



AVI E-newsletter

E-newsletter from the Advanced Vehicle Initiative Consortium Issue #1 ~ February 2, 2006

Editor: Ron Johnston-Rodriguez, Economic Development Director
[Port of Chelan County](http://www.portofchelan.com), WA ~ (509) 663-5159; Email: avi@ccpd.com

The November 15 [Summit](#) at the [Confluence Technology Center](#) generated strong and continuing interest in the Advanced Vehicle Initiative (AVI) launched in July, 2005. The founders of the AVI have met several times to follow-up on ideas and resources identified at that event, and to further refine an evolving plan to accomplish the goal of ***establishing the region as a center for testing, demonstrations, research, design, training, maintenance and manufacturing activities for advanced vehicles and fuels, with a primary focus on Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) technology as a platform.***

This newsletter represents the first step in the effort to inform and educate active members of the consortium, prospective members, community leaders and other interested parties about the ongoing activities of the AVI and related efforts. The newsletter will not adhere to a fixed schedule, but is anticipated to be issued electronically on at least a quarterly basis. Content, format, frequency and authorship is likely to change as the newsletter evolves. Please contact the editor at avi@ccpd.com to submit a news item for a future newsletter, or to add or remove your name from the mailing list.

HIGHLIGHTS

- [Local Partners](#) listed as founders of Plug-In Partners National Campaign Kickoff
- Announcement of Regular Monthly [Meeting Schedule](#) for AVI Consortium
- [Tech Group convenes](#) to plan conversion of hybrid cars into Plug-Ins
- [Lake Chelan School District](#) plans to purchase a Plug-In School Bus
- Interest in [bio-diesel](#) availability and use in NCW grows
- [AVI homepage](#) to receive significant makeover

Plug-in Partners National Campaign

The founding partners of the Advanced Vehicle Initiative (AVI), are pleased to announce the successful launch of the [National Plug-in Partners Campaign](#) on January 24, 2005 at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. The intent of this grass-roots, nationwide initiative is to demonstrate to U.S. automakers that there is a demand for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs). The press conference featured presentations and video clips of several speakers who participated in the AVI Summit: Prof. Andy Frank, "Father of the PHEV"; Felix Kramer of [CalCars.org](#); and Roger Duncan of Austin Energy, leader of this nationwide effort. The video of the event can be viewed over the Internet at <http://www.connectlive.com/events/austinenergy> .

Notably, several local entities are among the first in the nation to support this effort as "founding partners". The City of Wenatchee is one of just 11 cities nationwide listed as a "Founding Partner" of the national initiative. The Port of Chelan County and Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council are two of just five "Founding Partners" in the *Counties and Local Governments* category; the Institute for Environmental Research and Education ([IERE](#) is a Vashon Island partner) is among 16 environmental groups; and the Chelan and Douglas County PUDs are among approximately 120 utilities endorsing the initiative nationwide.

One of the objectives of the AVI Consortium is to encourage other local agencies and organizations to endorse resolutions and participate in activities in support of the AVI and the Plug-in Partners National Campaign. This effort will continue throughout the year.

Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule for AVI Consortium

In response to growing interest, activities, and opportunities – the founding partners of the AVI have decided to expand participation in the initiative to other interested organizations and have established a regular monthly meeting schedule. The AVI Consortium organizational meetings will convene on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. at the Confluence Technology Center. The first regular meeting will be held on February 16, 2006.

Key agenda items for the February 16 meeting include: Plug-in Partners National Campaign; AVI Tech Group Meeting Report; Fleet Managers Roundtable; Bio-diesel projects in NCW report; Organizational Next Steps – MOUs, committee structure, project financing, and a discussion on AVI website content.

AVI Consortium Meetings
3rd Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. at the CTC
Next Meeting: Thursday, February 16, 2006
3 – 5 p.m. at the Confluence Technology Center
Contact: Ron Johnston-Rodriguez, Port of Chelan County, (509) 663-5159
avi@ccpd.com

Participation in the February 16 meeting will be limited to invited representatives of organizations that have expressed an interest in active involvement in the AVI. However, individuals who would like to listen to the discussions are welcome. At this writing, invited participants include representatives from the City of Wenatchee; Chelan PUD; Port of Chelan County; Lake Chelan School District; Wenatchee Valley College; Link Transit; Bio-diesel Coop; WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture & Natural Resources; and Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council.

Tech Group Convenes To Plan Conversion Of Hybrid Cars Into Plug-Ins

If you are interested in technical details and hands-on experience with plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, hybrids, electric vehicles, bio-diesel and ethanol fuels – then plan to participate in the first AVI Tech Group meeting that will be hosted by Blake Murray, Director of Wenatchee Valley College’s Automotive Technology department and a founding member of the AVI.

AVI Tech meetings will convene on the second Monday of each month, at 6:30 p.m. at [Wenatchee Valley College](http://www.wenatcheevalleycollege.edu) Automotive Technology department shop – enter from 9th street. The first AVI Tech Group meeting/lab will focus on Prius conversions, batteries, and organizational matters (i.e., identifying topics, presenters, and demonstrations for future meetings). The first meeting will be held on Monday, February 13, at 6:30 p.m.

