



# Clatsop Tidings

*A monthly review of County business*

*“Neighbor to neighbor, serving Clatsop County with integrity, honesty and respect”*

February 2010

## County joins effort to solve Highway 101 flooding

No one ever does anything about the weather, the saying goes, but local officials are trying to do something about one chronic weather-related headache.

Clatsop County, local cities, the Port of Astoria and the state highway department have partnered to find a solution to the flooding that hampers traffic on U.S. Highway 101 at Beerman Creek south of Seaside.

The group plans to commission a study of the problem, which occurs nearly every year when heavy rains coupled with high tides send water flowing over the banks of the nearby Necanicum River and onto the roadway, causing traffic restrictions and even closures.

Hydrology specialists were interviewed last month, and

the group will recommend a name to the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, which is tentatively scheduled to approve a contract with the selected consultant on Feb. 24.

All of the participating entities have pledged to contribute toward the cost of the study. The county itself has earmarked \$15,000.

More than a dozen high-water notices have been issued in the past five years and a number of closures – some for “low-profile” vehicles and, on two occasions, to all traffic – have been imposed, leaving motorists stuck with no convenient detours available.

The flooding has been an irritant and worse for North Coast residents, business owners and visitors for years. In 2008 local cities urged Gov. Ted Kulongoski to support a



A permanent sign on U.S. Highway 101 south of Seaside warns drivers during periods of high water.

solution.

While Highway 101 is under the state’s jurisdiction, Clatsop County has joined in the effort for a solution because of the route’s critical importance to citizens and businesses, and the real hardships that the

yearly restrictions and closures cause the whole county.

“ODOT is only responsible for the right-of-way, but the flooding also occurs on the private property next to the

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## *U.S. Census: Count provides vital information*

It’s time to stand up and be counted.

The United States Census kicks off in March with the aim of counting every U.S. resident, and local and national officials are urging everyone to take part.

The U.S. Constitution mandates that the federal government conduct a census of the entire country’s population every 10 years. The data provides a demographic picture of America, and is used not only to redraw Congressional and local legislative districts, but also to determine how an estimated \$410 billion in federal funding will be distributed over the next 10 years.

The population data collected in the Census

helps forecast future transportation needs, show where new schools, hospitals and other important facilities are needed, and drives business development decisions as well.

The count begins in mid-March when questionnaires are mailed out to every household in the in country.

The form contains just 10 questions about the name, age, sex and ethnicity of each of a household’s occupants and whether the home is rented or owned. People are not asked to give out their incomes, social security numbers, bank accounts or other sensitive informa-

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### Upcoming County Meetings

**Planning Commission**  
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 10 a.m.  
Judge Boyington Building

**Board of Commissioners**  
Wednesday, Feb. 10, 5 p.m.  
Judge Boyington Building

**Board of Commissioners**  
Wednesday, Feb. 24, 6 p.m.  
Judge Boyington Building

*Times subject to change*

## Blast from the past



Jerry Ostermiller, left, and Clatsop County Commissioner John Raichl assist the removal of the courthouse cannon Jan. 31. The historic weapon will be restored by volunteers and returned to the spot later this year.

## Flooding: Tillamook study offers model

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highway – those are county residents,” County Manager Duane Cole said. “The county felt it was necessary to provide leadership to resolve the flooding.”

The study area will stretch from the Highway 26 intersection to Avenue U in Seaside, and include river flow measurements, computer modeling and analysis of existing data, according to Ed Wegner, director of county Transportation and Development Services, which helped coordinate the consultant interviews. The study, expected to be completed in August or September, isn't

intended to design a detailed project but instead to set out a series of alternative solutions, he said.

The seemingly obvious solution – simply raising the level of the roadway – won't necessarily work, Wegner said. The highway itself already acts as a kind of dike, restricting the flow of water, and any solution may require some sort of water control measures away from the roadway.

The project is modeled on a similar study conducted two years ago in Tillamook County that examined fixes for the frequent flooding problems at the Wilson and Trask rivers, Wegner said.

## Census: Billions in federal funding at stake

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tion.

If you fill out and mail in your questionnaire, you're done. If you don't, a Census worker will visit your home to ask you the questions from the form in person.

Clatsop County Clerk Cathie Garber, local coordinator for the Census campaign, said one-third of Americans didn't mail in their forms during the 2000 Census, and as a result the federal



**IT'S IN OUR HANDS**

government spent \$2.8 billion to conduct face-to-face interviews. “For every

one percent of the population who doesn't turn in their questionnaire, it costs the government \$80 to \$90 million to get the information,” she said. “The form just takes 10 minutes to fill out,” she added.

To see the actual survey form and to find out other information about the Census, go online to [www.census.gov/2010census](http://www.census.gov/2010census) or call 1-800-932-828

## Citizens still urged to get H1N1 vaccine

Flu season is over, right? Not so fast.

With spring approaching and influenza-related illnesses declining, many people who avoided the H1N1 “swine” flu may feel they're out of the woods. But the virus remains out in the population and can still pose a risk, particularly to those most vulnerable.

The seasonal flu season normally runs through the winter and tapers off in spring. But because the 2009 H1N1 strain originally broke out in the spring, health officials aren't sure whether this virus will dissipate as well or spread again in a “third wave.” For that reason, they're recommending citizens get the H1N1 vaccine.

Vaccine supplies are now plentiful and available at a number of local providers, including hospitals, clinics and pharmacies. People who want to get vaccinated are asked to contact their private health provider or local pharmacy. Clatsop County Public Health is also providing vaccines by appointment – call (503) 325-8500 for more information.

Clatsop County has fared reasonably well during the H1N1 outbreak, with just six hospitalizations and no deaths attributed to the strain.

Clatsop County Interim Public Health Director Margo Lulich credits the low numbers to the cooperation among vaccine providers. Each week the health department worked with hospitals, clinics and pharmacies to make sure the limited supplies reached as broad a number of recipients as possible.

“The providers came forward because they wanted to ensure that people in the community had the vaccine,” she said.

To get the most up-to-date information on local vaccine availability, call the Clatsop County Public Health information line at (503) 338-3600 ext. 4921 or go to [www.co.clatsop.or.us](http://www.co.clatsop.or.us).

More information is also available at [www.flu.oregon.gov](http://www.flu.oregon.gov).