

# Stevens County

## 2010 Primary Election

### State of Washington



Conducted by:  
The Office of the Secretary of State  
Election Certification and Training Program

## INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Legislature enacted legislation in 1992 mandating that the Office of the Secretary of State review county election procedures and practices. The Election Certification and Training Program was established within the Elections Division of the Office of the Secretary of State to conduct reviews and to provide for the certification of election administrators. In 2009, the Legislature altered the Election Certification and Training Program to require that each County Auditor's Office be reviewed at least once every five years. The Legislature also added a requirement that the Program follow-up with the County Auditor to verify that the County Auditor's Office has taken steps to correct the issues noted in the report.

The election review process is governed by RCW 29A.04.510 through 29A.04.590 and Chapter 434-260 of the Washington Administrative Code.

Pursuant to RCW 29A.04.570(1)(b), the Election Certification and Training Program conducted an election review in Stevens County during the 2010 Primary Election cycle. Libby Nieland, Elections Program Specialist, represented the Election Certification and Training Program during the review. Tim Gray, Stevens County Auditor, Beverly Lamm, Elections Supervisor, and other members of the staff participated on behalf of the Stevens County Auditor's Office.

Both the reviewer and the Stevens County Elections Department approached the review in a spirit of cooperation. The department allowed the reviewer to thoroughly review and examine all aspects of the election processes. The staff provided documentation and materials during the review which greatly contributed to a successful examination process.

The purpose of this review report is to provide the Stevens County Elections Department with a useful evaluation of its election procedures and policies and to encourage procedural consistency in the administration of elections throughout the state. This review report includes a series of recommendations and/or suggestions that are intended to assist the Stevens County Elections Department in improving and enhancing its election processes.

The reviewer is statutorily prohibited from making any evaluation, finding, or recommendation regarding the validity of any primary or election, or of any canvass of the election returns. Consequently, this review report should not be interpreted as affecting the validity of the outcome of any election or of any canvass of election returns.

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## OVERVIEW

Located in the northeast portion of Washington State, Stevens County was incorporated on January 20, 1863 from the northern portions of Walla Walla County. At the time, Stevens County consisted of most of eastern Washington, making it one of the largest counties in the Washington Territory.

Stevens County, named in honor of Washington's first territorial governor, yielded territory to create Whitman, Okanogan, Ferry, and Pend Oreille Counties. The final annexation of land from Stevens County to form the county of Spokane established current county boundaries. Stevens County is now home to more than 40,000 people.

Colville, the county seat, is also the largest of six incorporated communities. Stevens County is part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Washington State Legislative District. According to the 2002 census, more than half of the county's residents are registered voters.

Large distances between population centers makes Stevens County well suited for voting entirely by mail. During the 2010 Primary, only one remote ballot deposit site was available to voters.

Stevens County uses two locations to serve voters. The County Auditor's Office, located in the Stevens County Courthouse, conducts voter registration, issues ballots, and provides in-person voting. A ballot processing center, located in a separate building with a high level of security, receives and processes all voted ballots. Although physically separated, the County Auditor and staff work closely together. Stevens County election staff is experienced, knowledgeable and conducts business in a professional in manner.

Uniquely, the Stevens County Canvassing Board participates at a greater level than in most counties of similar size. The Canvassing Board convenes every three days during an election to canvass ballots and resolve ballot issues. This participation demands the Board remain current with regard to election rules and procedures.

Stevens County is well suited for voting entirely by mail because of extended distances between population centers. During the 2010 Primary, two ballot deposit sites were available to voters. The County Auditor's office provided a ballot deposit box and accessible voting units for an interval of 20 business days before the Primary. A second deposit location opened in the town of Tum Tum on the day of the Primary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations identify areas in which the county is out of compliance with the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), the Washington State Constitution, or Federal election law. The reviewer obtained information based on actual observation of a procedure, verbal explanation or written procedures. The reviewer provides a description of the county's procedure, a citation of the applicable law, and a recommendation based on the citation.

