

Steve Omdal Memorial



Leadership
Farm Succession
Innovation
Water

Friday, February 7th, 2025

at

WSU NWREC

16650 S.R. 536

Mount Vernon, WA

SKAGIT SUMMIT

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County

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Steve Omdal passed away on Saturday, September 28, 2024. Omdal was first elected as a Port of Skagit Commissioner representing District 2 in 2012. His motivation for seeking the Commissioner position was to bring new ideas and a “for profit” business background to enhance the ability of the Port to improve economic development opportunities for all Skagit County residents.

Omdal’s business background was in sales and management with pharmaceutical companies Wyeth-Ayerst and BASF, and later on with FedEx Services. His sales career began in the mid-1970’s with Western Farmers Association, a nod to his roots growing up on a dairy and crop farm in nearby Bow, Washington. His experience on the farm helped Omdal embrace and understand the importance of value-added agriculture in our community today, and the required infrastructure for production, manufacturing, and marketing for the industry. As a lifelong Skagitonian, his passion for agriculture, the preservation of farmland, and creating opportunities for Skagit growers and producers was widely known.

Steve Omdal served on the planning committee for the Skagit Ag Summit since it’s inception. He was never one to shy away from controversy and was always willing to lend an ear to anyone with a good idea. His collaborative style included a desire to learn and a willingness to brainstorm, *“think outside the box,”* and not be afraid of new ideas or opportunities that may arise in a constantly changing environment. It is more than appropriate that we will name the 2025 Skagit Ag Summit in his honor. Thank you for your contribution Commissioner.





Schedule

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Agenda

Friday morning, February 7th, 2025

8:30am

Welcome & opening Remarks

Ron Wesen, Skagit County Commissioner, Don McMoran, Director, WSU Skagit County Extension

8:40 am

Building Blocks for success: Infrastructure Supporting agriculture

Moderator: Don McMoran, Director WSU Skagit County Extension

Objective: The continued viability of Skagit agriculture.

Ron Wesen, District 1, Skagit County Commissioner

Peter Browning, District 2, Skagit County Commissioners

9:45 am

Break

10 am

Farm Succession

Moderator: Jennifer Smith, Board member of Western Washington Ag Association

Objective: Getting the farm to the next generation or other alternatives

Trevor Faucet, Ag West

Andy Perleberg, WSU Chelan County Extension

Todd Burgers, Larson Gross

Sarah Stoner, Skagit County Farmland Legacy



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11:00 am

Access, Protection, Acquisition

Moderator: Eric Nelson, Skagit Conservation District

Objective: It's not farmland without Farmers: Getting Boots on the ground & tractors in the field

Dan Fagerlie, WSU retired Tribal Liaison (retired)

Owen Peth, John Peth and Sons

Amy Frye, Boldly Grown Farms

Mark Knutzen, Knutzen Farms (retired)

Blake Vanfield, Genuine Skagit

Wayne Hill, Hill Farms

12 pm

*Lunch Keynote Trevor Hardy– Brookdale Farm Supply

1 pm

Innovation: Show me the Money

Moderator: Jake Fowler, Northwest Ag Business Center

Objective: To educate the Skagit agricultural community on agricultural business and technology

Steve Mantle, Innovat8

Kate Smith WSU Skagit County Extension

Eber Rivera, WSU Skagit County Extension

Trevor Hardy, Brookdale Farm Supply

Paola Cabrera, AgAID Institute

Devin Gonzalez, Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship



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Friday afternoon, February 7th

2 pm

Break

2:15pm

" The Future is in Your Hands: Supporting Skagit AG"

Moderator: Don McMoran, Director, WSU Skagit County Extension

Objective: "2025 Outlook Issues Impacting Skagit Agriculture"

Jenna Friebe, Skagit County Dike and Drainage Consortium

Emmett Wild, Skagit Conservation District

Kellie Gillingham, Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE)

Jose Ortiz, Saint Charles Church, Burlington

3:15 pm

Closing Remarks: Commissioner Peter Browning & WSU Skagit County Extension

3:30

Evaluation

4pm

Social Hour at Sean O'Donnell's sponsored by

