

BYKE BYTES: Bike More, Drive Less, Get Active
An E-newsletter from the Bicycle Alliance of Washington
February 9, 2006

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Washington Doesn't Want to be Average!

Bicycle Lobby Day is behind us but the legislative session doesn't end until March 9th. The Bicycle Alliance is following closely Senate Bill 6339 which would limit the ability of regional planning organizations to choose Transportation Enhancement projects on local needs and priorities and instead require allocations based on national averages! As of this writing, SB 6339 is still in the Senate Rules Committee. Should it move to the House of Representatives, the Bicycle Alliance will issue an action alert calling for all State Representatives to oppose this bill. Stay tuned. Representative Ed Murray, the House Chair of the Transportation Committee indicated his opposition to the bill in a meeting with Bicycle Alliance staff Louise McGrody and Barbara Culp.

Safe Routes to School Training Coming to Wenatchee

On Thursday, March 23, the Bicycle Alliance is bringing a day long Safe Routes to School training to Wenatchee. Participants will learn engineering, enforcement, education and encouragement strategies for designing and implementing Safe Routes for their school neighborhood. This class is open to parents, teachers, school administrators, healthcare professionals, transportation professionals, and others who are interested in making it easier for children to walk and bike to school. The training will be facilitated by Barbara Culp and Dave Janis of the Bicycle Alliance, and David Levinger of Feet First. The training is free but space is limited. **Contact JoEllen Colson** at the North Central Educational Service District **(509) 665.2618** or joellenc@ncesd.org to reserve your seat. A detailed description of the workshop can be found at www.bicyclealliance.org/saferoutes/#workshop.

Funding the Conserve by Bicycling Program

By Andy Clarke, League of American Bicyclists

Issue

The 2005 Energy Policy Act (PL 109-58) signed into law by President Bush on August 8 authorizes a \$6.2 million program to study the energy impact of shifting car trips to bicycle trips in up to ten communities. Funding must now be appropriated to implement the study, which will be managed by the Secretary of Transportation.

Status

Each year, Congress must appropriate funds for spending by the different government departments. The Department of Transportation's annual budget is included in an appropriations bill that also funds the Treasury, Judiciary, and Housing and Urban Development departments as well as the District of Columbia.

In February, the President submits a budget for approval to Congress for the following fiscal year (FY 2007 starts on October 1, 2006 and runs through September 30, 2007). Based on that budget and its own priorities, Congress debates and ultimately passes a series of appropriations bills. In order for the Conserve by Bike program to be funded, an allocation of money must be included in the transportation department's annual appropriation.

Background

The Conserve by Bicycling program is designed to conserve energy resources by encouraging the use of bicycles in place of motor vehicles. The legislation was proposed long before the gas price hikes and \$3/gallon gas prices in the fall of 2005 and seems even more appropriate and necessary now than ever.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 755, requires the Secretary of Transportation to establish not more than 10 pilot projects to

- * use education and marketing to convert motor vehicle trips to bicycle trips
- * document project results and energy savings
- * maximize bicycle facility investments
- * demonstrate methods that can be used in other regions, and
- * facilitate the continuation of ongoing programs sustained by local resources.

The Secretary of Transportation is required to enter into a contract with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a report on the feasibility of converting motor vehicle trips to bicycle trips. The study shall take into account experience in the pilot communities, existing travel patterns, a cost-benefit analysis of bicycle infrastructure investments, and a description of factors that would encourage more motor vehicle trips to be made by bicycle.

\$6.2 million is authorized for the Conserve by Bike program: \$5.15 million to carry out the pilot projects, \$300,000 to coordinate and manage the program, and \$750,000 for the NAS study. In addition, funding for the pilot projects must be matched with 20% of state or local money.

Opposition

The provision was a very small part of the Energy Policy Act. We can anticipate concerns about ANY increased funding or earmarking of funding for programs in a tight budget year, and the Department of Transportation may resist the allocation of their funding

towards this project. However, as part of an overall energy policy - and especially as an effort to reduce our reliance on imported oil – promoting alternatives to driving clearly makes sense.

Transportation Lobby Day is Thursday, February 16th in Olympia. You'll have the chance to learn more about transportation issues, meet with legislators, attend hearings, and be a professional lobbyist for a day! To RSVP contact Rachel Smith at 206.329.2336 or rachel@transportationchoices.org.

2006 IAC Grants Workshops

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) will host its annual grants workshops in February and March. These workshops are designed to help organizations interested in applying for IAC grants for outdoor recreation facilities and habitat conservation. Workshop and grant info can be found at www.iac.wa.gov/iac/grants.asp.

Volunteers Needed: Two volunteers are needed for the evening of March 15th from 6:15 to 8:30 PM for the Seattle Mountaineers 2006 NW Environmental Issues Course. Peter Hurley of Transportation Choices is the keynote speaker for the evening topic of transportation in the Northwest. Volunteers will set up a table with Bicycle Alliance materials and talk to participants during breaks. Call Barbara Culp at 206/224-9252 or email barbc@bicyclealliance.org if interested.

Downtown Seattle Bike Network

The Urban Mobility Group is working to gather current information on bike parking and shower facilities in downtown Seattle. Please call them at (206) 613-3122 for more information.

Share the Road License Plates are selling well - 333 plates in January! Please buy yours soon! Part of the cost is tax deductible. Go to www.bicyclealliance.org for more information.

First bicycle in Washington Territory arrives in Seattle on November 14, 1879.

On November 14, 1879, the first bicycle ever seen in Washington Territory arrives in Seattle aboard a steamer from San Francisco via Portland. Seattle Merchant William H. Pumphrey displayed the boy's size two-wheeler in front of his store at 617 Front Street (later 1st Avenue). On November 18, 1879, Jules Lipsky bought the bicycle for his son.

The *Weekly Intelligencer* predicted, "Another season will find many bicycles here in active use." The newspaper also noted that William H. Pumphrey & Co. featured "a stock of books not equaled elsewhere in the territory." (*found on HistoryLink.org, file #250*)