



**MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:**

Grandview  
Granger  
Harrah  
Mabton  
Moxee  
Naches  
Selah  
Sunnyside  
Tieton  
Toppenish  
Union Gap  
Wapato  
Yakima  
Yakima County  
Zillah

**YVCOG EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE:**

John P. Hodkinson, Jr., Chair  
*Regional Planning Commission*  
James A. Restucci, Vice Chair  
*Sunnyside City Council*  
Mike Leita  
*Yakima County Commission*  
Norm Johnson  
*Yakima City Council*  
Dan Olson  
*Union Gap City Council*  
Loren Belton  
*Mayor, Toppenish*  
Velva Herrera  
*Mayor, Mabton*



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**Public Transportation Discussion at  
March YVCOG General Membership Meeting**

*By J. Page Scott, Executive Director*

On March 19, at the Vineyard in Grandview, YVCOG General Membership had a presentation and discussion about the history and possible future of public transportation in the Yakima County region. Page Scott, YVCOG Executive Director, and Tom Hanson, Washington State Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division presented results of an informal survey of YVCOG members and provided a brief history of public transportation milestones in the Yakima County region's history.



Tom Hanson provided a statewide perspective and was pleased to hold up the Yakima County region as an example of expanding transit service through interlocal agreements. The expansion of Yakima Transit service to Selah and Union Gap is a model that has not been used elsewhere in Washington State.

Madelyn Carlson, CEO of People for People, and Ken Mehin, Yakima Transit Manager, were on hand to answer transit ridership and cost questions posed by YVCOG members.

When asked what the next steps would be to continue exploring public transportation options for this region, Tom indicated that the next logical step would be to convene a Public Transportation Improvement Conference (PTIC). There are three ways that a PTIC can be convened (RCW 36.57A.020):

- by the Board of County Commissioners,
- by resolution of 2 or more cities within the county, or
- by petition of at least 10% registered voters of last general election.

*Clarification: At the YVCOG General Membership meeting, option 2 was incorrectly described as a resolution by 2 or more cities requesting that the County Commissioners convene a PTIC. The statute **does not require** that the County Commissioners be the conveners. The statute allows for 2 cities to convene the PTIC.*

If you have any questions or would like further information about public transportation options, please feel free to contact Page Scott, YVCOG Executive Director, at (509) 574-1550 ([scottp@yvcog.org](mailto:scottp@yvcog.org)) or Tom Hanson, WSDOT Public Transportation Division, at (509) 667-3029 ([hansont@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:hansont@wsdot.wa.gov)).



## FY 2008 CMAQ Call for Projects

By Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner



The Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO has issued its FY 2008 Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) call for projects. CMAQ provides funding that may be used by states, local agencies, non-profits and private businesses for projects and programs that reduce transportation-related emissions in federally designated air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas. To be eligible for CMAQ funding in the Yakima Valley region, the project or program must take place within the boundary of the PM<sub>10</sub> limited maintenance area and demonstrate a contribution to PM<sub>10</sub> emission reductions.

Federal CMAQ funds are allocated to MPOs/RTPOs by WSDOT for regional prioritization and selection. \$389,460 in funding is available in the Yakima region during the FY 2008 call for projects. Air quality modeling requests are due to YVCOG by April 23, 2008 and final application are due by May 28, 2008.

For more information contact Drew Miller at 509-574-1550 or millerd@yvcog.org.

## Juniper Dunes Wilderness Area in the Spring

By Rick Spada, GIS Analyst



It's spring and I would like to tell you about a beautiful wilderness area located close to the Yakima Valley. Springtime in the Juniper Dunes Wilderness Area is especially beautiful with wildflowers, juniper trees and sunny clear blue skies contrasting with white dry sand dunes. The landscape and colors mixed with the aroma of sage and wildflowers make this area a special place to visit. It is also a place of solitude with motorized vehicles only allowed on the outskirts of the preserve.

