



NEWS RELEASE

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Subject: Port of Chelan County's plug-in Prius to be a highlight of state energy policy meeting

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An innovative demonstration vehicle owned by the Port of Chelan County will be a center of attention on Wednesday, Feb. 7, at a news conference and joint legislative committee meeting in Olympia. The meeting, scheduled from 3:30 – 5:30, is likely to be televised on TVW (Channel 95 in the Wenatchee area). Port economic development director Ron Johnston-Rodriguez will show and speak about the Port's plug-in Toyota Prius, the centerpiece for an initiative promoting plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) as a solution for reducing dependency on oil.

"I'm so pleased that the Port of Chelan County is front and center in pushing these types of important, innovative solutions to our energy and environmental challenges," said Senator Linda Evans Parlette, R-Wenatchee. "Exploring alternative uses of energy will be key to the discussion of creating sustainable energy sources in the future."

Johnston-Rodriguez's talk will be part of a presentation by the statewide Electrify Transportation in Washington Group to a joint meeting of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources committee and Senate Water, Energy and Telecommunications Committee. The Legislature is considering two bills encouraging the use of cleaner energy, including biofuels and electric vehicles. Committee members on Wednesday will focus on PHEVs. On Friday they will consider truck stop electrification, idle reduction kits and seaport electrification.

Also speaking on Wednesday will be Jim White, project energy services engineer for Chelan County PUD, who will discuss implications for utilities, should plug-in vehicles become widespread. Other speakers include Ron Sims, King County Executive; KC Golden, Policy Director of Climate Solutions; Rich Feldman, Washington State Coordinator of the Apollo Alliance; Rober Babik of General Motors; Steve Johnson, Executive Director of the Washington PUD Association; and David Kaplan, President and CEO of V2Green.

Johnston-Rodriguez will demonstrate the Port's plug-in Prius and explain the commitment of partners in a North Central Washington consortium toward establishing the region as a center for alternative

vehicle technology and education. The Advanced Vehicle Initiative (AVI) Consortium includes the Port of Chelan County, City of Wenatchee, Wenatchee Valley College, Lake Chelan School District, Chelan County, Chelan and Douglas County PUDs, Link Transit, and the Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council.

Last fall, AVI Consortium volunteers converted a standard 2005 Prius into a plug-in by installing an additional battery pack, charger, and related electronics and software. Johnston-Rodriguez will describe to state leaders the experience of driving a plug-in hybrid; the readiness and future of the technology; its potential economic benefits and development opportunities; the vision and objectives of the Advanced Vehicle Initiative Consortium's Plug-in Center; and how the State can help.

Johnston-Rodriguez will also be promoting the third AVI plug-in action summit in Wenatchee on May 14 and 15, 2007. The summit, titled "Power Up! Electrifying Transportation," will focus on vehicle and battery advancements, plug-in hybrid conversions, vehicle-to-grid (V2G) interaction, and solar integration. He will also seeking support for the Lake Chelan School District's effort to acquire a plug-in hybrid school bus that will run on electricity from the grid and a biodiesel blend.

For more information visit the AVI web site, www.plugincenter.com, or call Johnston-Rodriguez at (509) 663-5159.