



## Proposed Methanol Plant Would Be a Game-Changer

In his seventeen years with the Cowlitz Economic Development Council (CEDC), Ted Sprague has seen a lot of change across the county – mostly for the better. Since 2000 the CEDC has assisted in the expansion or recruitment of over 3,000 jobs and over one-billion dollars of capital investment that has added the necessary infrastructure for industrial development, built up the steel industry, aided in an increase in commercial business, and solidified the county as a leading port exporter in the bulk economy.

Additionally, Sprague notes, the county “has had success in recruiting new business and diversifying the economy to move away from its reliance on the natural resource industry.”

But a project the size of the proposed Northwest Innovation Works’ methanol plant would be a game-changer for the area.

“After losing nearly 1,000 jobs and having people move away to find work after the Reynolds Aluminum facility closed” said Sprague.

***“A project of this size would positively impact just about everyone I know.”***

The CEDC is excited about the prospect of a \$2 billion capital investment in the county and its positive impact on job creation – both construction and non-construction – and the impact on local businesses like restaurants, auto shops, and the like.

Sprague is also impressed by the environmental consciousness of the company, saying “this company has been asked to do things well above and beyond what is required of them.” He continued, “in my opinion, they have met all those requirements and exceeded many others with features like the Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) system.”

If not approved, Sprague believes it would send the message that the state and the community is too difficult a place to secure a permit. “Our state already has the reputation of being difficult, if we deny this project we will only further solidify that reputation,” he said.

The opportunity presented by NWIW’s methanol plant is huge. “Kalama does not have Seattle’s proximity to research universities and the medical and software industries,” Sprague said.

***“Building this plant would solidify our reputation in the world as a top-quality exporter and manufacturer.”***

Now is the time to show the world Cowlitz County is open for business.