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IS ALGAE THE FUEL OF THE FUTURE?

(Mukilteo, Washington) -- Eye to eye with tanks of bubbling algae, visitors at the Future of Flight Aviation Center can now view a promising source of sustainable biofuel that potentially could power their airplane in the future. The Future of Flight Foundation, in partnership with The Boeing Company, is proud to feature a new exhibit on the use of algae as a potential source of sustainable biofuel for commercial air travel. This particular exhibit (see background information below) was a star attraction at the 2008 Farnborough Air Show in the United Kingdom.

In celebration of Earth Day, Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon will cut the ribbon for this new exhibit at **11 am on Wednesday, April 22**. Prior to the ribbon cutting, Mr. Reardon will sign an ordinance, which will enable the Future of Flight Foundation to expand and acquire more exhibits to stimulate innovative thinking in commercial aviation.

The Future of Flight Aviation Center is a unique learning and interpretive facility designed to give wings to innovative thinking. The 73,000-square-foot Future of Flight facility includes a 28,000-square-foot Aviation Gallery with interactive exhibits and displays, 9,000-square-foot rooftop observation deck overlooking Paine Field, Boeing Tour Center, conference space for 250 people, special event space for groups of up to 750 people, a 240-seat theater, 125-seat café, Future of Flight Store and Boeing Store.

The Future of Flight Aviation Center & Boeing Tour is open from 8:30am – 5:30pm daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Tours of the Boeing Assembly Plant operate daily at 9, 10, 11am and 1, 2 and 3pm.

Future of Flight Aviation Center & Boeing Tour, 8415 Paine Field Blvd., Mukilteo, WA 98275, 425-438-8100, www.futureofflight.org.

Background: *The new biofuel exhibit tells the story of how the simple combination of sunlight, CO₂ and algae can produce a low-carbon, renewable jet fuel source. Four airlines have flown successful test flights using various biofuel mixtures – Virgin Atlantic, Air New Zealand, Continental, and Japan Airlines. Algae are simple, photosynthetic plants that are capable of producing 30 times more oil per acre than the current crops being utilized for production of biofuels. Unlike corn and a soybean, algae does not require large land or fresh water resources. Current estimates are that a landmass roughly the size of Belgium or the state of Maryland could potentially produce enough algae to supply the entire worldwide commercial airline fleet with 100-percent sustainable biofuel. Algae, which is only one of many sources of biofuel, can be grown in open ponds, or wastewater and fed with carbon dioxide from power plants, and it can also be grown in developing countries, providing them with socio-economic benefits.*