AVI TECH GROUP MEETING/LAB
Monday, February 13 ~ 6:30 p.m.
Wenatchee Valley College, Automotive Technology Department Shop
Topics: Prius Conversions & Batteries; organizational matters/plans/topics
Contact: Blake Murray, (509) 682-6631; email: bmurray@wvc.edu

Note: Several participants in the Tech Group have associated with the Seattle Electric Vehicle Association ([SEVA](http://www.seva.org)), one of the most active such groups in the nation. The President of SEVA is very interested the AVI and eager to provide technical assistance to the Tech Group. The AVI Summit provided SEVA an opportunity for a face-to-face meeting in Seattle with Felix Kramer and Ron Gremban of CalCars.org, resulting in the club’s creation of a special group to focus on Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (versus electric-only vehicles). We hope to be working with SEVA on some future workshops, conferences, and auto shows here – and will have access to some of their extensive resources for conversions, components, expertise, and contacts.

Lake Chelan School District Plans To Purchase A Plug-In School Bus

Lake Chelan School District #129 is planning to acquire a Plug-In Hybrid Electric School Bus. The bus will be powered by electricity from the Chelan PUD grid (via on-board batteries) and from a bio-diesel-burning internal combustion engine.

According to Scott Logan, the district's Transportation Supervisor, Lake Chelan is one of just 16 school districts nationwide participating in the [buyer's consortium](#) that will issue an *Invitation to Bid* to manufacture at least 22 school buses. The invitation to bid is tentatively scheduled to be issued in March of 2006. It is anticipated that construction of these "early production" buses would occur over approximately 18 months after the bid is awarded; a PHEV school bus could therefore be potentially on-the-road by December 2007.

Scott has been involved in this project for almost two years. Much of the consortium's time to-date has been spent developing product specifications in consultation with manufacturers and coordinating funding requests. Although the district has commitments for over half the anticipated cost, Scott is seeking local and state assistance to makeup a shortfall of approximately \$110,000 for the project. Email logans@chelanschools.org

Interest In Bio-Diesel Availability & Use In NCW Grows

Aside from the limited amount produced by and for the Bio-Diesel Coop in Peshastin, there is apparently no currently available, reliable source of bio-diesel in Chelan/Douglas counties. However, that situation may be changing before year-end: The Port of Chelan County is exploring the option of supplying the vehicles in the service of Pangborn Airport with B20, a mix of 20% biodiesel with 80% standard diesel; the Lake Chelan School District plans to run biodiesel in the PHEV bus it will be ordering; and members of the bio-diesel coop report their supply does not meet a growing demand.

The AVI will be assessing the local demand for biodiesel with fleet managers and others in an effort to demonstrate to fuel retailers that a sufficient local market exists (assuming, it does) to economically justify offering a reliable supply.

The Next Generation: Rod Cool, an agriculture and natural science teacher at Lake Chelan High School has launched a class project that will involve his students in the production, processing, and demonstration of biodiesel. He's invested in equipment to process waste fryer grease from Lake Chelan area restaurants. The resulting biodiesel will be used in a school pickup truck. He also has plans to grow some crops that can be processed as biodiesel, albeit in tiny batches. Rod could use some additional funds to offset the cost of the equipment; if you can help, contact him at coolr@chelanschools.org

Event Notice!

The office of U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell invites you to a
Bio-Fuels Forum
February 15th, 2006, 1:30-4:30 pm
Kittitas Valley Events Center-Heritage Room
Kittitas Valley Fairgrounds, 512 N. Poplar St., Ellensburg, WA

Panel #1: An Overview of Government Funded Research in Bio-Fuels and Alternative Fuels in Washington

Panel #2: Bio-Fuels: What is happening locally?

Discussion / Q&A

All interested parties, from grower to producer to consumer, are encouraged to attend this event.

Please RSVP to:

RSVP@cantwell.senate.gov

Subject: Bio-Fuels Forum

For additional information, contact:

Kristin.Eby@cantwell.senate.gov ~ (509) 946-8106

AVI Homepage To Receive Significant Makeover

Plans to construct a content-rich, user-friendly, newsy AVI website are underway. Suggestions for content, style, etc. will be solicited from active partners at the regularly scheduled meetings of the AVI Consortium. In the interim, the current homepage located at www.ncwctc.com/205.html will continue to serve as the primary communication center for AVI activities.

Some of the additional topics and functions envisioned for the future website are:

- Summaries of each regular meeting of the AVI Consortium and Tech Group
- News of new advanced vehicle / alternative fuel projects in Chelan/Douglas counties
- On-line “soft-order” requests for individuals and/or organizations interested in owning and/or leasing a Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle
- On-line “soft-order” requests for individuals and/or organizations interested in purchasing biodiesel fuel
- posting weekly performance data of advanced vehicles being tested/demonstrated in the area

We are interested in any constructive suggestions for the website. To submit your ideas or comments please email avi@ccpd.com