The Juniper Dunes Wilderness Area includes six groves of the largest concentration of western juniper trees in the state. These groves have existed here in relative isolation for thousands of years, with many individual trees having grown for two or three centuries. Wild animals thrive here including mule deer, bobcats, coyotes, badgers, skunks, weasels, porcupines, pocket gophers, kangaroo rats, several species of mice, hawks, owls, ravens, quail, partridge, pheasants, doves, numerous songbirds, and rattlesnakes. The area is also home to the largest sand dunes in Washington State. The dunes, some of which are as much as 100 feet high, are located in what was essentially a flood basin at the end of the last ice age.

To get there, go towards Pasco, take the Walla Walla exit then drive east 2 miles on Highway 12 to Pasco/Kahlotus Highway. Turn left and drive 5.5 miles to Peterson Road. Turn left and drive 4.5 miles to a large sandy parking area, where the jeep trail starts. If you need topographic maps ask the USGS for Levey, Levey SW, and Levey NE.

Contact me at (509) 574-1550, or spadar@yvcog.org, if you have any questions as I am heading out to the dunes as soon as the wildflowers start blooming. Be sure to bring lots of water, it sure is dry there.

## New Requirements for 6-Year TIP

By Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner

In April the Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will discuss new requirements for reporting costs in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have issued a new rule that affects fiscal constraint determinations for TIPs. The new planning rule contained in 23 CFR 450.324 requires "year of expenditure dollars" to be included in project cost estimates for the TIP.

A 4% annual inflation rate was used to estimate costs in the recently completed *Yakima Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan 2007-2027*, and YVCOG will participate in consultations with WSDOT, FHWA, FTA and the TAC to determine an appropriate rate(s) for estimating costs. Incorporating this requirement into the TIP will result in a more stringent view of fiscal constraint because revenues are projected to grow at a slower rate than project costs, providing for fewer dollars to cover future construction costs.

Local agencies will need to incorporate year of expenditure estimates into their 6-year TIPs this year so YVCOG can implement and comply with this rule in time for development of the 2009-2012 MTIP/RTIP. It is anticipated that YVCOG will soon distribute an Excel spreadsheet that will facilitate local jurisdictions in incorporating the appropriate inflation rate(s) for estimating future costs.

## SWAC Up and Running Again

By J. Page Scott, Executive Director



After taking a few years off, a new Yakima County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) has been formed. The first meeting was held on January 24, where new members were introduced and a chair and vice chair was selected. The SWAC will be updating the 2003 Yakima County Solid Waste Management Plan and 1991 Hazardous Waste Management Plan over the next 12 months.

Stay tuned for periodic updates in YVCOG newsletters. If you have any questions about the SWAC or the plan updates, please contact Wendy Mifflin, Yakima County Solid Waste Manager, at (509) 574-2458 (wendy.mifflin@co.yakima.wa.us).

### Your YVCOG Staff:

J. Page Scott, Executive Director  
Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator  
Vacant, Senior Planner  
Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner  
Saadia Hassan, Planner  
Richard Spada, GIS Analyst/Systems Administrator  
Gene E. Weinmann, Housing Rehab Coordinator  
Jim Dixon, Housing Rehab Building Inspector  
Tamara Hayward, Housing Rehab Office Specialist  
Nancy Soules, Administrative Finance Officer  
Judy Price, Office Specialist



## 'Just Wondering...'

By Brian Curtin, CTR Program Coordinator

*Wind, Rain, Snow or Sleet of night will not deter me from my chosen means of transportation: my bicycle. Day in and day out I face the challenges of bicycle commuting. I am one with my bicycle and my wardrobe shows it, I have more cycling jerseys than work shirts and my nicest pair of shoes has cleats in the soles. So, Mr. CTR Guy, I was just wondering if you could recommend any recreational rides that would allow me to decompress from the rigors of commuting and still enjoy my passion for cycling.*



Great question Cycling Guy! I can recommend an excellent book called "Great Bike Rides in Eastern Washington and Oregon" by Sally O'Neal Coates, published by Wilderness Press. This month's featured ride is 'Gateway to Wine

