

management difficulties, the group will continue to offer AIDS education and prevention services in Lane County.

Clay vowed to take whatever means were necessary to be sure the agency stays alive and stays within its budget. His first step was to commit only to projects the group could afford.

"It jeopardized the stability of the program to take on projects for which we had no money," he said.

Financial setbacks were symptoms of the greater problem, not necessarily a crisis, just "good old-fashioned deficit spending," Clay said.

"As of two days ago, the problem stopped. The project now is to regain stability," he said.

Clay said WAC and Shanti have discussed the possibility of combining their programs, and they will continue to do so, but neither group is actively considering it.

The immediate goal is finding a way to meet obligations and pay bills, Clay said, not committing to the enormous undertaking that a merge with Shanti would be.

William Warren, executive director of Shanti in Oregon,

said the group's financial resources have been "cut to the bone." Last fall a budget shortfall led to the layoff of a staff member, further limiting the services Shanti could offer.

Shanti has enough funding to operate until spring, when the program's future will be contingent on money anticipated from several grants. If funds are lower than expected, the group could curtail its present daily operation, he said.

About 85 percent of Shanti's operating budget comes from private donations, Warren said. The agency receives \$5,200 per year from the county health department, he said.

Warren said the group has considered joining with the larger WAC.

"There are tremendous advantages," he said. For example, volunteers could be better used because many of their tasks are duplicated at the two agencies. Shanti's pool of volunteers, many of whom have been University students, is small, he said.

In addition, it would be easier for a single larger agency to undertake the time-consuming task of applying for grants, he said.

Warren said a disadvantage would be the transition time of moving office headquarters while higher priorities remained.

He said that the need for local prevention and support has increased beyond the means of the two groups. "It's not a case where one agency or another has failed," he said.

Robert McAlister, manager of the Oregon Health Department HIV program, said he had faith that WAC's financial dilemma could be turned around.

"I'm fully confident that ... the organization will continue to be at the cutting edge of prevention services," he said.

As early medical intervention for HIV-infected individuals becomes more important, the distinction begins to blur between WAC's emphasis on prevention and Shanti's focus on assisting those already infected, McAlister said.

Portland's Cascade AIDS Project, which in the past has had similar financial difficulties, now offers a combination of prevention and support services, he said.

"As the number of (HIV-) infected people and the number of people needing support grows, so does the pressure on groups such as the Willamette AIDS Council and Shanti," McAlister said. "Any means those groups could do to conserve their resources would be advisable."

He said combining the services of WAC and Shanti was a realistic and timely possibility.

"It's up to the two organizations. Assuming that they find themselves compatible, they certainly have similar agendas," McAlister said.

"Eugene has every right to be very proud of the hard work both those organizations are doing. The people who work at Shanti and the Willamette AIDS Council are the heroes of this epidemic, and we need lots of heroes," McAlister said.

Numerical error spurs increased timber sales

CORVALLIS (AP) — State timber planners say their discovery of a mathematical error that has been in the Siuslaw National Forest's database since 1974 allowed a boost in the annual timber sale level.

Correcting the error and making other management changes should allow the forest to increase the annual timber sale level to 340 million board feet, Gail Achterman, natural resources aide to Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, said Tuesday.

That is about 5 million board feet more than the Forest Service is proposing in its 10-year forest plan and 45 million board feet more than the federal agency proposed in its draft forest plan a year ago, she said.

The Siuslaw sold an average of 348 million board feet a year between 1979 and 1988.

Norm Johnson, Goldschmidt's timber analyst, said the error involved converting timber volumes from cubic feet to board feet and was traced back to the forest inventory compiled in 1974.

Tony Vander Heide, planning staff officer for the Siuslaw, said Johnson pointed out the problem early last year and it was traced late last summer to basic forest plot inventories.

Once the mistake was included in the computer model of the forest, it affected all long-range planning decisions, he said.

Johnson said he suspected the Rogue River National Forest has a small inventory flaw, as well as the Olympic National Forest in Washington.

The state's alternative for

the Siuslaw also calls for slightly more land to be allocated to protect streams and northern spotted owls, with less undeveloped recreation land allocated.

The alternative recommendation is the fifth to be released by Gov. Neil Goldschmidt's special planning team, which is analyzing the proposed forest management plans for all national forests in Oregon, said Gail Achterman, assistant to the governor for natural resources issues.

Achterman said the governor's team tried to maintain historic timber harvest levels in the Siuslaw forest while protecting fish, wildlife, streams and recreational opportunities.

The amount of land available for timber production will remain the same, 380,000 acres, Achterman said. By intensely managing certain lands and concentrating timber sales in areas of the highest productivity, more wood can be extracted from the same acreage, the state recommendation says.

"The Siuslaw is the highest-productivity forest of all the national forests in the United States," Achterman said. It has the best soils, best growing conditions and very little old growth due to recent fires, she added.

About 34,000 acres of old growth are left in the area.

Dennis Hayward, a spokesman for the North West Timber Association in Eugene, said the industry believes the Siuslaw forest can maintain an annual harvest level in excess of 400 million board feet "and still protect the fish and the owls and the streams."



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Reporting Intern, Medford Daily News, Fall 1986
Researched and wrote articles.
Freelance Reporter, Oregon Daily Emerald, 1984-85
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