For Immediate Release

2011 IACC Annual Awards
October 20, 2011

(WENATCHEE) The Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) held their third annual Infrastructure Awards program in Wenatchee today. The Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council recognizes projects and individuals that have made a difference in bettering communities in Washington State. This year the IACC gave out eight awards in the categories of Creative Solutions, Community Impact, Community facilities, Solid/Wastewater, Drinking water, Transportation and the coveted Joe Mitchelen Lifetime Achievement award.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD—Gary Rhoades (Mason County)

There are two winners of the Joe Mitchelen Lifetime Achievement award. Ironically, both are from Shelton. The first winner of a Joe Mitchelen Lifetime Achievement award is Gary Rhoades. Gary Rhoades has been the executive director of Evergreen Rural Water of Washington since 1999 and has worked in the public administration of the water and wastewater industry for 40 years.

His career in the water and wastewater industry started back in 1971 when he went to work for the city of Shelton. Gary retired from Shelton with 28 years of service and immediately was sought out for the position of executive director of Evergreen Rural Water of Washington.

Gary has contributed two-thirds of his life to the water and wastewater industry. He sat on the public works board; chaired the water supply advisory committee; and been a member of the American Public Works association.

He is a past recipient of the Roy Morse Public Works Director of the Year award; the Peer Leadership award as well as the Presidents' Award from National Rural Water.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD—"Skip" Rand (Mason County)

The other winner of a Joe Mitchelen lifetime achievement award is "Skip" Rand of the Rural Community Assistance Corporation. Skip Rand distinguished himself with a long service career in the US Army with tours of duty as a Vietnam helicopter pilot before retiring at Fort Lewis. He then went to work for LOTT as a wastewater treatment plant operator in Olympia. He then served as a utility technician for the Thurston county department of water and waste management. Skip Rand took the skills he learned in the Army and used these skills while working for the Rural Community Assistance Corporation helping with utility and infrastructure operation and capacity development projects. As a rural development specialist, he has spent the last 13 years working on community projects, large and small.

Skip Rand's vast experience and knowledge has been felt as a presence in communities in every corner of the state and is widely known and well respected in his field. Even into retirement he will continue to work with communities, people and projects that need his help.

DRINKING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AWARD—Hunters (Stevens County)

In the category of Drinking Water Infrastructure, the winner is the tiny community of Hunters. Hunters Water District's board of three volunteer commissioners have compiled hundreds of hours of their time in grant writing, planning, project oversight, management, operations and maintenance without compensation. Despite being an all volunteer organization, the Hunters water district board overcame tremendous infrastructure hurdles while resolving issues of building and operating a specialized facility that removed arsenic from their water and would solve their community's drinking water issues.

The community of Hunters, along with the Columbia School (which the water district serves) now has an arsenic treatment facility that provides clean reliable drinking water with minimal financial impact upon the residents that the rural water district that Hunters serves.

WASTE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AWARD—City of Snohomish (Snohomish County)

The City of Snohomish had an antiquated sewer system. During heavy rainfall, sewer overflows were being carried away to the nearby Snohomish River necessitating the need for upgraded system that separated storm water flows from the City sewer system. The engineers estimate for the undertaking was a staggering $30 million dollars. The replacement cost seemed daunting considering the city of Snohomish only has a service population of 9,000.

The City of Snohomish did not have the luxury of waiting for the funding to come rolling in. Adding to the pressure to act quickly was the realization that one of the city's pumping stations needed to be replaced sooner rather than later. With the assistance of the IACC, the City of Snohomish raised $7 million dollars for a combined sewer reduction project. One fortunate outcome of the recession has been realized in very competitive bidding by general contractors. With the low bid awarded, the city had additional funds available to make their project aesthetically more pleasing. They hired a local architect to design the new pump station to mimic historic structures in downtown. Other upgrades include the installation wrought iron fences, public artwork, and the establishment of a connecting trail for hikers and bikers and they upgraded a storm water retention pond into a showcase rain garden.

