



Spilyay Tymoo

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Fires mostly contained at 107,000 acres

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymoo

Close to 2,400 fire personnel have been on the reservation over the past two weeks, battling range and wild land blazes that burned across more 107,000 acres.

At times the flames approached very close to homes, but only one structure, a shed, was lost. More than 300 homes were threatened at different times. Some rural homes, such as in the Sidwalter and Schoolie flat areas, came close to catastrophe.

Defensible space around the homes, and the effort of the fire crews, are credited with saving the structures, said Dan Martinez, chief of Warm Springs Fire and Safety.

Martinez commended all the fire crews who helped, as well as the community, which showed great support for the responders.

Most of the response teams have arrived from the Northwest region. Protecting the Sidwalter area, for instance, were crews from Marion County.

"We've met so many great people," said Woodburn Fire Chief Paul Iverson, whose crew came over with two support engines. "We've enjoyed being here."

The work was difficult, with teams



Fire crew works an area of Sidwalter Flat.

Dave McMechan/Spilyay

working in shifts around the clock. Many slept in tents at the industrial park by the Fire Management building. Others stayed near the elementary school, and some at the newly-built Sidwalter Fire Hall.

The series of fires, collectively named the High Cascade Complex, consisted of four main blazes: the West Hills fire, the Razorback fire, the

Powerline fire, and the Seekseequa fire.

A more recent blaze, the Badger Butte fire, was the most active on the reservation as of earlier this week.

The West Hills fire, now 90 percent contained, burned just west of Warm Springs. The Razorback was in the Mutton Mountain area. The Powerline fire was in the Sidwalter-Schoolie flats. And the Seekseequa was in a southerly

of the reservation.

They started during a lightning storm that passed over the area on the evening of Wednesday, Aug. 24.

The four main blazes on the reservation were among dozens of lightning-caused fires that broke out that night in south and central Oregon.

See FIRES on page 7

Deadline for Cobell claims is Sept. 16

An important deadline is approaching the *Cobell vs. Salazar* class action lawsuit.

All individuals who believe they are entitled to participate in the settlement—as a member of the trust administration class, and who are required under the terms of the settlement agreement to submit a claim form—must do so by mailing a properly completed and signed form to the claims administrator postmarked no later than Friday, Sept. 16, 2011.

The settlement website contains all of the important information about the case and how to participate. Go to:

www.IndianTrust.com

Also, if you have questions, call toll-free 1-800-961-6109; or email:

Info@IndianTrust.com

The settlement

The *Cobell* settlement agreement creates two classes of Indians eligible to receive settlement money:

- The Historic Accounting Class are Indians alive on September 30, 2009, who had at least one transaction in an open IIM Account between October 25, 1994 and September 30, 2009.

- The Trust Administration Class are individual Indian beneficiaries alive on September 30, 2009, who have or had IIM Accounts dating from approximately 1985, as well as individual Indians who as of September 30, 2009, had a recorded or demonstrable interest in land held in trust or restricted status.

The settlement does not include beneficiaries deceased as of September 30, 2009. Other eligibility conditions and exemptions for each class are detailed in the agreement.

Historical Accounting Class Members will each get \$1,000.

Trust Administration Class Members will get at least \$500.

If you own a small parcel of land with many other people, the federal government may ask you to sell it. You will be offered fair market value. If you sell your land it will be returned to tribal control.

At least several hundred Warm Springs tribal members, and many have filed their claims.

The settlement provides:

- A \$1.5 billion fund to pay those included in the classes.

- A \$1.9 billion fund to buy small interests in trust or restricted land owned by many people.

- Up to \$60 million to fund scholarships to improve access to higher education for Indian youth.

- A government commitment to reform the Indian trust management and accounting system.

Long running lawsuit

The 15-year legal battle started back in June of 1996, when Elouise Cobell, a member of the Blackfoot Tribe of Montana, filed a class action case that included more than 300,000 tribal members with Individual Indian Money accounts, IIMs, at the time.

This \$3.4 billion settlement is believed to be the largest ever against the federal government and dwarfs the combined value of all judgments

in all Indian cases

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Students back to school this week

This Wednesday, Sept. 7 is the first day of school for students at Warm Springs Elementary, and for sixth-graders and new students at Jefferson County Middle School.

Ninth-graders and new students are also starting Sept. 7 at Madras High School.

The rest of the students—seventh- and eighth-graders at the middle school, and tenth- through twelfth-graders at the high school—start on Thursday, Sept. 8.

School supplies picnic

Backpacks and school supplies were given to over 600 students at the Annual Back To School Barbecue held last Thursday.

Over 850 people gathered to meet their teachers and enjoy a meal. For a special treat 500 ears of corn were donated to the feast by the Community Garden.

Even a few night-shift fire crews were able to join the party to fill up before they went to start their shift.

DJ K-9 announced them and the crowd roared with applause and thanks for all their work.



Students and parents line up for school supplies at the annual Back to School BBQ.

Dave McMechan/Spilyay

Museum call to artists

The Museum at Warm Springs will present the Eighteenth Annual Warm Springs Tribal Member Art Exhibit this fall.

The museum invites Warm Springs tribal member artists, age 18 and older, to submit their artwork.

Works can range from contemporary to traditional, and can include paintings, photography, basketry and regalia, among other categories.

This year there will be two top prizes for the Judges Choice Award, one for contemporary and one traditional.

Art applications are available at the museum. Additional guidelines apply.

Artists who wish for their items to be judged for prizes must submit art on or before 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 23. All other art can be submitted before Friday, Oct. 7.

An opening reception and awards ceremony will take place with an evening reception on Thursday, Oct. 13, from 5:30-7:30, in the museums lobby. Please contact Natalie Moody during regular business hours for additional information, 541-553-3331 ext. 412.

Council looking at 2012 budgets

The Tribal Council agenda for September includes a number days dedicated to the 2012 tribal budget.

Budget reviews and presentations are scheduled for Thursday and Friday of this week, Sept. 8 and 9, all day. Presenters will be secretary-treasurer Jody Calica, and treasury controller Brandie McNamee.

Tribal Council is scheduled to continue the 2012 budget discussion on Monday and Tuesday of next week, Sept. 12 and 13, all day.

A budget posting date has been scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 27, according to the recent Council agenda.

Other Tribal Council agenda items for September include:

The Sidwalter Grazing Group; Oregon Health Sciences University with Dr. William Martin; and Verizon, with tribal planner Lonny Macy (this Wednesday, Sept. 7).

Bridge of the Gods discussion on Tuesday, Sept. 13.

Biomass discussion on Tuesday, Sept. 27.

The Fifty-Eighth Annual Conference of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) is Sunday-Thursday, Sept. 18-22 at Tulalip, Wash.