Country'. It begins and ends in Zillah, WA. Take exit 52 off of Highway 82 and look for the Claar Cellars sign on Vintage Valley Parkway, that's where our ride begins. After visiting with the friendly folks at Claar Cellars, head back towards the stop sign on Vintage Valley Parkway. Take a left, cautious of exiting freeway traffic, towards Zillah. In the middle of town, turn left, go one block, then turn right on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Follow 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. out past the High School. At this point the road has changed from paved to chip seal. As you cross Yakima Valley Highway, the road name changes to E. Zillah Drive. Continue straight on E. Zillah Drive, rolling into your first ¼ mile downhill, followed by a ¼ mile uphill, characteristic of the rollers throughout the ride.

You are surrounded by vineyards and orchards as you leave town on this two lane shoulder less well-paved road. You will soon cross the Sunnyside Irrigation canal, a critical irrigation source for the wine region. Turn left on Lucy Lane and continue on for 2 miles. Turn left on Highland Drive, travel about ½ mile then turn right on Vintage Road. The book tells us that we will be heading towards Covey Run winery, but a lot has changed in the Rattlesnake Hills Appellation since the book was published. At the end of Vintage Road you will now find Silver Lake Winery and a spectacular view of the valley's orchards and vineyards. Leaving Silver Lake, reverse course and return to Highland Drive. The next three wineries are also not in the book. Turn right and ride about ½ mile and you will find Paradisos Del Sol on the left. Another ½ mile finds you at Roza Drive and another new winery, Maison de Pagett. Take a moment to enjoy their lovely English gardens and view of Mt Adams. Continue west on Highland Drive about ¾ mile and turn right on Cheyne Road. About a quarter mile on your right you will find Two Mountains Winery. The newest addition to Rattlesnake Hills Appellation, their label features Mt. Adams and Mt. Rainier, both of which are spectacularly visible throughout the ride.

Continue north on Cheyne Road just over 1 mile until you reach Gilbert Road. Turn left and ride about ½ mile and you will find the paved drive through the gates of Hyatt Vineyards. Here you will find the most spectacular view of both mountains while nestled within the vineyards. Their pristine,

park-like grounds provide a perfect opportunity to take a break and enjoy a well deserved picnic. Departing Hyatt Vineyards turn left on Gilbert road and ride ½ mile to N. Bonair Road and turn left. Travel about ¾ mile and you will find Wineglass Cellars on your right. Continuing south on Bonair Road you will cross Highland Drive onto a hard packed dirt road. A somewhat bumpy, yet beautiful ride through mature orchards and newly planted vineyards takes you back a century or two to the unique European style setting of Bonair Winery. This is another great place to enjoy your picnic lunch. Leaving Bonair, you will take a right onto Highland drive and ride just over 1 mile and turn right on Cheyne Road. Remain on Cheyne Road, crossing Yakima Valley Highway, about 2 miles back into Zillah. At the intersection with 1<sup>st</sup> turn right and then again turn right at Vintage Valley Parkway for your return to Claar Cellars.



I offer a few words of caution regarding this bike tour. The ride is rated easy with rolling hills and beautiful views and a length of about 20 miles. You might experience a local phenomenon called "goat's heads" or puncture vines which are little seeds with deadly (to tires) spines. Be sure to bring along a patch kit and extra tubes. If you are riding with a large group, call ahead to the wineries and let them know you are coming, they appreciate the heads up. Also, we visit eight wineries along the way and there is no such thing as a designated driver when you're riding a bicycle, so seriously consider the effects of too much tasting. And of course, wear your bright colors and head gear. Enjoy the ride and until next time, we're '**Just Wondering...?**'

### APRIL MEETINGS...

**MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee**  
Thursday, April 10, 2008  
311 North 4th Street, Suite 202  
Yakima, WA

**YVCOG Executive Committee &  
MPO/RTPO Executive Committee & Policy Board**  
Monday, April 21, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.  
The 300 Building  
311 North 4th Street, Suite 202  
Yakima, WA

### TITLE VI Notice to the Public

YVCOG fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, see <http://www.yvcog.org/title6.pdf> or call (509) 574-1550.