The result is a new system that is not just functional and practical but it has now become an attractive and inviting gateway for the City of Snohomish.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AWARD—Snohomish County Public Works (Snohomish County)

Finding and constructing a truck route around Granite Falls to improve the safety and quality of downtown was a massive 23-year long collaborative effort involving many tribes, federal, state and local agencies.

The project was unusual in the fact that it incorporated multiple and complex round-abouts with intersection designs that could accommodate truck and trailer combinations of up to a maximum of 112-feet in length or "Super Truck" size on a limited access route. Because of the extent and range of the project even the mitigation had to be "Super Sized". The presence of an Archaeological site with artifacts up to 9,000 years old meant that special care and attention to detail had to be considered while excavating the alternate route.

The new route also features noise reduction walls and wildlife under-crossings as well as improved storm water drainages. Opened in November of last year, the nearly 2-mile long bypass diverts trucks away from downtown, saves the trucking companies time and money while residents and visitors now enjoy a safer, and more pedestrian friendly downtown Granite Falls.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE AWARD—City of Washougal (Clark County)

The Washougal pedestrian tunnel project restores the historic link between Washougal's downtown and the Columbia River waterfront. Previously, the only available crossing was a signalized, at-grade crossing of State Route 14: a deadly, high accident, corridor according to the Washington State Department of Transportation.

A 116-foot pedestrian tunnel was the chosen preferred alternative to re-establish Washougal with its historic waterfront. The design goal of the project was to create a safe, desirable, environment for multiple user groups. Special design considerations included using natural local building materials, tree plantings, and other aesthetic benefits such as basalt stone carvings of local area Native American petroglyphs.

The tunnel was constructed of pre-cast concrete segments that were trucked to the site and slid into place which saved time, project costs, and shortened construction related delays along the highway. Despite the presence of a historic era archaeological site, the city of Washougal was able to complete the project in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS AWARD—City of Camas (Clark County)

The Washougal River pedestrian bridge and greenway trail is the final link of a much larger project that began more than twenty years ago. Over time, Camas leadership has methodically acquired over 140 acres of property on both sides of the Washougal River from its entry into the Columbia River along the city's border. This greenway has preserved these contiguous riverfront properties for the benefit of Camas citizens and visitors in perpetuity.

As Camas developed over the years, the developmental pressures upon the Washougal River have been felt by endangered species. Removing one of the last surface water collection systems that had been in place for over 80-years would require the construction of a new well and delivery system.

The well 14 project provides camas with a new source of drinking water, while protecting the summer river flows of the Washougal River for the benefit of endangered species and greatly improves drinking water reliability. As part of the well 14 delivery system, Camas constructed the Washougal River Greenway trail bridge. The new bridge not only serves trail users but also accommodates a new 24-inch water transmission main on one side and a new 24-inch sewer transmission main on the other. This creative solution to Camas growing needs provides an interesting case study for developing partnerships to achieve multiple goals simultaneously.

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD—Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (Yakima County)

The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, instituted a waste handling efficiency project called *mataawit tiichamnan* or "Cleansing the Land".

The overall goal of the Yakama Nation's solid waste program is to develop a tribally administered, sustainable, integrated solid waste management system that is economical, safe and incorporates ancestral knowledge of the ecology into practice while protecting and enhancing cultural and environmental resources on the reservation and the tribe's areas of influence.

With assistance from US Department of Agriculture-Rural Development, the project was aimed specifically at improving waste handling and collection methods employed by the Yakama Nation while changing the waste disposal behaviors and practices that adversely affect the land, the waters and the people of the Yakama Nation.

The tribe set out five goals to change tribal member's attitudes, behaviors and practices. They are: Improve solid waste handling efficiency; reduce costs of waste handling; increase user participation in curbside collection; education and outreach on proper waste handling and recycling; and lastly, improved relationships with their Federal partners at the US Department of Agriculture's regional Rural Development office.

The "Cleansing the Land" program not only met its goals, it has succeeded beyond the expectations of the tribe and the tribe's partners. This pilot program is now being implemented with other tribal groups across the state.