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In the Great Smoky Mountains

Oregonians connect at Clean Cities conference

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On November 2-5, I participated in the 2009 Clean Cities Coordinators Leadership Retreat held in The Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The highlight of the packed agenda was an informal meeting with Matt Hale, the other Oregon coordinator from the Columbia-Willamette Clean Cities Coalition. He is a program analyst for the Oregon Department of Energy and operates the coalition out of his office. He works with Rick Wallace, the DOE engineer who spoke at our October 14 Stakeholders meeting. Matt was able to answer some of my questions about reporting and grants they are pursuing. We agreed to have a conference call on the third Monday of each month at 1:30 pm. We believe our coalitions can partner on events and grants in the future.

Other conference highlights were:

- Updates on the National DOE programs and funding
- Fuel economy initiatives
- Motorweek telling Clean Cities success stories on PBS
- National Fleet panel including AT&T, Sysco
- Yellowstone National Park telling about their participation with clean cities initiatives
- New research and training that is being developed to help coordinator efficiency and effectiveness.



RVCC Clean Cities Coordinator Sue Kupillas, right, with Robin Erickson of Utah Clean Cities Coalition in Salt Lake City, center, and Natalia Swalnick coordinator of Denver Metro Clean Cities, left.

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Great Smoky Mountains continued

We had a chance to meet with many vendors and hear their presentations. Another highlight was learning about the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and a networking opportunity as we rode through the park on hay wagons. (See photo of Natalia Swalnick coordinator from Denver, Colorado, Robin Erickson, coordinator from Salt Lake City, Utah and myself.) The excitement came while driving hay wagons through a controlled burn that came right up to the road. I also spoke to some of the California coordinators during this event. The retreat agenda kept coordinators busy from 8 in the morning until after 5 in the afternoon with a break for lunch. During the monthly conference call Thursday (November 12), everyone agreed it was a very informative and useful conference.

The new program that is most exciting is the Clean Cities University, where coordinators can log on to the DOE Clean Cities website and find the University in the tool box. There is an opportunity and requirement to complete at least four courses during a contract year. This should be very helpful information as new opportunities and programs come online. From this retreat, I can only conclude that Clean Cities coordinators are making great strides toward US energy independence with innovative application of alternative fuels, more efficient driving and idling programs and raising public awareness of the need and possibilities. There is growing support from the Department of Energy, Congress and the Administration for this effective grassroots effort.



See more photos: <http://www.nps.gov/grsm/index.htm>

Medford Cruise Poker Run/Car Show

Rogue Valley Clean Cities Coalition hopes to organize an alternative fuel vehicle contingent for the Medford Cruise 2010. We're recruiting drivers or vehicles for a Poker Run on June 18 and a car show on June 20. The Poker Run is scheduled from 9 am to 3 pm Friday, June 18. The Show N' Shine car show is scheduled from 8 am to 4 pm Sunday, June 20, at Hawthorne Park. We're looking for owners or drivers of electric, biofuel, CNG or other alternative fuel vehicles. Motorcycles, buses and delivery trucks are welcome. If you are interested, call Melissa Stiles, 779-0569, or write melissa@roguevalleycleancities.org. To learn more about the Medford Cruise, visit <http://www.medfordcruise.org/index.html>

The Chronicle is a monthly publication of Rogue Valley Clean Cities Coalition. The Coalition is made up of businesses and agencies with a shared goal of reducing the nation's dependence on imported oil. Contact Sue Kupillas, coordinator, by email, sue@roguevalleycleancities.org. Learn more from the website: www.roguevalleycleancities.org