### INACTIVE VOTERS

**Procedure:** Staff mails confirmation cards to the voters whenever a voter's status changes from active to inactive. When a response to a confirmation notice returns indicating a voter has moved to another county in Washington, staff notifies the voter that he, or she, will need to re-register in the current county of residence and the voter remains as an inactive voter in Stevens County.

**Requirement:** RCW 29A.08.640 (2) "If the response from the voter indicates that the voter moved out of the county, but within the state, the auditor shall cancel the voter's registration and notify the county auditor of the voter's new county of residence."

**Recommendation:** Whenever a confirmation card response indicates that a voter has moved to another Washington State county, the elections department must cancel the voter's registration and they should notify the new county of residence.

### NAME CHANGES

**Procedure:** Voters requesting a name change may only do so by submitting a new registration form.

**Requirement:** RCW 29A.08.440 states that "A registered voter who changes his or her name shall notify the county auditor regarding the name change by submitting a notice clearly identifying the name under which he or she is registered to vote, the voter's new name, and the voter's residence, and providing a signature of the new name, or by submitting a voter registration application."

**Recommendation:** Voters may submit a change of name on any written document that contains all of the required information.

## CANCELLATION OF INCAPACITATED VOTER

**Procedure:** Upon receiving a court order removing voting rights from an incapacitated person, the Stevens County Auditor correctly cancels that voter's registration. However, no notice of the cancellation is sent to the voter.

**Requirement:** WAC 434-324-108 requires "After canceling an incapacitated person's registration, the auditor must send a cancellation notice to the incapacitated person using the last known address."

**Recommendation:** The elections department must send a notice of cancellation to any voter removed from voter registration rolls for the reason of incapacitation. This is the only type of cancellation when the County Auditor is required to send a notice to the cancelled voter.

## CANVASSING BOARD MANUAL

**Procedures:** In July 2010 at an open public meeting, the Stevens County Canvassing Board adopted revisions to the county canvassing board manual. Several procedural inaccuracies still exist in the manual.

The manual classifies voting on something other than a regularly issued ballot is a "ballot which has been inappropriately cast."

The Stevens County Canvassing Board hears challenges to voter registrations issued within 45 days of an election or primary unless the challenged voter did not cast a vote in the election. In that case, "the challenge will be referred to the County Auditor and processed in the same manner as a challenged received more than forty-five (45) days prior to the election."

The Canvassing Board properly determines rejection of all ballots voted or mailed after Election Day. The Canvassing Board manual directs staff to not count the ballot, but credit the voter with voting.

Recount procedures correctly require notification of affected parties of any recount. There is no mention of contacting applicants and candidates by other means than mail.

**Requirements:** For each of the bulleted statements a statute or rule contradicts the Stevens County Canvassing Board directives.

WAC 434-261-075 "If the voter returns voting responses by mail on any form other than the ballot sent, the votes thereon shall be acceptable and tallied provided that: (1) Only votes for offices or measures for which the voter is eligible are counted. (2) The candidate or measure response position for which the voter is voting can be clearly identified. (3) The ballot issued is

not returned, or if returned, contains no marks indicating an attempt to vote it. (4) A valid signature on an absentee oath is received with the voting responses. The votes accepted must then be duplicated to a ballot that can be read by the electronic voting equipment.”

RCW 29A.08.820 “(2)(a) If the challenge is filed within forty-five days before an election at which the challenged voter is eligible to vote, the county canvassing board presides over the hearing. (3) If the challenge is filed at least forty-five days before an election at which the challenged voter is eligible to vote, the county auditor presides over the hearing.”

WAC 434-262-013(1) “A voter may not be credited for voting if the ballot was voted after election day, was received after certification of the election, or will otherwise not be counted.”

RCW 29A.64.030 “The county auditor shall also notify the affected parties by either telephone, fax, e-mail, or other electronic means at the time of mailing. At least three attempts must be made over a two-day period to notify the affected parties or until the affected parties have received the notification. Each attempt to notify affected parties must request a return response indicating that the notice has been received.”

