costs of processing criminal cases.

**Other questions of the Workgroup can be answered as follows:**

- Supervision costs are administrative fees imposed by agencies, not a legal financial obligation imposed by the Court.
- Waiver of fees is not very common because few defendants manage to make 24 consecutive payments.
- Offender education occurs every time the court enters a judgment. Offenders -are advised of waiver laws and the language is also contained in all judgments and sentences.
- Changing interest rates and accrual during incarceration or turning off and on interest would have to be controlled in the state AOC system with a DOC download. This could be very confusing because defendants may have several sentences to serve. Determining in which sentence interest should be waived and if interest is waived on sentences that are not prison sentences while the defendant is incarcerated is very problematic. Clerks have no way to determine if defendants are incarcerated in another county.
- **Is elimination of interest on the obligation a reward for re-incarceration?** If defendants re-offend do they get a reward of interest reduction on all other cases? Current law is intended to reward those who comply and who do not re-offend – this suggestion is contrary to that law.

*“Please consider that the primary purpose of collections programs is to gain compliance with court orders and to enforce restitution orders.* National research shows that defendants lose respect for courts and are more inclined to re-offend when court orders are not enforced. Enforcement equates to respect for courts and authority and results in less crime in our communities. We also ask the workgroup and the task force to consider the clerks' concerns for fairness to victims. We urge you to only recommend changes that enhance an offender's ability to conform to norms and standards of society. Do not accept changes that simply forgive felons' debts owed to other members of society. There are ways to manage collections that both encourage compliance with the law, support rehabilitation and reentry, and help maximize fair victim compensation. The county clerks' collection programs have been very successful both in improving compliance with court sentences and in increased restitution to victims. County Clerks are pleased to report that the payment of restitution to victims has increased by 24% and the proceeds to crime victims' compensation increased 6.3% in the first two reporting periods since the passage of ESSB 5990, Chapter 279, 2003 Laws of Washington. ESSB 5990 transferred the responsibility for collection of LFOs to County Clerks from the Department of Corrections. We are pleased to offer this service to our communities and have been proud of the amounts of money we have managed to recover for the state, counties and victims. We have also shared the pride of the many offenders that have sent us letters expressing their sense of accomplishment and their appreciation for our help in completing their LFOs. We feel we are offering a humane,

rational and valuable service to every party in this legal situation. We would be happy to answer any further questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact us.”

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## ***Transportation & Public Works***

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### **Request for Proposals for Aquatic Species Passage Projects on Forest Highways**

The Forest Service is requesting proposals for projects to correct passage for aquatic species at road-stream crossings on Forest Highways. This is in response to the \$10 million funding that became available in the Transportation Bill (for fish passage on Forest Highways).

The process for submitting projects in Oregon and Washington is as follows:

- The Regional Office issued a letter dated August 15 to the National Forests in Region 6 requesting projects.
- The proposals are due to the Regional Office (from the National Forests) on September 27.
- Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a Forest Service team in late September/early October. The team will develop a prioritized list of projects from Oregon and Washington.
- The prioritized list will be submitted to the Forest Service headquarters in Washington, DC by October 6.
- A national priority list will be developed and the results should be announced by the end of 2006 calendar year.

This is a multi-year program and includes funding for assessment, preconstruction (NEPA, survey, design) and construction. Proposals may include projects that can be implemented in fiscal year 2007 (by September 30, 2007) as well as projects that will require multi-year funding. All projects intended for multi-year funding will re-compete for future year funding.

Projects will be rated considering the following criteria:

- Addresses threatened and endangered (T&E) and other emphasis aquatic species first.
- Maximizes the amount of habitat that will be made available.
- Leverages to the greatest extent possible other funds both internal and external.
- Addresses large-scale watershed partnership projects.
- Ensures project will not introduce invasive species into refugia for native aquatic communities.
- Ensures the proposed project is consistent with the long term objective of the road.

#### **What the Counties and States need to do if they would like to submit projects to be considered for funding:**

- Make sure the project is on a designated Forest Highway (and within the termini of the designation).
- Contact the National Forest that is accessed by this Forest Highway (contact Julie Murray at [JMurray@wacounties.org](mailto:JMurray@wacounties.org) to obtain list of National Forest contact persons).
- Provide data to the National Forest to aid in completing the “Capital Investment Project Detail Sheet – Fish Passage Projects – FY2007.” (again contact Julie Murray at [JMurray@wacounties.org](mailto:JMurray@wacounties.org) to obtain instructions and forms to complete Detail Sheet).

