



CONNECTIONS

Published by the Northwest Cooperative Development Center

FALL 2001

NWCDC Celebrates Co-op Month by Hosting an Open House

NWCDC celebrated October 2001 Co-op Month with an annual meeting and open house at the state office of USDA Rural Development in Olympia, WA on October 18th. NWCDC and USDA invited the public to recognize the economic contributions of Washington's cooperative businesses.

Aaron Jones, Chairman of the NWCDC, opened the program by reading a proclamation from Governor Gary Locke designating October as Co-op Month in Washington State.

Jim Jesernig, WA State Department of Agriculture Director and key note speaker, emphasized the importance of cooperatives to the state's agricultural industry.

"The long-term viability of Washington agriculture depends on an independent group of people - farmers - working together through their cooperatives," he said.



USDA officials, Jackie Gleason and Chris Cassidy, present the Rural Co-op Development Grant to NWCDC Chairman, Aaron Jones.

John Annaloro, CEO of the WA Credit Union League, represented a different type of co-op and noted that October 18th is also International Credit Union Day. He reminded those attending that there are 2.2 million credit union members across Washington state and that credit unions are the safest and most sound financial service providers.

A highlight of the event was the presentation of two USDA checks. Jackie Gleason, Washington State Director of USDA Rural Development, presented NWCDC with a \$205,000 check. These funds came from the USDA Rural Co-op Development Grant



Prosser Farmers Market Co-op display of fresh produce and crafts.

Program to assist ten co-op businesses in Washington State. NWCDC has become a recipient of this grant program for the second year in a row. Several NWCDC project participants attended the open house. Prosser Farmers Market Co-op, for example, displayed their fresh produce and crafts.

The other check for \$500,000 was awarded to Pacific Rim Ethanol, LLC, one of the recipients of the USDA Value-Added Grant Program. These funds will be used to construct, own, and operate an ethanol and gluten plant in Moses Lake that will use barley and wheat as its primary feedstock. The project will not only benefit the state's agricultural economy, but will create 400-500 jobs and considerable spin-off benefits in related industries, including transportation and energy.

NWCDC then presented the Cooperator of the Year Award to Mark Johnson.

Johnson has served on Group Health Cooperative Board of Trustees and is a professor at Centralia College. He initiated the revitalization of the NW Co-op Development Center in the Spring of 2000. NWCDC



Mark Johnson, Cooperator of the Year

acknowledged Johnson for his life-long dedication and work to support cooperatives.

NORTHWEST COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Northwest Cooperative
Development Center

NWCDC is an association of consumer, producer and worker cooperatives in Washington, Oregon, Western Montana, Alaska, Idaho, Northern California and Hawaii. NWCDC was founded by cooperatives in 1979 with the mission to promote and strengthen cooperatives in the Northwest. NWCDC was formerly known as Puget Sound Development Foundation. In the spring of 2000, NWCDC was reorganized and renamed in order to include a broader geographical area. The mission of the NWCDC is to foster community economic development, primarily through cooperative business models.

NWCDC Board of Directors

Aaron Jones, Chairman - WA Rural Electric Co-op Association
Mark Johnson, Treasurer - Group Health Cooperative
Art Siegal, Secretary - Group Health Cooperative
Al Ochoa - Ochoa Ag Unlimited Foods
John Annaloro - WA Credit Union League
Leslye Teuber - Recreational Equipment, Inc.
Tom Von Muller - Bonneville Power Administration
David Howard - WA State Grange
David de la Vergne - Group Health Cooperative
Dan Coyne - WA Council of Farmers Cooperatives
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NWCDC Projects for 2001-2002

Rural communities in the Northwest face persistent economic and social challenges. NWCDC's strategy is to solicit and support innovative solutions to these challenges, including: increasing farm production of low-cost, renewable energy such as wind, solar and biomass; reaching out to and empowering Hispanic communities; helping local cooperative businesses compete with national retail chains; and saving family farms.

"Last Mile Electric Co-op" is a collaborative effort between the NWCDC, WRECA and other organizations to supplement hydropower by increasing the use of wind generation and other farm-based energy projects. Rural areas of Eastern WA, OR, ID, MT and Hawaii have abundant wind resources, and rural landowners are seeking ways to use their windy sites to produce power. The project is an ongoing effort to promote renewable energy sources to ease the strain on existing generating capacity and to improve development prospects for rural landowners. "Last Mile Electric Co-op" was incorporated in April, 2001; in August, a General Manager was hired.

Next Generation Energy Cooperative

This project seeks to facilitate and expedite the development of distributed, small-scale solar-electric installations in western WA. NGE co-op will also serve as an information and technical resource for individuals and businesses interested in adopting or developing various other forms of renewable energy solutions, including wind, fuel cells, biodiesel, and biomass systems.



Mariposa Images

NWCDC will continue to provide cooperative education and business support services to a group of Hispanic women in Eastern WA. Several local established and developing businesses have decided to join their forces and form a marketing co-op of artisans.