**Recommendation:** The County Canvassing Board should amend the Stevens County Canvassing Board Manual to comply with the statute and rule. The reviewer suggests that the Stevens County Canvassing Board also update the manual to reflect a countywide mail ballot environment and edit for minor errors.

#### VOTER IDENTIFICATION CARDS

**Procedure:** The Stevens County Auditor acknowledges all new and changed voter registration data by sending voter identification cards. Two statements on the identification cards are contradictory and confusing.

The card declares that replacement ballots are available “up to the day of election.” The County Auditor issues replacement ballots on the day of the election.

The approximate date for mailing ballots appears on both sides of the identification card. The dates for mailing differ from one side of the card to the other. The front of the card gives the day of mailing as 18 days while other side of the card lists 20 days as the approximate date of mailing.

**Requirements:** WAC 434-250-080 permits “the county auditor may issue a replacement ballot, as authorized by RCW 29A.40.061, if the request is received prior to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.”

RCW 29A.40.070 (1) states “the county auditor must mail absentee ballots to each voter for whom the county auditor has received a request nineteen days before the primary or election at least eighteen days before the primary or election.”

**Recommendation:** All information printed on the voter registration card must be correct. For the sake of clarity, all information provided, especially dates and deadlines, should be consistent.

#### VERIFICATION NOTICES

**Procedure:** Whenever a voter registration application lacks any of six pieces of information, staff correctly mails the applicant a verification notice, accompanied by a pre-addressed, postage-paid reply. The verification notice opens with the statement, “We are unable to process your application because of the following missing information” and indicates missing information by using a multiple-choice list. Two items “missing identification,” and “name incomplete – please print name as listed on WA driver’s license, WA voter ID card or Social Security card” are included in the list as required information.

**Requirement:** RCW 29A.08.010 addresses “(1) The minimum information provided on a voter registration application that is required in order to place a voter registration applicant on the voter registration rolls includes: (a) Name; (b) Residential address; (c) Date of birth; (d) A signature attesting to the truth of the information provided on the application; and (e) A check or indication in the box confirming the individual is a United States citizen. (3) All other information supplied is ancillary and not to be used as grounds for not registering an applicant to vote.”

**Recommendation:** Verification notices must list only the five pieces of required information as being essential to processing an application. Although it would be helpful to administrators, there is no requirement for an applicant to register using the name as it appears on the applicant’s Washington State driver’s license or official identification card or Social Security card.

If an applicant does not include identification, the applicant should be provisionally registered and the verification form must accurately reflect that process.

#### IDENTIFICATION VERIFICATION NOTICE

**Procedure:** Stevens County sends notices to voter registration applicants needing verifiable identification. The notice begins with the statement, “In accordance with the Help America Vote Act and RCW 29A.08.113, all voter registrations must provide a Washington State issued drivers license number, Washington State I.D. card number or the last four digits of your social

security number.” Although the notice provides a list of alternate forms of identification further on, the opening sentence infers that the applicant, in order to be registered, has no option than to provide one of the three stated forms of identification. The notice further states that “failure to provide one of the above forms of identification will result in your ballot being treated as a provisional ballot and subject to review by the county canvassing board.” The inference is that a voted ballot may be accepted or rejected.

**Requirements:** RCW 29A.08.107 requires “(2) if the applicant does not provide a Washington driver's license, a Washington state identification card, or a social security number, the applicant must be provisionally registered to vote. (3) The ballot of a provisionally registered voter may not be counted until the voter provides. . . identification. . . no later than the day before certification of the primary or election.”

WAC 434-250-045(2) “The notice to the absentee voter must be in substantially the following form: [a list of seven acceptable identification items is given]. (4) If the voter fails to provide one of the acceptable forms of identification by the day prior to certification of the election, the ballot shall not be counted.”

**Recommendation:** The purpose for sending notices per 29A.08.107 (not 29A.08.113) is to obtain verifiable identification for a provisionally registered voter. The notice used by Stevens County is inaccurate regarding the status of the application, the purpose of the notice, the type of identification actually required to upgrade the voter to active status, and the resolution of ballots voted by provisionally registered voters. The County Auditor should either adopt the form provided in WAC 434-250-045, or revise the identification verification notice currently in use to request verifiable identification while providing accurate information to the voter.

