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## Is Paine Field airport service winning support?

By [Bill Sheets](#), Herald Writer

Advocates of passenger flights at Paine Field have started a Web site to push their position, and they appear to be broadening their base.

An estimated 10 to 15 individuals and groups - including chambers of commerce and elected officials - are lending statements of support to a fledgling group called Fly From Everett, according to Greg Tisdel, an Everett businessman who is spearheading the effort.

Tisdel, owner of Tiz's Doors, is a member of the Private Enterprise Coalition of Snohomish County, a business advocacy group that has so far taken the lead in pushing for commercial flights at the county-run airport.

Members of the business group are still involved, but support is now coming from others as well, Tisdel said. He named several local chambers of commerce and a few individuals, whose involvement could not be verified as of press time for this story.

"We made a decision through the (Private Enterprise Coalition) that this has gotten bigger and needs to be self-sufficient," Tisdel said.

A press release accompanying notice of the Web site Friday said, "Flyfromeverett.org is a large non-profit consortium of local community groups whose identities will be made public on the website at a future date."

Tisdel said the site would post letters of support "sooner than later. We are continuing to meet with people and organizations."

So far, the support is moral, rather than financial, Tisdel said, though "the ask is out."

The Web site includes links to government information, news stories, other aviation-related sites and statements about the proponents' hope for limited commercial service at Paine Field.

"We're doing this to get the rest of the county engaged in the process," Tisdel said. "We still don't feel that Mukilteo owns Paine Field. The citizens of Snohomish County own it."

The cities of Mukilteo, Edmonds, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace and Woodway have issued resolutions opposing commercial flights at the airport.

Passenger flights have not been formally proposed, but have been advocated by some since a 2002 county economic development study said they could help bring jobs to the area.

Currently, Paine Field serves private planes, operations by Boeing and Goodrich Aircraft, and occasional military flights.

The Web site also includes examples of smaller airports around the country - in Monterey, Calif.; Charlottesville, Va.; and Traverse City, Mich. - that it says could serve as a model for limited service at Paine Field.

Proponents say on the Web site that they don't believe allowing 15 to 20 flights of smaller passenger jets per day at Paine Field would open the door to more, larger and louder commercial flights, as opponents of passenger service contend.

"Paine Field will never be a large-scale hub airport like LAX, Denver, or Chicago," the Web site says. "Nobody affiliated with Fly from Everett would support the campaign for a regional airport in Everett if we believed the evolutionary path of Paine Field was to become a major hub."

Those fighting passenger service don't seem intimidated by the idea that advocates could be adding to their numbers.

"So we'll finally know who the opposition is," said Mukilteo City Councilman Marko Liias.

Commercial flights would damage communities with increased noise and reduced property values, opponents say.

"It's a little like drinking the Kool-Aid in a mass suicide," said former Mukilteo mayor Don Doran, a member of Save Our Communities, a group of Mukilteo residents opposing commercial flights.

"I'm incredulous that the business community is drinking the Kool-Aid the (Private Enterprise Coalition) is manufacturing."

If passenger flights really help the economy, as proponents believe, "they're going to have to prove it," Doran said.

Tisdell said a study on that issue, financed by the Private Enterprise Coalition, is about 70 percent complete.

The business group said in March it would spend \$100,000 or more in the next year to promote the passenger flight cause.

The city of Mukilteo soon countered by setting aside \$250,000 to oppose commercial flights. The City Council is scheduled to discuss at its meeting Aug. 20 how to spend that money, Liias said.

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