

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, December 13, 1989

9:00 a.m. Department of Community Development - Discussion Regarding Assistance to Communities Impacted by Federal Supply Reductions.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Wednesday, December 13, 1989, with Commissioners Dave Rohrer, Ruth Wylie and W. W. Vaux present.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - DISCUSSION REGARDING ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY FEDERAL SUPPLY REDUCTIONS.

Present for this discussion were Denny Coole, representing the Washington State Department of Community Development; Don Krupp, Assistant Director - Department of Community Development Community - Preservation and Development - Division; Meg VanSchoorl, Manager - Department of Community Development Community Revitalization Unit; Kay Eichinger, Forest Products Program Director - Department of Trade and Economic Development; Teri Eager, Program Coordinator - Training and Economic Analysis Division - Employment Security Department; and Don Wick, Executive Director - Economic Development Association of Skagit County.

Mr. Krupp explained that at the last legislative session, the legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill 5911 (the Adams-Hatfield Bill). He stated that the Department of Community Development (DCD) has been directed to work on implementation of the legislation. He stated that the DCD and Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) have been charged with providing assistance to counties impacted by the bill. Mr. Krupp explained that the purpose of the discussion was to explain the proposed assistance program to those counties identified as experiencing the most impact from the bill, and to gather comments from those counties on the program.

Mr. Krupp explained that the counties most affected by SB5911 will be those on the Olympic Peninsula and, to a lesser degree, those in the Baker-Snoqualmie area. He stated that target areas for the DCD program have been identified as the Olympic Peninsula (Clallam and Grays Harbor Counties), Southwest (Lewis and Cowlitz Counties), Mount Baker-Snoqualmie (Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish Counties, and Gorge (Klickitat and Skamania Counties).

Commissioner Wylie asked if a determination has been made on the amount of forest related revenue loss these counties will suffer. None of those present were able to state specific amounts.

Ms. VanSchoorl then reviewed the components of the DCD's plan. She stated that \$450,000 was appropriated in SB5911 for assistance to counties. She stated that the DCD has proposed that \$250,000 will be utilized on the Olympic Peninsula in Clallam and Grays Harbor Counties. A staff person for technical assistance will be hired for a two year period with \$100,000 of the funds. The remaining \$100,000 will be available to other counties identified as target areas.

The group discussed Jefferson County and its exclusion from the list of targeted counties.

Commissioner Wylie expressed concern at the use of \$100,000 for technical support, stating that EDASC already provides economic data and support to Skagit County. She felt more of the funding for the staff person should be allotted to the affected counties.

Ms. VanSchoorl stated that the DCD plans to assemble economic development strategies for each of the four identified areas through work with a consultant, the DTED, the Employment Security Department (ESD) and regional timber committees. These strategies will determine the allotment of the \$100,000 to other communities.

Commissioner Wylie questioned the types of strategies that will be discussed by these groups. She expressed concern over plans to retrain and relocate workers whose culture and lifestyle produces strong bonds to Skagit County.

Ms. Eichinger stated that the goal of the DTED's Forest Products Program is to preserve the timber industry. She stated that she will primarily be acting as an advocate of the forest products industry, and has formed an informal advisory council to give her direction for her activities.

Ms. Eichinger stated that the Northwest Policy Center affiliated with the University of Washington is being utilized to perform a study on the economic impact of SB5911 on Washington counties. She stated that forest products origins will be studied and trends in technologies and markets will be evaluated. Diversification opportunities will be examined as a last phase of the study, and a model will be developed in a chosen county.

Ms. Eichinger stated that the DTED will also be hiring a technical assistant to consult on industrial extension within counties. She discussed other short term efforts being made by the DTED to benefit timber areas.

Ms. Eager explained the function of the Dislocated Workers Unit. She stated that the program utilizes on-the-job training, providing subsidies to participating employers, and formal training through communities colleges, universities and vocational schools. Ms. Eager stated that workshops are also used to aid in the adjustment of workers to new situations. Crisis intervention is also a part of the program.

Ms. Eager explained the Warn Legislation, which mandates companies employing 100 or more workers to give notification of plant closures of 30 days or more that will result in layoffs of more than 1/3 of their employees. She stated that the Dislocated Workers Unit responds promptly to plant closures, contacting employees about available programs immediately.

Finally, Ms. Eager explained the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, which helps workers whose jobs have been affected by foreign trade, especially imports.

Mr. Krupp then asked that the Board comment on the program proposed by the DCD, and make suggestions on how best Skagit County might be served.

Commissioner Wylie noted that eastern Skagit County is most strongly affected by the decline in the timber industry, and that that portion of the county is most interested in new industries that would create new employment opportunities at salaries commensurate with their previous employment.

Mr. Wick agreed with Commissioner Wylie, noting an extreme decline in the shake processing industry, which most notably affected eastern Skagit County.

Commissioner Vaux pointed out that SB5911 does not help Skagit County because the logs harvested by the two major suppliers located in Skagit County are processed in other counties. Commissioner Vaux felt Skagit County could be best helped by an increase in the supply of federal cedar.

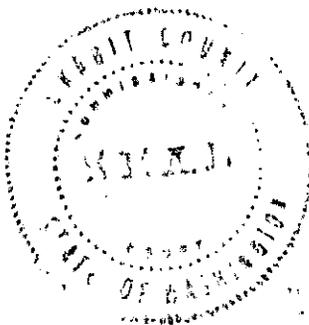
Commissioner Wylie reiterated the need for development of value added industry, and Commissioner Vaux suggested Delta Resources of Sedro Woolley as a company whose growth could be encouraged, thereby providing more jobs.

The discussion ended at this point.

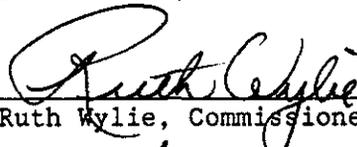
ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wylie motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Vaux seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

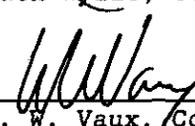
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Dave Rohrer, Chairman

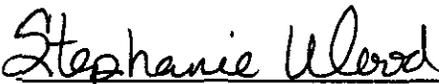


Ruth Wylie, Commissioner



W. W. Vaux, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners