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PROJECT IMPACT TODAY

A monthly newsletter published by FEMA Region 10 to share information, leverage resources, and capitalize on proven successes for building *Project Impact* disaster-resistant communities.

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PROJECT IMPACT TODAY

BUILDING DISASTER RESISTANT COMMUNITIES ONE STEP AT A TIME

Nature & the Environment: Partnerships Reduce Disaster Losses



Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber, left, and James Lee Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in the amphitheater at the Riverfront Park in Salem, OR after signing a document listing the Willamette River as one of 10 American Heritage Rivers.

A recently released National Science Foundation study, "Disasters by Design: A Reassessment of Natural Hazards" calls for a policy of "sustainable hazard mitigation." The five-year study cites "shortsighted and narrow conceptions of the human relationship to the natural environment" as causal in increasing natural disaster losses. These same themes resonated throughout FEMA Director James L. Witt's 24-25 May Oregon visit, as he repeatedly called for partnerships with nature and the environment to reduce disaster losses and create more disaster-resistant communities.

Director Witt listed healthy natural environments as core *Project Impact* principles to change the way America deals with disasters when he addressed the Association of State Floodplain Managers' Annual Conference in Portland, participated in the Willamette Restoration Initiative-American Heritage River Initiative Signing Ceremony in Salem, and led the *Project Impact* Signing Ceremonies in Tillamook and Benton counties.

"My heart's been warmed by watching the best in people come out when disaster strikes. But my heart's been broken by seeing pain I knew could have been prevented."

-- James Lee Witt

"We believe that part of disaster resistance is using natural protection: wetlands as sponges, timberland as a buffer from mudslides and the coastline as a barrier to hurricane-force winds," said Witt. "Sometimes the best protection against nature's disasters is working with nature's resources."

Virtual Auction: High Tech & On-line

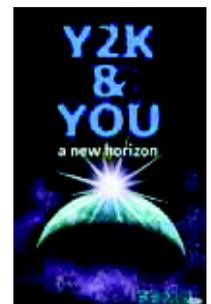


The Seattle-King County Chapter of the American Red Cross teamed up with Yahoo! Auctions to offer the chapter's first annual online auction, this month, raising over \$115,000 for local disaster relief. According to Seattle-King County ARC CEO Jon Fine, Yahoo's support clearly demonstrates their commitment to helping people whenever assistance is needed.

(Cont. on Page 3)

Are You Y2K O.K.?

There is a virtual storm of conflicting opinion on Y2K issues. The flip side is that Y2K does provide a unique opportunity to get the word out on basic family preparedness. The message? Families should prepare for Y2K the way they would for a flood, earthquake, or any other natural disaster. Check out FEMA's comprehensive May '99 consumers guide "Y2K & You, a new horizon," available online at: <http://www.fema.gov/y2k/>



From Regional Director David L. de Courcy

Signing Ceremonies: Sustaining the Momentum



The sheer number of landmark mitigation initiatives launched here in the Pacific Northwest this spring says a lot about our region's commitment to aggressive pre-disaster planning. The quality of these initiatives, and their potential for nation-wide application, speaks volumes. As we move into summer, celebrating beginnings and sharing early successes, we set the stage for expanded partnerships and sustainable progress.

FEMA Director James Lee Witt joined us the last week of May in Oregon on a whirlwind tour that included keynoting the Association of State Flood Plain Managers' 23rd Annual Conference and briefings on Oregon State University's Weatherford Hall seismic retrofit project. He joined Governor Kitzhaber in Salem to mark the Willamette Restoration Initiative's expansion into the American Heritage River Initiative, and participated in the Tillamook County and Benton County *Project Impact* signing ceremonies. I attended the Municipality of Anchorage's *Project Impact* signing ceremony in early June, and am looking forward to returning to Alaska with

Director Witt for Kenai Peninsula Borough's kick-off events scheduled for July 7, 1999.

These are busy, exciting times for all of us as we move to sustain the momentum generated by signing ceremonies. The City of Seattle, and Benton County, Oregon have both held community workshops, and more are planned for the near future. Walla Walla County is publishing its own *Project Impact* newsletter, and many communities, like Seattle, and Pierce and King Counties in Washington, have created local *Project Impact* internet sites. Partnerships already span network television affiliates, major daily newspapers, and the banking, insurance and corporate manufacturing industries, and continue to expand.

