

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Chairman Delores Pigsley

In a previous issue of Siletz News, we reported that a study to determine the tribe's social and economic impact on Lincoln County and Chinook Winds' impact on Lincoln City had been launched by the Portland-based economic research firm, ECONorthwest, under a tribal contract.

The results of ECONorthwest's study were reported to the media at a press conference held at Chinook Winds on March 29. Following my report of important current tribal activities, I will share with you what I said in my introductory statement at that press conference, which includes highlights of the study.

### Organization and Planning for Tribal Housing in Process

Under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) administered by HUD, which Congress passed more than a year ago, tribes are required to develop a five-year plan and annual plans.

The Siletz Tribe has completed its five-year plan. We are in the process of defining our goals and objectives over the long term and a plan for the current year.

Our tribe also is in the process of bringing the Siletz Indian Housing Authority under tribal administration. Initially, our organizational structure required the Housing Authority to be separate from tribal administration. Revised federal regulations, however, allow a housing authority to be under tribal administration which will, among other things, improve policy and program coordination.

We will report on these changes in greater detail in upcoming issues of Siletz News.

### Tribes Hosts National EPA Conference

The Siletz Tribe has been selected to host the Fifth National Tribal Conference on Environmental Management at Chinook Winds during the second week of May. This event is sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In magnitude, this conference will be comparable to the BIA conference that the Siletz Tribe hosted last year. That conference brought together Department of Interior officials, BIA area directors, and agencies from across the country.

We are proud that we were selected to be involved in coordinating this major, national EPA conference that will again bring together tribal, federal, and state government officials from across the country.

### Siletz Tribe Releases ECONorthwest Report

The following is the statement that I made at the March press conference, highlighting the ECONorthwest study. The press conference was attended by several major media representatives and resulted in excellent coverage for the tribe, especially in the Lincoln County newspapers, KOIN-TV, KGW-TV and Oregon Public Radio. We regret that the article in the Salem Statesman-Journal, however, was apparently the basis of an Associated Press story that was picked up by The Oregonian. It included unfounded statements by disgruntled residents who led the failed No Casino campaign five years ago.

We are distributing copies of the full report to selected individuals. They will be able to read for themselves the conclusions reached by ECONorthwest, a highly credible economic research firm and the largest one in the Northwest.

Copies are available for anyone to read in the Portland, Salem, and Eugene area offices. You can obtain a copy of the 40-page report by writing to Kelley Ellis, Executive Secretary of the Tribal Council, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380.

### Press Conference Statement, March 29, 2000

The Tribal Council has called this press conference today to share with you the findings as reported in **An Economic & Social Impact Study** that was commissioned by the Council and prepared by ECONorthwest, a highly credible Portland-based economic research firm.

Robert Whalen, who directed the research study for ECONorthwest, is with

us today to respond to your questions.

I'd like to step back a moment and remind you that five years ago, when the Siletz Tribe began planning for the development of a gaming center in Lincoln City, there was great apprehension among some people in Lincoln City that a gaming center in their midst would have serious negative financial and social impacts.

The Siletz Tribe agreed to have a reliable study conducted by a credible research firm to determine what, exactly, the impacts would be.

Ladies and gentlemen, what our economic impact study reveals is that contrary to those earlier concerns, the Siletz Tribal government and our Chinook Winds Casino & Convention Center are making significant **positive** contributions to Lincoln City and Lincoln County. These contributions translate into jobs filled by Indians and non-Indians alike, economic stimulus to scores of businesses in the area, and all of this accomplished with no adverse social consequences.

In fact, the economic contributions made by the tribal government and Chinook Winds become even more meaningful in light of the fact that two of the major industries in the coastal area, timber and fisheries, declined substantially in recent years, a scenario that produced high unemployment and a depressed economy.

In addition, the study addresses several myths surrounding Indian gaming that corroborate our decision to locate the casino in Lincoln City.

I think it's important to be reminded that when the Siletz Tribe fell victim to the now universally discredited Termination Policy of the 1950s, this piece of trust property on which Chinook Winds now stands was, at that time, property owned by a tribal member and part of our reservation. Because of termination, this parcel was converted to fee patent and taken out of Indian ownership in 1956.

The tribe was not restored as a federally recognized tribe until 1977, and in late 1994, through the determined efforts of the Siletz Tribe, this particular parcel was restored by an act of Congress as part of the Siletz Reservation and made eligible for gaming.

Although the Tribal Council was confident that our gaming center would not negatively impact Lincoln City, we agreed to have an unbiased impact study conducted by a credible economic research firm. This **Economic & Social Impact Study**, which covers the period through 1998, is the result.

(See ECONorthwest on page 21)