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Recent Happenings

Attended Samaritan Hospital Vision & Mission Celebration.

Representative Matt Manweller hosted Connell Rail Interchange meeting and the EDC took the lead on coordinating the economic development organizations for the three counties located on the rail line.

Distributed the new wage and benefit report to local businesses and stakeholders.

Participated in video presentation about data centers and their economic impact in Central Washington.

EDC began coordination with Inland Northwest Aerospace Coalition for more visibility in our area.

Attended the AWB Legislative Summit.

Grant County Represented at Northwest Food Processors Association Expo



Portland, OR—The Northwest Food Processors Association held its 2015 Expo earlier this month at the Portland Convention Center. There were three full days of classes and an exhibit area which consisted of more than 250 companies featuring new products, techniques, and a Taste of the Northwest.

“The Northwest Food Processors Association put together a really comprehensive expo,” said Emily Braunwart, Business Recruitment Manager for the Grant County EDC. “In just a few days I was able to touch base with our local processors, meet new companies, and get

the most current information on issues that could potentially impact the industry.”

Braunwart met with companies and shared information about Grant County and the cluster of food processing companies already in the area.

She also attended several lectures that were offered, including one on climate change legislation in Washington and its implications for the Northwest food processors. Other lectures covered incentives for food processors and a Northwest Workforce and Education Forum.

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Can a Rail Line Operate at 170% of its Practical Capacity?

Washington's rail system is expected to handle more than 260 million tons of cargo by 2035— more than double the volume carried on the system in 2010. The highest utilized portion of the states railway system is the BNSF's Spokane to Pasco segment which currently operates at 87% of practical capacity. By 2035, this segment is forecasted to be operating at 170% utilization.

But this raises the question of how a rail line could even operate at 170% of utilization. The answer is that maybe it could...but with lots and lots of costly delays and capacity issues.

Congestion on the BNSF rail line has a direct impact on local businesses in Grant and Adams Counties because all rail shipments into Adams County and the south part of Grant county must travel along the BNSF line and then interchange with the Columbia Basin Railroad short line in Connell. The interchange between the short line and the BNSF mainline in Connell was built 100 years ago and is inefficient for meeting existing rail customers' needs and the problem continues to get worse as rail traffic increases.

Fortunately, work is already underway to develop a comprehensive plan for identifying and prioritizing specific projects that will increase freight mobility and allow for efficient rail service. A meeting led by state legislators including Rep. Matt Manweller, Rep. Susan Fagan, Sen. Judy Warnick, and Rep. Tom Dent brought together stakeholder from across the three counties of Franklin, Adams and Grant to work together to solve the rail

infrastructure challenges.

As a direct result of that meeting, the City of Connell has taken the lead role in applying for a state grant to conduct a detailed feasibility study of the rail transportation needs and future growth of the short line. The study will identify and prioritize specific projects that will be needed to accommodate the coming growth.

"Each community along the rail line has its own list of rail projects and needs," said Jonathan Smith, Executive Director for the Grant County EDC. "While each of these projects could be addressed on a case-by-case basis we believe that by working together in a regional partnership we can better support the needs of business."

One of the most recent businesses to locate along the rail line is Pacific Coast Canola which built a \$109 million facility and relies on rail to receive unit trains consisting of 110 cars. Other large rail users include Simplot, Akzo Nobel, ConAgra LambWeston, McCains, REC Silicon, Western Polymer, and Basic American Foods. In total, the Columbia Basin Railroad line currently serves 60 active shippers that collectively employ thousands of residents across the 60+ miles of track.

"Hopefully we never have to find out if a rail line can operate at 170 percent of its intended capacity," said Smith. "By working together we have a much better chance of accomplishing all of the needed projects on the rail line so that as traffic increases, we will have the infrastructure in place to accommodate that traffic."



State Funds Project to tee up Large-Scale Aerospace Manufacturing Opportunities in Moses Lake

Advanced permitting project will build on growing aerospace industry momentum at Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake.

The Washington State Department of Commerce has announced the award of \$350,000 to Grant County to complete an environmental review of 400 acres of undeveloped land at the Grant County International Airport.

Jeff Bishop, Executive Director for the Port of Moses Lake said that no specific tenants have been identified for the 400 acres but the proposed development includes a number of potential buildings totaling as much as 2.6 million square feet. The sites will be available to aerospace and other advanced manufacturers that would benefit from being near one of the largest airports in North America.

"Moses Lake and Grant County International Airport have a long history in supporting the aerospace industry in Washington," said Bishop. "We have proven our ability to provide a highly capable workforce and low-cost renewable power, as well as the land to support advanced industries. This grant provides us with the opportunity to get ahead on the permitting process and attract even more companies here."



Brian Bonlender, director of the Washington State Department of Commerce also expressed his support of the project. "The land around Grant County International provides some of the greatest opportunity in Washington for large-scale aerospace manufacturing," said Bonlender. "This funding will help get this property ready to go so companies can hit the ground running when they choose to establish new or expanded operations in our state."

In recent years, the Port of Moses Lake has attracted significant interest from the international aerospace community. In 2013, Everett-based Aviation Technical Services established a VIP aircraft completion center now employing approximately 80 people. Last year, Seattle-based AeroTEC partnered with Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation of Japan to conduct flight test and certification operations for the new Mitsubishi Regional Jet (MRJ) there. A new 65,000-square foot

hangar is under construction to support the effort and the Port anticipates as many as 200 MRJ and its supply chain engineers to establish residence in Moses Lake throughout the multi-year project. Moses Lake is also home to BMW/SGL's carbon fiber production facility, which is undergoing an expansion making it the largest facility of its type in the world.

"I am very pleased that Grant County was able to compete and successfully win funding for this project," said Senator Judy Warnick, 13th District—Moses Lake. "This funding will build on the work we are doing to attract more business to the area around our airport, and provide more family wage jobs. The area will be an innovation hub for aerospace manufacturing and will bring so many benefits to the district and state."

Jonathan Smith, Executive Director for the Grant County EDC and board member for the Washington State Aerospace Partnership said, "It is great to see this project started. There is a growing amount of aerospace activity in the state and this prepares Grant County to participate in that growth."





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Founders Circle (\$75,000+ up)

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City of Quincy
Grant County
Grant County PUD
Port of Moses Lake
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ITC Services, Inc.
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Key Bank
Lad Irrigation Co., Inc.
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Million Air Moses Lake
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Tommer Equipment Co., Inc.
Total Employment & Management (TEAM)
Town of Coulee City
Trask Insurance Inc.
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Bronze Division Continued

Work Source Moses Lake Affiliate
Zip Truck Lines, Inc.

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