Prosser Farmers Market Co-op

During 2000-2001, the NW Co-op Development Center in cooperation with Benton Rural Electric Association has provided funding and services to transform the existing Farmers Market into Prosser Farmers Market Co-op. The newly established co-op will assist local Hispanic growers and other owners of small farms in meeting their economic needs. During 2001-2002, the NWCDC will continue



to bring business services and co-op education to the members of the co-op.

WA Cooperative Preschools

The purpose of this project is to strengthen the ability of the over 400 cooperative preschools in WA to accommodate the increasing enrollment of Spanish-speaking parents and children.

Adoption of WAGES Curriculum

This curriculum was developed by Women's Action to Gain Economic Security (WAGES), a non-profit organization based in Mountain View, CA. The curriculum is a teacher's guide which provides a comprehensive technical assistance manual to groups of Hispanic women interested in starting cooperatively-owned businesses.

North Country People's Co-op

The Co-op has been in business for 26 years and is the only community-owned grocery

store and bakery/deli located in Colville, WA. It is facing serious competition from large warehouse stores such as WalMart. The co-op needs immediate assistance with administrative support, consultation, and community outreach.

Ferry County Food Co-op

The co-op was organized in 1976 as a non-profit cooperative and a socially responsible business. It was founded by a group of people desiring to establish a means of obtaining natural and organic foods and encouraging cooperative ownership.

Southwest WA Local Link Co-op

Small family farms, the foundation of many rural communities, are disappearing nationwide and in Washington state. The Southwest Washington Local Link Co-op will work to restore family farming as a safe, satisfying, and viable vocation, and to re-establish local agriculture at the center of healthy communities.

Island Grown Farmers Cooperative

The co-op was incorporated in October 2000 and is now preparing to assume ownership and management responsibility of the meat processing facilities portion of the San Juan Food Processing Center. The co-op members are all small-scale livestock producers who will be using the meat processing and marketing services of the cooperative.

WIND NEWS

NW Wind Maps

More than \$350,000 has been raised through the NWDC to produce high-resolution maps of wind resources of the Northwest. The wind maps will help landowners and utilities make a first-cut determination of the feasibility of installing distributed wind turbines to supply power on-site. They will provide utilities and developers with a much better understanding of where the best wind resources are and screen out less promising areas, significantly minimizing the cost and timing of prospecting. NWDC has signed a contract with TrueWind Solutions that will be hired to

use its advanced MesoMap mesoscale modeling system to produce the wind resource maps of the Pacific Northwest. So far, preliminary maps of WA, MT and ID have been developed.

NWDC has also signed a contract with NW SEED (Sustainable Energy for Economic Development) staff to develop an interactive website for broad public access to the Northwest Wind Map. The NW Wind Map website will include several levels of "zoom-in" capability to allow a user to locate a specific area of interest and retrieve wind resource data for any 40-acre site in the region. Our target release date for the website will be announced in the next edition of "Connections."

"Last Mile Electric Co-op"

"LMEC" manager, Dave Warren, traveled to Eastern WA last week to set up the first 10-meter wind tower on the property of Ms. Betty Jean Black in Nespelem County. Two more towers are expected to go up by the end of the year. In the meantime, two members of "LMEC", Plumas-Sierra Electric Co-op in CA and Wells Electric Co-op in Nevada, are putting up two 50-meter wind towers.



"Harvesting Clean Energy II" Conference.

NWDC and Climate Solutions are coordinating the upcoming regional conference "Harvesting Clean Energy II - Farming for Energy Independence." The date and location of the conference are February 26-27, 2002 at the Doubletree Airport in Pasco, WA.

The focus of this year's conference is economic opportunities for farmers to harvest new revenues and create vital rural jobs from a new "agricultural commodity" - clean energy. The technologies discussed and on display will include large and small-scale wind, biogas, biofuels, and irrigation and stock watering systems powered by the sun and wind.

For registration information please contact **Laura Aymond** at (360) 943-4241.

Al Ochoa Joins NWDC Board

In October, NWDC has acquired a new board member, Al Ochoa, a successful businessman from Kennewick, WA. The Ochoa family runs and owns a growing company, Ochoa Ag Unlimited Foods, that produces a variety of farm products and premium-quality french fries. Ochoa



comes from the Hispanic background, which makes him an invaluable asset to the NWDC and our minority clients.

Mr. Ochoa has a wife, Diane, and three sons: A.J., David, and Brett. He is also a former director of Big Bend Electric Co-op.

Annual United Co-op Appeal Campaign (UCA Campaign)

The UCA Campaign is coordinated by the Cooperative Development Foundation. The purpose of the UCA Campaign is to raise funds to support qualifying 501 (c)(3) cooperative development organizations nationwide. Through these organizations, funds are extended to help struggling communities in the U.S. improve their economic and social well-being.

This is NWDC's second year of participation in the UCA Campaign. Last year the center raised over \$12,000 through the campaign. The money was used to help several NWDC's projects.

For more information or to request a contribution form, please contact Madina Cavendish at (360) 269-8093 or email to: nwcdc@qwest.net

Yes! I want to be in the cooperative loop

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