The National Forest will make the formal submittal, including the Detail Sheet and a multi-year spreadsheet to the Regional Office by September 27. This means the National Forest will need input from the Counties and States as soon as possible.

### **County Comments Sought on Commute Trip Reduction Program Draft Rules**

The legislature passed the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Efficiency Act (ESSB 6566) during the 2006 session based on recommendations from the CTR Task Force's 2005 legislative report. WSDOT is seeking feedback on the program's draft administrative rules. A copy of the draft rules, as well as additional explanatory information, can be found on <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/tdm/taskforce/tfmaterials1.cfm>. WSDOT has also created an online survey to help you submit comments electronically. The new rules will affect Benton, Clark, Franklin, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima counties.

## Your Input Sought on GMA Transportation Concurrency Study

The Legislature directed the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to conduct a fact-based analysis of applying the transportation concurrency requirement of the Growth Management Act to state-owned transportation facilities. Eric Johnson, WSAC Assistant Executive Director, has been participating in a workgroup WSDOT convened to conduct the analysis.

The workgroup has reviewed the current statutory setting of concurrency and has evaluated state, regional and local administrative practices related to concurrency within local jurisdictions. WSDOT and WSAC are seeking your input on the question: What gaps in law and practice hinder the fulfillment of GMA's concurrency goal, and in particular, those that relate to state highway congestion? Please provide your input as soon as possible to [EJohnson@wacounties.org](mailto:EJohnson@wacounties.org).

A report summarizing the facts and data resulting from the analysis, describing potential policy options, and evaluating the potential impacts of those options will be submitted to the legislature no later than December 1, 2006. As a result, the workgroup has a tight timeframe to discuss problems and policy options. It is expected that concurrency will be a hot topic in the 2007 Legislature, and therefore, your input now is very important in framing the future debate.

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## Association News

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### Favorable WCIF 2007 Renewal

On August 17, 2006, the Washington Counties Insurance Fund (WCIF) and Washington Counties Insurance Pool (WCIP) Board of Trustees/Directors approved benefit changes and monthly premium rates for 2007.

Premiums for the WCIP's medical plans will increase an average of 4.18% while Group Health Options' premiums will increase 5.5%. These premium increases include the cost of bundling Long Term Disability (LTD) and Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) enrollment automatically with enrollment in the medical plans.

In addition to the favorable renewal rates and bundled LTD and EAP enrollments, a number of benefit enhancements were approved for the WCIP's medical plans including an increase in chiropractic visits, adding a smoking cessation program, eliminating the application of the deductible for office visits, and covering flu shots at 100% when received out-of-network. Other changes include offering a new high deductible health plan (HDHP) with a health savings account (HSA), adding the option of composite or two tier monthly premiums, and reducing the premiums for LEOFF1 nonmedicare retirees to match those offered to active employees.

For Group Health Options, the Budget Plan's benefits will change to mirror the Options plan offered by PEBB in 2006. This change was made in response to the PEBB's decision to eliminate its Options plan in 2007. In addition, the tiers of premiums for our four Options medical plans were changed to match the tier ratios of the WCIP's medical plan which resulted in premium decreases for dependent children and increases for employees and spouses.

The premiums for vision and life insurance plans will remain unchanged in 2007 for the third consecutive year.

The Washington Dental Service plans will increase an average of 4%. The orthodontic lifetime maximum was raised to \$2,000 and a new incentive plan will be offered. Also, the Premier dental plans will be changing to Enhanced PPO plans which will not impact patients receiving services from Premier dentists but will increase the benefits for those receiving restorative dental services from PPO dentists.

Willamette dental plans will not be offered in 2007. However, employers may execute contracts directly with Willamette at a premium increase of 9.94% and the WCIF will continue to provide administrative support (e.g., web enrollment, combined billing, COBRA administration) to ease the transition. For those employers deciding not to contract directly with Willamette, arrangements have been made with WDS to handle ongoing orthodontia treatment so there is no adverse impact on a patient's copays from no longer being enrolled in Willamette dental plans via the WCIF.