## HOSPITAL BALLOTS

**Procedure:** Written procedures for issuing hospital ballots to persons in a medical care facility caution that, per RCW 29A.40.080, only the registered voter or immediate family member may pick up an absentee ballot.

**Requirement:** RCW 29A.40.080(1) provides an exception to who may pick up an absentee ballot by stating that “unless the voter is a resident of a health care facility, as defined by RCW 70.37.020(3), on election day and applies by messenger for an absentee ballot. In this latter case, the messenger may pick up the voter’s absentee ballot.”

**Recommendation:** The entire purpose of a hospital ballot is to provide for those voters who are unable to have a ballot mailed to them and is incapable because of health issues of obtaining a ballot by any other means. Procedures must acknowledge the acceptability of ballot delivery by messenger on Election Day for persons in a hospital care facility.

## FORWARDING BALLOTS

**Procedures:** The Stevens County Auditor provides for US Postal Service forwarding of ballots. In order to fulfill statutory requirements for forwarding, the ballot packet includes a tri-folded pamphlet explaining eligibility requirements for voting in the election. Eligibility is described on the pamphlet as, “A registered voter of Stevens County, a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old, a resident of Stevens County for 30 days prior to the election, are not presently being denied your civil rights as a result of being convicted of a felony and reside in the jurisdiction or district to be eligible to vote for that office or issue. “ The voter is also directed “If you are not sure about your eligibility, contact the Stevens County Auditor’s Office.”

**Requirement:** WAC 434-250-070 (1) “If the county auditor chooses to forward ballots, as authorized by RCW 29A.40.091, the county auditor must include instructions substantially similar to the following: If you have changed your permanent residence address, please contact your county auditor to ensure the ballot you receive in future elections contains the races and issues for your residential address. If you have any questions about your eligibility to vote in this election, please contact your county auditor.”

**Recommendation:** The elections department must revise the message regarding voter eligibility to comply with current rule.

## EMAIL BALLOTS

**Procedure:** Staff correctly sends a ballot by email to any voter making such a request. The instructions accompanying the email ballot specifically tell the voter to return the voted ballot by fax or postal service, but not by email.

**Requirement:** WAC 434-208-060 permits “In addition to those documents specified by RCW 29A.04.255, the secretary of state or the county auditor shall accept and file in his or her office electronic transmissions of the following documents: (4) Voted ballots, provided the voter agrees to waive the secrecy of his or her ballot.”

**Recommendation:** Email is a form of electronic transmission; therefore, the same rules apply to returning voted ballots by fax or email. Communication to voters should not exclude returning ballots by email.

## BALLOT PROCESSING CENTER

**Procedures:** The Stevens County Auditor processes ballots in a facility shared with County Emergency Services. The building has multiple entrances, a number of hallways, and rooms, yet no permanent signage guiding visitors and observers to the ballot processing room. On Election Night, several observers wandered accidentally into the Emergency Services sleeping quarters.

Their disorientation caused that corridor to be blocked off with 'crime scene' tape for the rest of the night.

**Requirements:** RCW 29A.04.205 "It is the policy of the state of Washington to encourage every eligible person to register to vote and to participate fully in all elections, and to protect the integrity of the electoral process by providing equal access to the process while guarding against discrimination and fraud."

WAC 434-261-010 states, "The county auditor shall designate a location to serve as the counting center. The vote tallying process shall be open to the public to the extent that public observation does not interfere with the proceedings or jeopardize the security of the ballots."

**Recommendation:** It is impossible to guarantee an open and observable process unless party observers and the public can locate the processing center. The County should install permanent signage, at the most accessible entrance to the building, and along the path to the ballot processing room to ensure an open and public process.

#### RESOLUTION OF BALLOTS

**Procedure:** The Stevens County Canvassing Board reserves the task of resolution of ballots as the Board's sole responsibility. The Board meets to resolve ballots in open public meetings conducted over a period of days throughout the election interval. As a quorum, only two members of the Board are required to participate in the task on any day. At the end of each session the Board does not sign a resolution log, although a resolution log for the entire election or primary is printed and presented to the Canvassing Board at the time of certification of the election or primary.

