

District, LDP marching toward a more sustainable future

story by Joe Saxon

Members of Walla Walla's Leadership Development Program (LDP) are helping the District march toward a more sustainable future.

Curtis Been, Dean Holecek, Scott Hall and John Lomeland are devising plans to address the District's water, vehicle and electricity use.

"We focused on areas where data is available," said Dean Holecek. "While these green initiatives all have a feel good component, it was very clear to us early on that we need to be able to quantify where we are and where we need to go. We've come up with the focus on water, power, fuel and a general sustainability focus to tie up the loose ends."

Executive Order (EO) 13514, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance, states that sustainability "means to create and maintain conditions, under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations."

The EO emphasizes that sustainability should not only be a natural part of all the Corps' decision processes, but should also be part of our organizational culture.

Been, a civil engineer in Geotechnical Design, is helping determine if the District is over-applying water faster than the soil can absorb it. He worked for the Natural Resource Conservation Service in the past and "half my job was doing irrigation water management plans for farmers and irrigators," he said.

"The District Headquarters uses 70,000 gallons per month through the year and up to a million gallons per month in summer," he said, "but it appears that the irrigation use is high, so modifying our procedures may save two million gallons per year."

Regarding fuel, "the District fleet used over 100,000 gallons of petroleum this last fiscal



photo by Joe Saxon

year," Holecek said. "That equates to about \$425,000 at \$4 per gallon. Reducing that use is going to require a District wide effort."

"We want everyone to think about the most efficient vehicle they can use and the most efficient ways to meet their missions in respect to travel," he said.

"For instance, making sure we're not sending four or five partially filled vehicles to the same meeting is a good place to start. Also, do we have the most efficient fleet composition to meet our needs? We'll be working with the Vehicle Fleet dispatch system to help us meet our goals. But we'll need help from a lot of people and organizations to achieve our goals," he added.

Jon Lomeland said the Headquarters Building used nearly two million kilowatt hours of electricity in fiscal year 2012, costing \$147,385. He encourages building residents to try and do their part with the little things such as "turn off their individual space heaters, lights when there not needed, and for coffee-users with their own coffee pots, consider using collective coffee pots instead of having an individual one. As public stewards we should pick up the baton and move this forward."

"We're just a small group in LDP, but there are many interested people around the District who are making a difference," said Scott

Hall. "It takes everyone's effort to buy in. This is critical because it requires a process change for our employees to take hold. We want this to carry forward so everyone can see the benefits."

Anyone wishing to join the District's Sustainability efforts should contact Been, Holecek, Hall or Lomeland.



Of the 21 federal agencies with accessible scorecards on the OMB website, USACE was the only agency to be red in every category in 2012.

USACE Goals

(1) Reduce energy intensity in USACE buildings

(2) Increase the Corps' use of renewable energy and implement renewable energy generation projects on agency property

(3) Reduce the Corps' use of fossil fuels by:

- using low greenhouse gas emitting vehicles, including alternative fuel vehicles
- optimizing the number of vehicles in the agency fleet
- reducing the USACE fleet's total consumption of petroleum products by a minimum of 2 percent annually through the end of fiscal year 2020, relative to a baseline of fiscal year 2005.