There is no "cookie cutter" template for successful beginnings and sustained success, and no one wants one. Our communities are as unique as the hazards that threaten them. But there is already a wealth of good ideas and proven techniques, and we hope that all existing and future partners will generously contribute to, and borrow from, our evolving *Project Impact* tool box.

David L. de Courcy
Director, FEMA Region 10

New Boeing Partnership Deals In Dollars



Gary Oakland, CEO and President of BECU and Jim Palmer, President of Boeing Shared Services

Time and time again, the lesson driven home when natural disasters strike is that there is no substitute for solid preparedness planning; that the time to start mitigating against disaster's worst effects is **before** disaster strikes. It's a concept that has been well received here in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in the corporate sector. In announcing a new landmark agreement between the Boeing Company and the Boeing Employees' Credit Union (BECU), Boeing Shared Services Group president Jim Palmer described local communities and corporate stakeholders as ideally suited to prioritizing threats and taking effective action.

"In the event of a temporary power or infrastructure failure, families often need immediate cash. In that keeping large amounts of cash on hand is unsafe and economically unsound, our partnership with the BECU will provide a solution for this dilemma," explained Palmer. "The Memorandum of Understanding between the Boeing Company and BECU will establish on-site cash disbursement centers at Boeing sites to ensure Boeing employees, family members and BECU membership access to emergency cash in the wake of a major earthquake or other disaster."

Boeing and the BECU are separate companies, with BECU currently serving over 250,000 employees, former employees and family members in 27 states. The Memorandum of Understanding paves the way for many other projects between BECU and the Boeing Company and increased partnership in surrounding communities, including Seattle's *Project Impact* "Disaster Saturday" workshops and seminars.

For more information call BECU's Cindy Kartes, (206) 439-5913 or Boeing's Bob Jorgensen, (425) 865-5877.

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Director of Oregon Emergency Management Myra Thompson Lee
Sustaining Disaster Resistance in Oregon



With 10 Presidential major disasters declared in Oregon since 1990, we have been repeatedly reminded of our state’s vulnerability to natural hazards of all types ... flooding, landslides, earthquakes, windstorms, fires and drought. In 1996 alone, 32 of Oregon’s 36 counties were included in at least one of three major disaster declarations that occurred that year.

Oregon’s policy focus is to learn from the natural hazard events that led to major disaster declarations in the 1990’s, and to mitigate loss of life and property damage from all future natural hazard events. As the recovery from Oregon’s recent flood and landslide disasters progresses toward completion, efforts will continue to reshape and articulate policies and plans in appropriate areas with mitigation as the

cornerstone. For example, non-structural flood hazard mitigation projects that elevate homes and businesses above the floodplain have already shown their cost effectiveness by avoiding any damage during this winter’s heavy rain and coastal flooding in Tillamook and Lane counties.

This same philosophy of taking action before the next disaster ... and by bringing together government, volunteer organizations, citizens and the private sector through partnerships at the local level ... forms the foundation of Project Impact. FEMA’s pre- and post-disaster grant programs have provided a starting point to explore and implement mitigation measures that can make a difference for citizens and their community. Project Impact can build on these success stories; forming partnerships and providing a framework to make a community ... and even a state ... disaster resistant. We are proud to have named three Project Impact communities in Oregon and invited all of our communities to develop local partnerships that embrace the challenge of making their community disaster resistant.

Myra Thompson Lee
 Director, Oregon Emergency Management

**Upcoming Region 10
 Signing Ceremonies:**

July 7th, 1999	Kenai Peninsula Borough, Alaska
July 28th, 1999	Walla Walla, Washington
July 29th, 1999	Boise, Idaho
August 5th, 1999	Kamiah, Idaho
Sept. 13th, 1999	Multnomah County/Portland, Oregon (tentative)
Date to be Announced	Pierce/King Counties, Washington

Seattle Red Cross, Cont. from Page 1...

“We believe the Yahoo! Charity auction marks the first time any Northwest non-profit agency has abandoned its traditional live auction format to run a totally online fundraiser,” said Fine. “The Virtual Auction has been the most successful auction in our 101-year history. We’re thrilled with the results.”

Yahoo! Auction’s senior producer Susan Carls agrees. “Seattle is a wired community, and offering people an online vehicle to support local relief efforts is a natural fit.”

For further information regarding Seattle-King County partnership activities, call (206) 323-2345, or visit www.seattlredcross.org.

