Still pushing for needed customs building to project aerospace jobs

I was disappointed to hear that the state Senate this week failed to include $350,000 for a much-needed U.S. customs facility at Snohomish County’s Paine Field Airport, especially after the state House had included the funding.

Until two years ago, Snohomish County processed planes carrying aerospace parts through customs out of our airport office, but a change in regulations now requires a separate facility, forcing the Boeing Company and others to make an extra flight to get here.

Each flight processed through U.S. customs at another site costs as much as $40,000, putting Snohomish County at a competitive disadvantage for future aerospace work (think 767 tanker, next-generation 737) and new jobs.

We need this funding now in order to open a customs facility by 2013 – at which point we anticipate as many as 10 deliveries per month for production of the new 767 tanker. Aerospace is the backbone of this region, and Paine Field has become an international center of commerce.

For a relatively small budget figure ($500,000 total, of which Snohomish County will provide $150,000), we can provide a much needed service that will decrease costs incurred by our industries.

My office is working to secure the necessary funding in the state budget, but I also encourage you to let your voice be heard. Let your state legislator know how much this investment means to the future of your families and this state’s employment base.

On a positive note, the state Legislature passed Snohomish County’s proposed triage facilities bill, which now awaits the governor’s signature.
Current law requires law enforcement officers to take people in need of alcohol, drug or mental health treatment to a hospital emergency room, a jail, or expensive facilities designed for those presenting more serious medical conditions.

Under the bill before the governor, non-medical triage facilities can be tailored to hold people in crisis until they are stabilized or while they wait for further evaluation. Through this legislation, we can provide a higher level of care to our most vulnerable citizens while achieving significant savings to the taxpayer.

In today’s economy, we must make every effort to find workable methods by which state budget cuts create fewer impacts on a community. This triage bill does just that.

Sincerely,

The SnoStat system tracks how well the County is delivering services, the costs of those services, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Simply visit our SnoStat Web site.

Contact me:
3000 Rockefeller Ave.
M/S #407
Everett, WA 98201
Phone: 425.388.3460
Fax: 425.388.3434
Send me an email,

Sincerely,

Aaron Reardon

Reardon supports land strategy protecting farms and fish

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon and Council Chairman Dave Somers commemorated Tuesday the completion of the first phase of the Snohomish Sustainable Lands Strategy, which provides simultaneous protection for agriculture and environment.

Launched in June 2010, the land strategy reconciles agriculture and environmental restoration interests through “net gain” for both farms and fish and wildlife, bringing together differing and competing interests.

“The purpose of this agreement is to define the principles upon which future farmland and fish and wildlife preservation should be based,” Reardon said. “The Sustainable Lands Strategy recognizes the importance of other issues as well, including clean water, economic viability and tribal cultural concerns.”

“Sustainability of the land and our communities is the essence of this agreement,” Somers said. “We’re proving that preserving our farmlands and restoring our salmon runs are not mutually exclusive goals, we can and must have both.”

Standing with Reardon for the signing were members of the
Snohomish County Council, Tulalip and Stillaguamish tribes, state representatives as well as agriculture and restoration community groups.

The agreement is non-regulatory in nature and requires further development to become fully effective, yet it reflects a commitment by all parties involved to continue good-faith efforts toward balancing farmland protection with habitat protection.

“The only way to succeed here is by recognizing that we all have a place here,” said Glen Gobin, the Tulalip Tribes’ vice chairman. “I know we can go forward together and find real sustainability for all of us.”

“As we got into the process, the conflicts were clear: farm versus fish,” said Brian Bookey, a member and former chairman of the county’s Agricultural Advisory Board. “But we learned that we can get past the butting heads and that we have a means to find and protect the best farmland and best fish habitat.”

Next steps include developing more specific plans geared toward the protection of farmland and habitat as well as proposed county code changes to promote use of the land strategy. Under the “net-gain” model, these should be done in a way to enhance both without a land loss for either when possible.

The primary areas of focus under the Sustainable Lands Strategy will be agricultural and restoration interests in the estuaries of the Snohomish and Stillaguamish rivers, the county’s two main river systems. Much of the county’s designated agricultural land lies within these estuaries, as do some of the most crucial salmon recovery efforts to date.

Under the Sustainable Lands Strategy, steps taken will be reviewed in three years.

Reardon recognizes 911 dispatchers, call-takers
Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon declared this week National Public Safety Telecommunications Week in honor of the work two 911 centers do in Snohomish County.

Each year, SNOCOM and SNOPAC respond to more than 800,000 calls for police, fire or emergency medical services. The two centers in Snohomish County provide 24-hour emergency communications between residents in need and emergency responders.

“When an emergency occurs, the prompt response of police officers, firefighters and paramedics is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property,” Reardon said. “The safety of our police officers and firefighters also is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from citizens who call our two 911 communication centers.”

The result of having well-trained staff at both centers is a lower rate of injury as well as a higher rate of criminal apprehension.

“We count on their critical decision-making, poise under pressure and compassion during times of distress,” Reardon said.

Still, residents can help 911 dispatchers when they call by:

- Knowing where to send help;
- Remaining calm and being prepared to answer questions;
- Following all instructions given by dispatchers;
- Only calling 911 for emergencies.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my electronic newsletter.

If you would like to send me your comments and feedback, or if you would like to unsubscribe, simply reply to this message.
You may also contact me directly by phone at 425.388.3460.