The LTD and EAP plans may also be offered as separate stand alone plans by employers that do not offer WCIF/WCIP medical plans. The EAP plan was enhanced by adding financial and legal benefits for \$1.94 per employee per month. The basic LTD and voluntary buy-up in coverage can also be offered outside of WCIF/WCIP medical plans with slightly higher monthly premiums.

Besides LTD from Standard Insurance, the other new plan being offered in 2007 is Flexible Spending Account (FSA) administration by Zenith Administrators.

More information on the above benefit changes, new plans and premium schedules will be passed out at the Insurance Advisory Committee meeting on September 14 at the Radisson Hotel in SeaTac. For more information, please call the WCIF at 1-800-344-8570.

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# Training & Upcoming Events

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WASHINGTON STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES  
206 TENTH AVENUE S.E., OLYMPIA WA 98501  
TELEPHONE (360) 753-1886 • FAX (360) 753-2842

## Growth Management – “Planning The Rural Environment” – Special FREE Pre-Conference Offering – All Conference Attendees Invited

Monday, September, 25, 2006

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Doubletree Hotel Spokane City Center, Suite B  
Spokane, Washington

WSAC members and their staff are invited to join Olympia based attorney Sandy Mackie as he presents information on - and facilitates a discussion about - the current GMA issues surrounding “Planning the Rural Environment”.

To frame the issues and discussion, this session will include presentations on case examples, discuss current litigation, and review Growth Management Hearing Boards and Court rulings. Each topic will be followed with a Q&A and Discussion Session to engage members and participants.

### DRAFT AGENDA

- 1) Resource lands -- implication for long term agriculture, forest and mineral designations and uses.
- 2) Urban Growth Boundary and the rural lands interface.
- 3) Choices in rural planning --
  - (a) large lot zoning and "variety of densities"
  - (b) "rural character", "rural" uses and activities and the role of historical precedent
  - (c) LAMIRDS and the search for logical outer boundaries-- residential, commercial, industrial, tourist and other
- 4) Master planned resorts, planned communities, and major industrial centers.

Alexander W. (Sandy) Mackie of Perkins Coie LLP is one of the state's well-known land use attorneys. Mr. Mackie has represented both County and City Governments' planning within the framework of the Growth Management as well as appellants. His practice is based in Olympia.

Please confirm attendance by Wednesday, September 20th by contacting Ginni Peppert- [gpeppert@wacounties.org](mailto:gpeppert@wacounties.org) or Barbara Warden- [bwarden@wacounties.org](mailto:bwarden@wacounties.org) in the WSAC office.

## Calendar of Events

| Meeting  | Location   | Date                                   | Information  |
|--|--|--|--|
| For your convenience training and workshops are bolded.  |  |  |  |
| <u><b>SEPTEMBER 2006</b></u>   |  |  |  |
| <b>Holiday Closure</b>   | <b>WA Counties Building</b>                        | <b>September 4</b>                     |  |
| WA Assn of Prosecuting Attorneys' Juvenile Training  | Icicle Inn, Leavenworth                            | September 10 - 12                      | (360) 753-2175   |
| WA Finance Officers' Assn Annual Conference  | Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center, Tacoma | September 12 - 15                      | (360) 753-7319   |
| <b>WA Assn of Prosecuting Attorneys' Prosecution of Drug Cases Training</b>                      | <b>Icicle Inn, Leavenworth</b>                     | <b>September 13-15</b>                 | <b>(360) 753-2175</b>  |
| WA Counties Insurance Fund/WA Counties Insurance Pool Board & Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC) | SeaTac   | September 14                           | (360) 586-0466   |
| Summit - Mentally Ill in the Jails   | Criminal Justice Training Commission, Burien       | September 18                           | (360) 486-2380   |
| WSACRPD Annual City/County Planning Directors Conference   | Chelan   | September 20 - 22                      | Jerrod MacPherson (509) 545-3521                                     |
| WSAC 100th Annual Conference   | Doubletree Hotel - Spokane City Center, Spokane    | September 25 - 29                      | <a href="http://www.wacounties.org/wsac">www.wacounties.org/wsac</a> |
| Urban County Caucus  | Doubletree Hotel - Spokane City Center, Spokane    | <u>September 26</u><br>Noon - 1:30 pm  | (360) 753-1886   |
| Rural Issues Sub-committee   | Doubletree Hotel - Spokane City Center, Spokane    | <u>September 26</u><br>Noon - 1:30 pm  | (360) 753-1886   |
| Legislative Steering Committee   | Doubletree Hotel - Spokane City Center, Spokane    | <u>September 26</u><br>1:30 - 3:15 pm  | (360) 753-1886   |
| WSAC Board of Directors  | Doubletree Hotel - Spokane City Center, Spokane    | <u>September 26</u><br>2:00 - 5:00 pm  | (360) 753-1886   |
| Assn of County Human Services (ACHS)   | Doubletree Hotel - Spokane City Center, Spokane    | September 27 - 29                      | (360) 586-4219 ext 106 or (360) 561-6317                             |
| <u><b>OCTOBER 2006</b></u>   |  |  |  |
| WA Assn of County Officials (WACO) 48 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference                            | The Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee        | October 3 - 6                          | <a href="http://www.wacounties.org/wsac">www.wacounties.org/wsac</a> |
| WACO Board of Trustees' Meeting  | The Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee        | <u>October 3</u><br>10:00 am - 2:30 pm | (360) 753-7319   |
| WA Association of Coroners & Medical Examiners Missing Persons Training                          | The Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee        | October 5                              | (360) 753-7319   |
| International Assn of Assessing Officers' (IAAO) Annual Conference                               | Milwaukee, Wisconsin                               | October 8 - 11                         | (360) 753-7319   |
| WA Counties Insurance Fund ACE   | SeaTac   | October 18                             | (360) 586-0466   |
| WA Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) Autumn Session & Board Meeting                                      | Red Lion Hotel at the Park, Spokane                | October 25 - 26                        | (360) 586-7447 ext 100   |
| <u><b>NOVEMBER 2006</b></u>  |  |  |  |