Seattle Has More Than Met Its Match... and the program has just begun

Project Impact grants require a local quarter for every federal dollar. The implementation of Seattle’s Project Impact initiative is still



in its infancy, but already the initiative has generated over three dollars in total benefits for every single federal dollar invested. As for the local match, every federal dollar has generated a little less than 3 local dollars.

The numbers are convincing.

The Seattle initiative has three initial project areas. **Hazard Mapping** of seismic and landslide hazards, **Schools Retrofit** of non-structural hazards, and **Home Retrofit** to anchor homes to foundations.

The **Home Retrofit** project provides a good example. The object of the program is to have homeowners bolt their homes to the structure’s

foundation, a common structural failure during earthquakes. To date, 58 people received permits to retrofit, 560 completed a three-hour course on retrofitting, and 120 contractors have completed professional training at the University of Washington. Conservative estimates indicate 100 homeowners have already retrofitted, or are in the process of retrofitting their homes.

The homeowner courses, contractor courses, prescribed construction drawings, expedited permit procedures, and tool lending libraries cost the program \$118,000. The initial retrofitting estimates developed by the City of Seattle averages \$3,800 per house. As a conservative estimate, 100 total homeowners have taken advantage of the **Home Retrofit** program – that is \$380,000 in program benefits. (100 x \$3,800 = \$380,000). The ratio is 3.2 *total* dollars to each federal dollar, factoring in \$118,000 in current program costs. (\$380,000/ \$118,000).

For every federal dollar spent to date, the Seattle Project Impact **Home Retrofit** project area has generated 2.6 local dollars of mitigation. ((\$380,000 - \$118,000)/\$118,000) When the private sector contributions are added, this ratio increases.

If this doesn’t seem sufficiently grand, consider when the expected Cascadia earthquake occurs, benefits could easily exceed 21 local dollars for every federal dollar, even if the retrofitting effort proves only 50% effective.¹

Mitigation is working in Seattle.

¹ If the cost of repairing an un-retrofitted house is \$50,000 then the saving attributed to a successfully retrofitted house is also \$50,000. And if 1/2 of the 100 retrofitted homes save \$50,000 each there would be a post disaster benefit of \$2,500,000 for a \$118,000 program investment or a benefit to cost ratio of 21 to 1.

Anchorage's Project Impact: Preventing Wildfires and Mapping Flood Hazards



The wildfire-fighting "Tazlina Hotshots" fell beetle-killed spruce to lower the risk of wild fire.



Anchorage Mayor Rick Mysrom (L) and FEMA Regional Director David L. de Courcy make it "official."

The Municipality of Anchorage's public and private sector partners gathered on June 3, 1999 to sign their partnership agreement in support of preventing wildfires and mapping flood hazards within the municipality. A tour of the wildfire hazard and a partnership reception sponsored by State Farm Insurance preceded the signing ceremony. The signing ceremony remarks highlighted, as stated by Kent Boothman of State Farm Insurance, how damage prevention "efforts are not as successful nor possible without the partnership and help from many different groups and businesses."

Through their Project Impact partnership, Anchorage's wildfire hazard will be reduced by establishing firebreaks, conducting an outreach campaign on defensible space around homes, and supporting hazard clearance through free chipper sites. Private sector partners include State Farm Insurance, KTUU Channel 2, Chugach Electric, Enstar Natural Gas, Matanuska Electric, Anchorage Daily News, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, and Allstate Insurance. At the signing ceremony, the Allstate Foundation presented the Anchorage Fire Department with a \$5,000 grant to support the wildfire prevention efforts. Numerous Anchorage community councils also joined the effort to reduce the wildfire hazard in their neighborhoods.

Anchorage's work to identify and reduce its flood hazards was also recognized. FEMA has selected Anchorage as its second Cooperating Technical Community (CTC) in the nation. The CTC designation enables Anchorage to manage floodplain identification from the local level. Anchorage received approximately \$60,000 in FEMA funding for flood mapping due to the CTC designation. FEMA's Regional Director, David de Courcy, also presented the Mayor with a National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System plaque for their efforts to maintain floodplain open space, regulate storm water discard, and develop a GIS system capable of identifying floodprone properties parcel by parcel.