**Requirement:** WAC 434-261-102 specifies "In counties tabulating ballots on a digital scan vote tallying system, two staff designated by the auditor's office must resolve ballots identified as requiring resolution. A log of the resolutions must be printed and signed by the two staff."

**Recommendation:** When resolving ballots the Board is functioning as staff and therefore must comply with WAC. Following every session, ballot resolution logs must be printed and signed.

#### DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Procedure:** The Stevens County Auditor established a Disability Advisory Committee in 2007. An action plan was created by the committee per RCW 29A.46.260. With the passing years, committee members have ceased participating. The committee membership no longer meets statutory requirements.

**Requirement:** RCW 29A.46.260(2) prescribes, “each county shall establish and maintain an advisory committee that includes persons with diverse disabilities and persons with expertise in providing accommodations for persons with disabilities.”

**Recommendation:** The County Auditor must reactivate the Disability Advisory Committee and include members of the disabled community and persons with expertise in the field. Tom Allman, HAVA - Accessibility Coordinator at the Washington Secretary of State’s Election Division, might be able to assist by providing resources and contact information. Upon convening, the full committee should then review and update the county’s plan for providing voting services to citizens seeking accommodations.

## SUGGESTIONS

The following are suggestions for increasing efficiency and improving operations within the County Auditor's Office. Although these suggestions do not address issues involving compliance with state laws or administrative rules, the reviewer identified the tasks as areas of election administration in which the County Auditor might improve the efficiency and operation of the office.

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO LOCAL JURISDICTIONS

**Procedure:** In 2010, staff mailed two separate questionnaires concerning candidate filing to each jurisdiction on the same day.

**Suggestion:** Savings in staff time and mailing costs are possible by merging the two questionnaires into one. This would also provide an opportunity to update information about how candidates file for office.

### CANDIDATES NOT ON THE PRIMARY BALLOT

**Procedure:** The County Auditor correctly notifies candidates of a race not appearing on the primary ballot. The letter sent to those candidates explicitly states how the candidate's name will appear on the general election ballot, but does not clearly state that the candidate's race will skip the primary ballot.

**Suggestion:** The letter sent to affected candidates when a race is not participating in the primary should clearly state that the race will skip the primary.

### REPORTING OF PARTISAN OFFICES

**Procedure:** The official abstract submitted to, and accepted by, the Stevens County Canvassing Board contains political party preference coding (||D and ||R) for partisan office candidates. The balloting system utilizes codes to print each candidate's party preference statement on the ballots. Many of the codes used by the Stevens County Auditor unfortunately are also single letter abbreviations commonly used to indicate political parties.

**Suggestion:** The code used to indicate a candidate's political party preference should be recognizably different from any common abbreviation used for a political party and should not appear on the results report. Without the entire party preference statement, the abbreviations could be confusing, causing some to believe the abbreviations indicate that the candidate is a member and representative of that political party.

According to the June 24, 2008 Top 2 Primary Advisory, issued by the Election Division of the Office of the Secretary of State, counties reporting results for partisan races have the option of including the preferred party for each of the candidates, but if included, the full statement of preference should be used.

“Some counties may be able to set up a report outside of their voting systems that can report this information. If you choose to do this, you must report the whole statement for each partisan candidate ((Prefers xxxx Party) or (States No Party Preference)) or no party information at all.

The state website and WEI websites will report the (Prefers xxxx Party) information with each candidate name. However, political party information will **not** be required to be on the final canvass reports that you will send to the Secretary of State’s Office.”

If the County Auditor wishes to indicate the party preference of each partisan candidate when reporting results, it is essential to provide the entire text statement of the party preference so as not to infer any official affiliation with a political party. Codes indicating political party preference do not substitute for the entire statement of party preference.

#### WRITTEN PROCEDURES

**Procedure:** Current written procedures for Stevens County still contain references to polls and poll sites.

**Suggestion:** It may be helpful, as a county conducting all elections by mail, to retire terms and processes specific to poll voting.

