WASHINGTON COUNTY
RURAL TOURISM STUDY WORK GROUP

DRAFT MEETING #1 SUMMARY
JANUARY 21, 2015; 1:00-3:00 pm
Room 109, Washington County Conference Center

Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Present</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Gregg</td>
<td>Jossy Farms</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darla Baggenstos</td>
<td>Baggenstos Farms</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace Dinsdale</td>
<td>Blooming Nursery (and Yoga)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michele Carpenter</td>
<td>David Hill, Vintners Assoc.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Peter Jacoby</td>
<td>Scholls Ferry Vineyards</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harold and Margaret Meyering</td>
<td>Cornerstone B&amp;B</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Klees</td>
<td>Pedal Bike Tours</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Terry Hummel</td>
<td>Cruise in Country Diner</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allen Amabisca</td>
<td>RROMAC and Rural Resident</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyn McCormick</td>
<td>WCVA CEO &amp; President</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nellie McAdams</td>
<td>Friends of Family Farmers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pam Treece</td>
<td>President, West Side Economic Alliance</td>
<td>No</td>
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Project Team / Staff

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<tr>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Present</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Kelly</td>
<td>WA County Long Range Planning</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theresa Cherniak</td>
<td>WA County Long Range Planning</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Stewart</td>
<td>MARStewart Group</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Eugene Wallace</td>
<td>Excell Oregon</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Bob Wise</td>
<td>Cogan Owens Greene</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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Introductions / Welcome
Theresa Cherniak and Anne Kelly welcomed and thanked everyone for participating in the Work Group (WG). They provided a brief on the study, noting that Washington County and independent consultants MARStewart Group and Cogan Owens Greene are managing it, while the Washington County Visitors Association (WCVA) is funding it. They highlighted objectives of the study:

- To explore existing, trending and desired conditions for agriculture, tourism, and their interface in the Washington County’s rural areas.
- To initiate broader discussion on rural tourism activities than accommodated through earlier work on a potential agritourism ordinance.
- To provide opportunity for a wider cross-section of rural interests to safely share ideas, concerns, hopes, and goals, with a degree of anonymity when desired.
- To learn about existing and desired rural tourism levels without making too many assumptions, understanding that for the purposes of this research, rural tourism is regarded broadly, as activities above and beyond traditional farm and ranch use that draw visitors to rural areas.
About the Consulting Team
Mary Stewart, MARStewart Group, introduced the team of consultants who bring a passion for rural community vitality, and a wealth of experience and skills to conduct the study. Consultants present at the meeting included: Mary Stewart, who is the chief investigator for the study; Eugene Wallace, Excell Oregon, who will facilitate; and Bob Wise, Cogan Owens Greene, who provides project management and other services.

Work Group Roles and Introductions
Bob Wise provided an overview of the WG roles and responsibilities. Most importantly:

- Serve as a sounding board, provide insights, connections to other interested parties, and test questions/approaches for interviews and focus group.
- Treat all members and viewpoints equally.

Members were asked to describe their interests in rural tourism issues. Interests include:

- The need to establish an easy way to welcome rural tourism visits and access networking/promotional resources.
- Creating a place to gather and provide healthy choices to visitors and support local businesses (e.g., Helvetia Swiss Festival).
- To understand the needs of farmers and make rural tourism amenable to farmers and other rural residents.
- The emergence of strong small farms and how these might benefit from activities/events.
- Need to address event conflicts neighboring ag/residents related to sound, road/access.
- Need to support signature events (e.g., Helvetia Swiss Festival).
- Ability to expand existing B&B and other local businesses, and host a range of events with clear rules (e.g., bridal showers of 20-30 people, small weddings, corporate and recreational events, “Farmer for a Day”).
- Need to provide good information on rural tourism opportunities and connections in the County and through Portland.
- Farmland protection balanced to protect rural character of county, compatible with rural events.
- Facilitating flexible transportation including bike tours (e.g., Yamhill Wine Country Bike Tours).
- Need to know the facts/baseline information (e.g., role of urban growth boundary (UGB)) and decide who we want to be in the future. Develop Washington County’s image as a place to visit and spend the night. Define success, lay the foundation for moving forward.
- Wineries create alchemy. Need support for local economic development, direct consumer marketing, and clear flexible guidance on what they can host (e.g., corporate retreats, weddings).
- Events and on-farm education can increase incomes and provide direct marketing. Red tape is a real problem (e.g., replacing an existing building with a new one that will be used for similar purposes).
- How to help guide the direction of rural tourism in a changing ag culture where the direct to local consumer interface is growing more important.
- Expansion of opportunities for recreational vacationing.
Study Status and Work to Date
Mary Stewart summarized work to date. Our statistical partner USDA-NASS, has completed a study that provides an historical and current picture of production agriculture in Washington County. We have started the process to place this study information into a form that is easy to access and understand by the client and WG.

About the Focus Group Task for Work Group Meeting #1
Bob Wise indicated most of the time during the second half of the meeting was for the purposes of an abbreviated trial run of the focus group questions and process. He encouraged all to participate and suggest improvements.

Focus Group
The WG responded to a series of questions. These responses will be combined and analyzed with other focus group responses.

Invite List for Focus Group and Individual Interviews
Mary Stewart shared a draft list of Washington County residents who will be invited to participate in a focus group (rural tourism practitioners, production agriculturalists who are not rural tourism practitioners, and organizations and suppliers who have an interest in rural tourism) or one-on-one interview. She invited members of the WG to comment on the suitability of the names on the list and to suggest additions.

Current Questions and Next Steps, Future Communications
Bob Wise, Anne Kelly and Theresa Cherniak mentioned:
- Wrap up: Study is trying to get a picture of where our rural tourism is now, where it might be headed, and desired parameters for it as expressed by a broad cross-section of rural interests.
- Our next meeting will be in about one and one-half months. Mary Stewart plans to present findings from agricultural industry research, focus group and individual interviews.
- Communications: WG communications will be through County staff to the consultants and others as necessary.

Availability for Next Meeting
By a show of hands the group indicated that they favor late afternoon meeting times with early evening as a second choice. Staff planned to send out a Google Doodle scheduling request to WG members and consultants to offer options for possible meeting dates and times.