Hewlett-Packard: Region 10's First Project Impact Corporate Partner

FEMA has designated Hewlett Packard-Corvallis as Region 10's first Project Impact Corporate Partner. The designation acknowledges Hewlett-Packard's many years of dedication towards building a disaster resistant business, community, and region. Hewlett-Packard recognizes its internal success, following a natural disaster, is dependent on the external conditions in the community where its employees, subcontractors and customers live. One of Hewlett-Packard's core values is a commitment to helping the community at all times. Therefore, in addition to a comprehensive internal approach to preparedness and prevention, Hewlett-Packard has assisted the Benton County, Oregon, Project Impact partnership by providing a loaned executive, as well as other in-kind contributions.

Hewlett Packard exceeded the region's criteria for being designated a regional partner — corporate mentoring and assistance on a regional damage prevention effort. And, to support disaster resilience on a regional basis, Hewlett-Packard will be a sponsor of the



(L to R) Hewlett-Packard Vice President and General Manager, Greg Merten, FEMA Director James Lee Witt and Benton County Project Impact Chair Diane Merten.

Region's upcoming small business damage prevention workshop. As a sponsor, Hewlett-Packard will print the document for distribution throughout our region.

The Regional Project Impact Corporate Partners designation is meant to recognize the invaluable support being provided to the region's *Project Impact* communities. Given the growing corporate participation, the Region

anticipates many additional regional partners in the coming months. For information on Regional Corporate Partner criteria, please contact, Sharon Loper, 425-487-4700.

Boise Acts to Assess Seismic Safety

FEMA recently approved a grant of up to \$60,000 under the National Earthquake Technical Assistance Program (NETAP) to conduct earthquake structural and non-structural assessments of several Boise Schools and the Boise Public Library. These engineering assessments will be necessary to provide the technical justification for some of Boise's earthquake retrofitting initiatives under *Project Impact*.

For more information, please contact Dr. James Zollweg, Department of Geophysics, Boise State University, at (208) 426-3250.



Taking Tsunamis Seriously: Mitigation Tools for Coastal Communities

Tsunami Hazards are Real! Coastal communities interested in becoming Project Impact communities should not forget to include tsunamis in their list of hazards. Geological evidence shows magnitude 8 to 9.5 West Coast earthquakes generate tsunamis every few hundred years. The interval between events can be greater than 1,000 years or as short as 150 years. The last event occurred 300 years ago. Events in Alaska are much more frequent and can send fatal tsunamis to the West Coast as in 1964. New mitigation tools are being developed to assist communities to become more tsunami resistant through the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP).

An Existing Partnership Can Help! The NTHMP is a partnership of Federal and State agencies (NOAA, FEMA, USGS, NSF, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington) led by NOAA and formed to reduce loss of life and property. NOAA is working to improve warning information through installation of deep-water buoys that can detect tsunamis long before they reach the coast. USGS is working to enhance regional seismic networks to improve information about whether an offshore earthquake is likely to generate a local tsunami. FEMA coordinates the Mitigation Subcommittee, which includes the States. The States have developed State and Local Tsunami Work Groups to provide opportunity for county and community emergency managers and other State and Local agencies to input their priority needs into the State Tsunami Program activities. Activities and products include inundation mapping, education and awareness materials, tools for emergency managers, and development of local guidance products.

To find out more about the NTHMP, visit the web site at: www.pmel.noaa.gov/tsunami-hazard/ and contact your appropriate area member or call Chris Jonientz-Trisler at (425) 487-4645.

Celebrating Successes In Tillamook County

Tillamook County was one of those damage/repair/damage kind of places up through the 1996 floods. That is when the Performance Partnership and the push for preventing additional damages took root in the form of elevating buildings, constructing cow pads and other mitigation efforts. To help the County celebrate the successes made possible by working together, FEMA Director James Lee Witt took part in the community's May 25 Tillamook County Project Impact MOA Signing Ceremony. "There are two obvious differences since last time I was here; this time it is dry and people have worked hard to prevent future losses" he said.



FEMA Director, James Lee Witt (L) tours the elevated Nehalem business district -- now elevated above flood levels.

The City of Nehalem, one of the worst hit areas in the 1996 floods served as the showcase for community success. Ken McGough, owner of the Three Village Gallery, said "I was happy to work together with FEMA to protect my investment from future floods". That cooperation was part of a concentrated HMGP project that elevated virtually every structure in that part of the city.

During the community's Signing Ceremony, the 30 original signatories of the community's Performance Partnership reaffirmed their commitment to natural disaster damage prevention and other initiatives addressed by the agreement. Additionally, 25 new partners volunteered commitments ranging from warning system funding assistance by Safeway to field survey work by Nehalem Marine. "Project Impact is the first time I have been able to work with the government and really feel like I was making a difference" said Leo Kuntz, owner of Nehalem Marine.