| Meeting  | Location                    | Date                    | Information                              |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs                                   | Skamania Lodge, Stevenson   | November 13 - 17        | (360) 486-2380                           |
| Assn of County Human Services (ACHS)   | Walla Walla                 | November 15 - 17        | (360) 586-4219 ext 106 or (360) 561-6317 |
| WA Counties Insurance Fund Budget  | Kennewick                   | November 16             | (360) 586-0466                           |
| <b>Holiday Closure</b>   | <b>WA Counties Building</b> | <b>November 23 - 24</b> |  |
| <u><b>DECEMBER 2006</b></u>  |                             |                         |  |
| WA Assoc of Coroners and Medical Examiners Medicolegal Death Investigations Training | Red Lion Hotel, Olympia     | December 2-5            | (360) 753-7319                           |
| Newly Elected Officials Training   | Red Lion Hotel, Olympia     | December 3-7            | (360) 753-7319 or 753-1886               |
| WACO Board of Trustees' Meeting  | Red Lion Hotel, Olympia     | December 5              | (360) 753-7319                           |
| Legislative Steering Committee   | Red Lion Hotel, Olympia     | December 8              | (360) 753-7319 or 753-1886               |
| WA Assn of Prosecuting Attorneys' Annual Winter                                      | Crowne Plaza, Seattle       | December 6 - 8          | (360) 753-2175                           |
| <b>Holiday Closure</b>   | <b>WA Counties Building</b> | <b>December 25</b>      |  |

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## Featured Courthouse

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This week's feature:

# Jefferson County



Nearly 300 years after the first European laid eyes on its rugged coast, and two years before Congress established Washington Territory, the Oregon Territorial Legislature created Jefferson County in 1852. At that time the county included all the area from its present southern boundary north to the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Jefferson County waited another 40 years to get a formal courthouse, but finally in 1892 a red-brick, Romanesque style courthouse and majestic clock tower rose high on a hill in the county seat of Port Townsend, overlooking Admiralty Inlet. Enjoy a detailed tour of the historic courthouse and clock tower at [http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/services/courthouse\\_pamphlet.pdf](http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/services/courthouse_pamphlet.pdf).

The annual Jefferson County Fair celebrates traditional family fun the second week of August. Visit Jefferson County at [www.co.jefferson.wa.us](http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us).

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## ***Attachments***

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

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

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

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"Results from our internal customer satisfaction survey show that our customers want two things from Purchasing. First save us time in the procurement process and second save us money. When Kansas City, Missouri uses a U.S. Communities contract we save both time and money for our customers."

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