#### BALLOT DEPOSIT SITES

**Procedure:** The County Auditor provided two ballot deposit sites in the 2010 Primary; a voting service center at the Auditor’s office and, in the southern part of the county, a staffed site available only on the day of the Primary.

**Suggestion:** In consideration of the demographics of the county, establishing more ballot deposit sites would benefit county voters. Although staff would have additional duties of emptying the deposit boxes, knowing ballots arrive directly into the hands of the County Auditor instills confidence in the election process.

## DOCUMENT READABILITY

**Procedure:** Several official notices used by the Stevens County elections department are in very small size type. Small size type presents reading challenges to some voters.

**Suggestion:** Staff may wish to seek the assistance of the Design for Democracy expert, currently working with the Secretary of State, and redesign voter information notices to be more readable.

## OBSERVERS

**Procedure:** A number of political party observers attend Stevens County Canvassing Board meetings, including the meetings at which the Canvassing Board resolves ballots. Due to the size and configuration of workspace, it was not possible for all of the observers to see the actions of the Board.

**Suggestion:** Projecting an image of ballots may alleviate misunderstandings by permitting observers to view the activities of the Board.

## PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

**Procedure:** Written county election procedures exclude issuing provisional ballots at any time other than on Election Day. Staff provides written information to provisional voters concerning free access to the final determination of his or her ballot. However, the free access notice refers to poll books and a polling place, two items that do not exist in a vote-by-mail county.

**Suggestion:** WAC 434-250-085 states that a provisional ballot issued before Election Day is valid if issued in a county conducting the election entirely by mail. Stevens County qualifies to issue a provisional ballot in advance of Election Day.

The information given to voters regarding the free access system should be precise and accurate. The free access information should be updated before the Primary of 2011 to correctly reflect the all vote-by-mail environment of the county. When making changes, it might be useful to add information on when the resolution of a provisional ballot will become available.

## VOTING CENTERS

**Procedure:** The Stevens County Auditor's Office serves as a voting center for 20 days prior to the Election Day. All required notices and services are available in the voting center. Signs

announcing balloting are on the building entrance doors, and directional signs within the building assist voters to locate the County Auditor's Office.

**Suggestion:** It would be helpful if signage could be readable from the street and sidewalk. Ideally, signage should guide the voter from the disability parking, along the shortest path of least resistance, to the voting center.

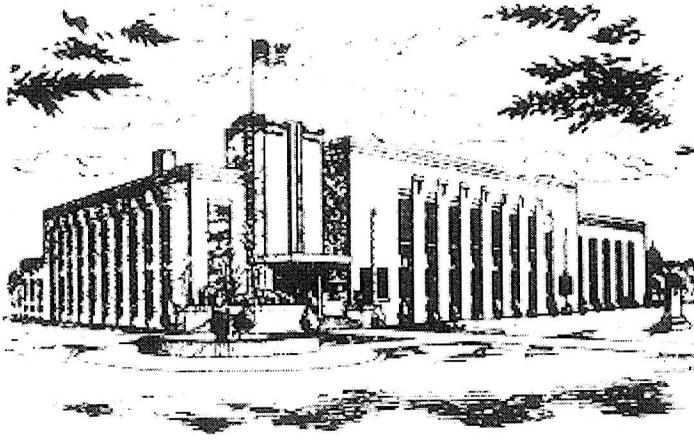
## COMMENDATIONS

The following commendations are to acknowledge the county election department's especially creative, effective procedures or solutions that go above and beyond what the law requires.

### TRANSFER AND CUSTODY OF BALLOTS DOCUMENTATION

For every election, ballots transfer from deposit sites to the county centers. When transferring ballots from a deposit site to the counting center, Stevens County elections department employs a continuous custody receipt. The receipt is a signed record of each transfer, each custodian of the ballots, the seal number as received by each custodian, and the locations of transfer. This document creates continuous documentation of ballot transit and custody from point of origin to final destination.

Stevens County creates a complete historical record of ballot transfer. Fully documenting such actions enhances ballot security.