For more information contact Tom Manning at 503-842-3412

Kenai Peninsula Borough to Sign MOA

The KPB's new Project Impact Coordinator, Kathy Scott, has jumped feet first into working with the community to develop the Borough's Project Impact effort. High on her list of priorities is the upcoming Memorandum of Agreement signing ceremony on July 7, 1999. Private sector partners including UNICAL are participating in this exciting event.

Due to the wide spread beetle kill of spruce trees, the wild-land fire threat to people and property has drastically increased. The Borough intends to showcase its' efforts to reduce the consequences of that and other threats as it works to become a more disaster-resistant community. The Alaska Youth Corps will also be showcased in the KPB's signing ceremonies for its' commitment to help implement non-structural mitigation project for the Borough's senior and homebound population.

For further information call Kathy Scott, (907) 283-6714 at the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Broadcasting Success: KOMO Partners with King & Pierce Counties

Project Impact of King and Pierce Counties has reached agreement with KOMO ABC4 (Fisher Broadcasting) to promote its Computer Seismic Tie Down campaign this fall, with a kickoff at KOMO Kids Fair August 14th. In the spirit of creating disaster resistant communities, KOMO has offered a number of in-kind contributions to the project.



KOMO will produce and air public service announcements, educating residents about creating disaster resistant communities. Weatherman Steve Pool will be the spokesman for the campaign. The vignettes will relate to the Computer Seismic Tie Down campaign, which encourages residents and business people to secure their computers to desktops in the event of an earthquake. One goal of the campaign is to expand the original computer tie down message to examining and eliminating earthquake hazards in the home. KOMO and Project Impact will work together to include third-party partners in the campaign.

KOMO has also agreed to produce and air a three part news series specifically designed to promote disaster preparation and, when possible, they will report on Project Impact stories that affect the community.

During the tie down campaign, KOMO will provide a "hot link" to the King and Pierce Counties Project Impact website, and create its own "Project Impact" page to inform viewers about disaster preparation.

Beaming in Benton County

Benton County's May 24 Project Impact MOA Signing Ceremony in Corvallis commemorated a full decade of pre-disaster planning successes. FEMA Director James Lee Witt celebrated with more than 170 community members at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center on the OSU campus.

The day's festivities began at Hewlett Packard's Corvallis campus which is their premier Ink Jet facility. In addition to a tour of their on-site mitigation efforts to minimize business interruption, HP was acknowledged as the first Regional Project Impact Corporate Partner. "We are happy to share our philosophy of preparing our business before disaster strikes," said Greg Merten, Vice President and General Manager of Hewlett Packard-Corvallis' Ink Jet Business Unit Operations.

The contingent then boarded the City of Corvallis' trolley for site visits of various other damage prevention projects including Dixon Creek, location of a mitigation project after the 1996 floods.

The day's tour highlighted the wide range of activities underway to prepare Benton County area businesses and residents to better withstand future disaster events. Much of the reason the community has accomplished so much is the leadership of Diane Merten, Chair of the Benton County Emergency Management Council. The county expressed its appreciation for those efforts by presenting her with an award during the MOA celebration applauding her "inspired leadership and selfless commitment to local, state and national community safety."

For more information contact Peggy Peirson 541-757-6864



Emergency Management Council Chair Diane Merten (R) recognized Eagle Scout Ryan Long for his leadership in implementing local environmental-friendly mitigation projects.

Napa River Model for Boise River

On May 19th, Dave Dickson with the Napa County, California, Public Works Department, traveled to Boise to discuss an ambitious \$80 million non-structural flood control and river restoration initiative recently passed by the voters of Napa County.

Using Project Impact mentoring funds, the City of Boise, in cooperation with the University of Idaho and Ada City-County Emergency Management (ACCEM), invited Mr. Dickson to Boise to talk to members of Boise River 2000 (a local river advocacy group), officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and representatives from Treasure Valley communities, on Napa's recently approved *Measure A* referendum. *Measure A* seeks to enhance degraded riparian habitat along the Napa River and lessen future flood damages by returning the river to its floodplain by acquiring property, restoring wetlands, and creating open park land.

For more information, please contact: Doug Hardman, director, ACCEM, at (208) 377-6645, or Dr. Peter Goodwin, University of Idaho, at (208) 364-4081

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

