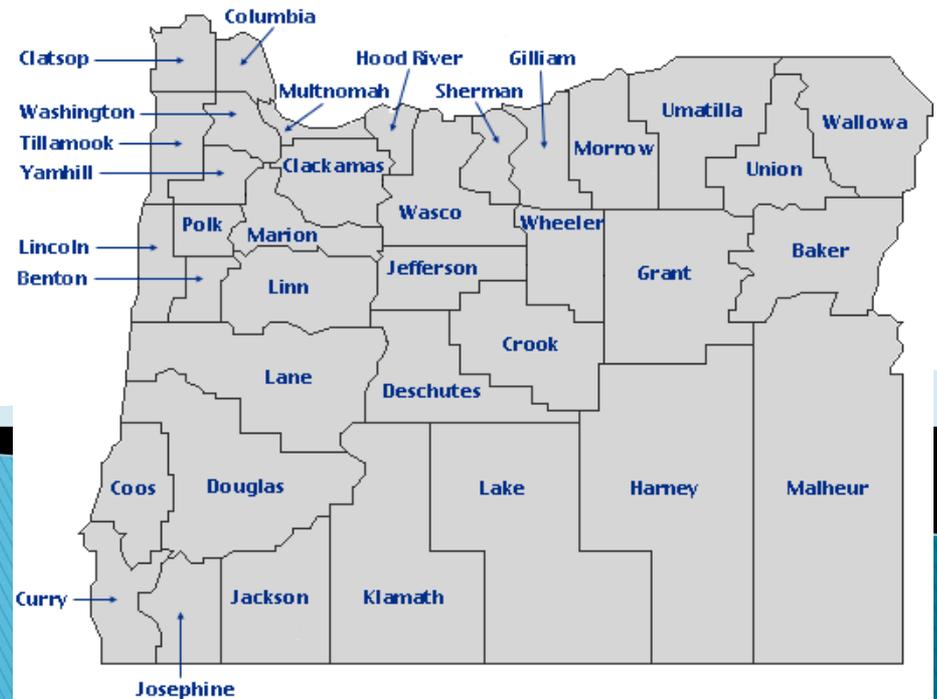
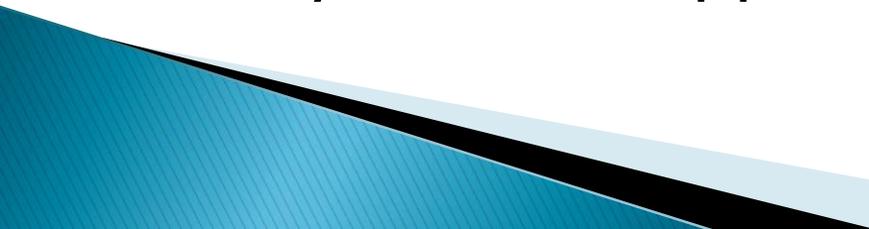


HIA in Small Rural Counties: some lessons learned from North Central Public Health District

Wasco County has less than 25,000 residents
Sherman and Gilliam Counties have less than 2000 residents apiece.



Screening: Determining the need and value of HIA.

- Does the HIA being considered align with a Policy, a Project or a Plan?
 - Is the timing right, so that the HIA can be completed and recommendations made within the proposed time frame to be useful in guiding decisions?
 - Are the potential health effects sufficiently unclear to warrant the time and effort of an HIA or are they readily apparent?
 - Do you have support from key stakeholders?
- 

Our first policy choice for HIA and lessons learned: Wind Energy

- ▶ Screening: The timing was right, we were poised to begin when there was plenty of time to complete prior to policy development.
- ▶ Screening: There are potential health effects from wind energy that are not obvious and local citizens who were concerned.
- ▶ Screening: In the end, it was the stake holder support that kept us from proceeding. We had launched into our application to do an HIA without running it past our board of health, who felt it was a potential conflict of interest. We spent valuable energy in literature review and grant application without first obtaining approval.

Perception is important...



There was a lesson here that should be remembered: Avoid potentially controversial projects or policies, especially on your first HIA, so your leaders will see value in the process and not be hesitant to do future HIA's.



We're getting warmer...



➤ We were granted HIA funding from Oregon DHS to practice our HIA skills on a Walkability Project, using San Francisco Health District's PEQI* tool, but we didn't have the Policy, Plan or Project to apply it to.

➤ We are on our second HIA, thanks to funding through the Northwest Health Foundation: Wellness and Walkability. Again, there were not any Policies, Plans or Projects being considered. District #21 superintendent decided an update to the district Wellness Policy was in order, and a Workplace Wellness component will be added. Knowledge of the walkability around the schools will help inform the policy. It's not quite a classic HIA, but it's getting warm...

**PEQI is Pedestrian Environmental Quality Index.*