# *County of Stevens*

State of Washington

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## *Office of County Auditor*

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January 21, 2011

The Office of the Secretary of State  
Election Certification and Training Program  
PO Box 40229  
Olympia, WA 98504-0229

RE: Stevens County's response to the draft Election Review Report

Dear Election Certification and Training Program:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft review of our election procedures. We would like to offer the following responses to the recommendations and suggestions:

Inactive Voters – We will comply with RCW 29A.08.640(2). We do correctly cancel the record when a confirmation is received. We have not experienced such a notification from another county and were not aware of this requirement.

Name Changes – We will comply with RCW 29A.08.440.

Cancellation of Incapacitated Voter – We will comply with WAC 434-324-108.

Canvassing Board Manual – We will make the recommended corrections and make an annual review of the manual in the future.

Voter Identification Cards – We will make the necessary corrections to the card.

Verification Notices – We will modify the letter to comply with RCW 29A.08.010(1).

Identification Verification Notice – We will either use the form in WAC 434-250-045 or modify our letter to comply.

Hospital Ballots – We will comply with RCW 29A.40.080(1). We do not believe that any voter has been denied the opportunity to vote because of the written procedure.

Forwarding Ballots – We will comply with WAC 434-250-070(1) by updating our message.

E-Mail Ballots – We do correctly accept voted ballots by e-mail and we will modify our instructions to include e-mails.

Ballot Processing Center – We have asked on numerous occasions for easier access to the room from the west side of the building. It was a priority of our interim sheriff to get this corrected and I will now follow up with our new sheriff.

Resolution of Ballots – We will have the resolution logs signed after each session.

Disability Advisory Committee – We are a rural area that does not have a significant disability community that is publicly active. We have not ignored this committee, we simply do not have a significant interest or demand in this area. We will continue to try and create some interest.

Questionnaire to Local Jurisdictions – The two questionnaires are mailed together in the same envelope. We will revise the information into one letter.

Candidates Not On The Primary Ballot – We will make this correction.

Reporting of Partisan Offices – By the time this error was discovered, it was determined by the County Auditor that the cost and time delay to correct were not justified. The County is now aware of the requirement and it will be correct in the future.

Written Procedures – We will make the updates.

Ballot Deposit Sites – We are currently discussing more locations with the Stevens County Rural Library District and hope to complete installation in 2011.

Document Readability – We will review the materials in question.

Observers – We will look at screen projection options and strive to make sure their questions are answered.

Provisional Ballots - We will update our written procedures for provisional ballot options.

Voting Centers – We added outside signage for the 2010 General and two disabled parking locations were re-established on Astor Street so that disabled citizens now have a direct, flat surface to the Elections Office.

We appreciate your commendations and the helpful and supportive approach the Election and Training staff use in making their recommendations and suggestions. I have great respect for the election process and I know I have a staff that feels the same way, so we will get busy and implement your recommendations and suggestions.

If my answers are too detailed, please feel free to reduce my response. I feel the statements are fair and we plan to correct the items as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Tim Gray  
Stevens County Auditor

## CONCLUSION

Stevens County Elections is a well-run shop, requiring only a few changes, modifications, and updates. The experience of staff is evident in the efficient functioning of the office. Ballot security is well documented and observed at every election by regularly assigned political party observers.

The Stevens County Canvassing Board participates on a very active level. In order to make Board participation most effective, the county canvassing manual should reflect current statutory requirements and county procedures.

The County Auditor could provide a more comprehensive service to the voters of Stevens County by establishing more deposit sites, making locations used for voting more visible, and addressing recommendations and suggestions in this report. Reactivation of the County Disability Advisory Board will specifically benefit voters of Stevens County's disability community.

The reviewer appreciates the complete thoroughness, openness, and cooperation of the Stevens County Auditor and staff while conducting this review. Administering elections is a complex and ever-changing task. Hopefully, the suggestions and recommendations in this report will assist the Stevens County Auditor.

Report Prepared by Your name, Elections Program Specialist, Election Certification and Training Program

Signature



Date January 26, 2011