

From the Olympian, May 5, 2008

## Rochester

### **Weed & Seed program declared a success**

A federally funded program to cut crime and create more community services has been a success, officials said Monday.

The Rochester Weed & Seed program, which wraps up this year, has led to less drug-related crime and, at the same time, a higher concentration of services for the area, Sylvie McGee, a contracted evaluator for the Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, told the county commissioners at their public meeting.

McGee said Prosecuting Attorney Ed Holm initiated the application for the \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice that led to the Weed & Seed program. Kate Greenquist, law enforcement coordinator for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Washington, said half of the money went to "weed out" felony drug crimes and meth labs and the other half to "seed" the community with more programs to aid area youths and adults.

In addition to the prosecuting attorney's office, other county agencies involved in the Rochester program include Thurston County Sheriff's Office, parks department and public health and social services. Other agencies involved include the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Rochester School District, Rochester Organization of Families, Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Thurston County.

Participants will gather in June at Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound for a closing conference on the program, said Aimee Danielson, Rochester Weed & Seed project coordinator.