



NEWS RELEASE – DRAFT

March 14, 2007 – for immediate release

Subject: Lake Chelan School District purchases plug-in hybrid electric biodiesel school bus

Contact: Scott Logan, transportation supervisor, Lake Chelan School District, (509) 682-2442; or Ron Johnston-Rodriguez, economic development director, Port of Chelan County, (509) 663-5159

The Lake Chelan School District is the first school district in the state, and one of the first in the nation, to purchase a plug-in hybrid electric biodiesel school bus. Transportation supervisor Scott Logan, who has worked since 2004 to acquire a bus that emits fewer pollutants and uses less fossil fuel than conventional vehicles, said on March 1 that he was elated to announce that all funding for the project has been secured. The bus will be delivered in June and put into service this fall.

The school district is part of the Advanced Vehicle Innovations (AVI) consortium led by the Port of Chelan County, which is establishing North Central Washington as a center for plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) technology and education. The Port invested \$10,000 in the bus, facilitating Logan's participation in the national Hybrid Electric School Bus buyers' coalition. Nineteen other school districts across the U.S. have contracted with IC Corporation to deliver PHEV buses this year, some of which will also run on alternative fuels.

Logan said the cost of the innovative school bus is \$210,000. The school district committed \$76,000 toward the purchase, roughly the cost of a conventional school bus. Logan and members of the AVI consortium raised the rest of the money from a variety of sources, including a \$55,843 grant through the national buyers' coalition; \$52,000 from the state Department of Ecology; \$5,000 each from the Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce and Lake Chelan Rotary; \$3,000 from Wal-Mart; \$1,000 from Brooks Solar; \$250 from LaPorte Financial; and contributions of \$50 to \$100 from community members. These were Blake Murray, Dave and Mary Weldy, Ron Johnston-Rodriguez, Sara and Jim Thomas, Mick and Donna Dalan, Kit and Mary Couchee, Heather de Saillan, Roy and Carol Draggoo, Jake and Kathy Lodato, and Von and Aimee Pope.

"The response from the community has been overwhelming," Logan said. "It's clear that people want to support alternative methods of transportation, actually putting their money where their mouths are. I'm excited that Lake Chelan School District will be one of the first in the country to demonstrate the potential of PHEV and biodiesel technology. Our bus is the first step in what we hope will be a larger operation down the road."

Logan said the bus will be plugged in overnight to a standard 120-volt socket, charging an additional battery pack that will allow the bus to operate in all-electric mode during much of its route. The

powertrain for a hybrid bus couples a V8 diesel engine with an 80-kilowatt hybrid-electric drivetrain; the system recovers kinetic energy during braking, charging the batteries while the bus is slowing down and providing additional power for acceleration. “Hybrid electric technology is ideal for school buses because of the frequent starts and stops they make along their daily routes,” Logan said.

Ron Johnston-Rodriguez, economic development director for the Port of Chelan County and leader of AVI, noted that the Lake Chelan School District bus would serve as a good regional model to demonstrate the potential of plug-in hybrid electric technology, helping to achieve the “Plug-in Center” objective of the AVI. “During the summer, when school is not in session, the AVI’s intent is to lease the bus for agricultural tours, festivals and other events throughout Chelan and Douglas counties,” he said.

A prototype bus from the national Hybrid Electric School Bus Project will be on display during AVI’s regional summit, “Power Up! Electrifying Transportation,” to be held May 14 and 15 at the Wenatchee Convention Center. Other advanced vehicles will also be exhibited at the summit, including the Port’s plug-in Prius; a solar drag racer; an electric ATV; and an original EV-1, manufactured by GM and then recalled in the 1990s.

For more information on the PHEV school bus, contact Logan at (509) 682-2442. For information on the “Power Up!” summit, contact Johnston-Rodriguez at (509) 663-5159 or visit the AVI website at www.plugincenter.com,