

TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

Ordinance Project Wraps Up Temporarily

The Natural Resources Ordinance Project is finishing up its first year and going into temporary hiatus due to a lack of funding. Project staff - Cathern Tufts, Ceola Norton and Diane Henkels - have researched, drafted and, with the help of community and staff members, revised four draft ordinances. These are the Administrative Procedures, Civil Offenses, Forest Management, and Water Quality ordinances, all of which have been submitted to Tribal Council for review and adoption.

The project's last scheduled ordinance for this first year was Sacred Sites. A draft Sacred Sites Ordinance was circulated to all area offices and sent to those individuals who specifically requested a copy. Tufts, Norton and Henkels held community and staff meetings in each area office to solicit questions and comments on the draft prior to the comment deadline of Nov. 15. A final revised draft Sacred Sites Ordinance should be submitted to Tribal Council for review and adoption in December.

There is no immediate funding available for a seamless shift into the project's second year. Federal and non-federal funding sources are being explored. The project was initially funded through a federal Administration for Native Americans (ANA) grant. Terry Lane, environmental planner for the tribe and the original author of the first grant, will resubmit an ANA grant in the next grant cycle. Tufts and Lane hope that this money will be available by summer 2000.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments about the project, or would like to consult with Cathern Tufts regarding the project, please contact Terry Lane in the Natural Resources Department, 1-800-922-1399, ext. 266.

Norton, Henkels and Tufts send happy holiday wishes to each and every one of you and thank you for your friendship, help and support in making this project a success.

SIHA Housing Finance Program Announces New Service

After months of hard work, the Housing Finance Program has processed all pending applications for down payment assistance. The program was established in the fall of 1998 and accepted its first round of applications on Jan. 4, 1999. Since then, the office has worked through a considerable backlog of applications and as of Oct. 31, all applicants have received preliminary notification.

New Express Processing Service

Effective Dec. 1, the Housing Finance Program office, located in Salem, Ore., will process new applications as they are received. The benefits of this new service are outlined below:

1. Within seven days, new applicants will receive notification that they either do or do not meet the preliminary qualifications.
2. Tribal members who are ready to purchase a home will not have to wait a long time to find out the status of their grant application. They can apply for the grant and as soon as they are notified of their eligibility, find a home and move forward on the purchasing process. The home buying process could be completed in as little as 60 to 90 days from the time they apply for the grant until the time they move into their home.
3. Tribal members who apply and are found **not** to be eligible because of missing documentation or credit challenges will have more time to supply the necessary information or work on correcting their credit report before qualifying for the grant.

The new "express service" will benefit tribal members who will be ready to purchase in the near future or who already have picked out a home to buy and allow them to move quickly into home ownership.

More About the Down Payment Assistance Program

Eligible tribal members can apply for a grant of up to 20 percent of the purchase price of a home, with a maximum grant of \$20,000. Minimum qualifications are:

1. Must be a first-time homebuyer or have not owned a home in the last three years.
2. The applicant's gross household income must be within 80 percent of median income limits (includes income of all household members). Call the office to find out where you fit.
3. The identity and status of all household members must be verified through proper documentation.
4. Must live in the home for five years, after which the grant is forgiven.

These are minimum qualifications only; others may apply. For more information on how the Down Payment Assistance Program can work for you, call the Housing Finance Program office in Salem at 1-888-870-9051 or 503-304-4064. Applications are available at the Housing Finance Program office, the Siletz Indian Housing Authority office in Siletz, or at any CTSI area office.