

# Ecotrust presents Indigenous Leadership Award to Pigsley, honors 4 others

## Group recognizes fourth Siletz Tribal member

By Diane Rodriguez

Tribal Chairman Delores Pigsley received the Ecotrust Indigenous Leadership Award in ceremonies held Nov. 2 at the Portland Art Museum in Portland, Ore.

She was honored along with four other Native leaders dedicated to improving the social, economic and environmental conditions of their people. She received \$25,000 to continue her efforts in the Siletz Tribal community. Each of the other four leaders received \$5,000.

Pigsley used her acceptance speech to credit Tribal Council members, staff and others she's worked with in her 32 years on the Tribal Council, 26 as chairman.

"I am most grateful to our Tribal members, to my family, to all the people who have contributed to the success of Siletz. It's not a one-person job, it's not even close to being a one-person job. You have to have people who believe in you and you have to have people who elect you," said Pigsley. "I truly thank Ecotrust, Rick George (emcee for the evening who introduced her) and all the people who made this possible. I don't look at it as recognition for me. It's really recognition for our Tribe and I very much appreciate that."

In his introduction, George highlighted Pigsley's involvement with several areas of importance to the Siletz Tribe.

"Chairman Pigsley has worked passionately with children to preserve and grow her culture and the natural resources so important to the survival of the Siletz," he said. "I know that because I worked for an Indian Tribe in Oregon for 20 years and I would hear about the great work this



Photo by Diane Rodriguez

Clan Chief Adam Dick (Kwaxsiatalla – Kwakwaka'wakw Nation, British Columbia), Delores Pigsley (Siletz, Oregon), Nora Marks Dauenhauer (Tlingit, Alaska), Charles F. (Chuck) Sams III (Cocopah Nation, Oregon) and Wayne Warren Don (Cup'ig/Yupik, Alaska), at the 2011 Ecotrust Indigenous Leaders Award celebration

Tribe over on the coast – the Siletz Tribe – did that everybody talked about. Research on the lamprey, watershed restoration, cultural preservation and a dream of most Tribes, the Siletz cultural museum, is now in its development stages."

Tribal General Manager Brenda Bremner shared comments on behalf of Pigsley's family, the staff and council members.

"One of the unique things about Dee is that we can have coffee or tea with her for 15 minutes or so before a negotiation, throw all of the information that we've been talking about for a month ahead of

time, put it all on her table, go into negotiations and she would say everything, handle the entire negotiation and we could just sit there. And things would come out well on our end," she said. "It takes a very unique individual to do that when you have 20 different programs and you're dealing with a lot of different agencies. So we admire her greatly for her ability to represent the Tribe so eloquently and to be able to so succinctly communicate the needs of our Tribe to our legislators."

Bremner also read a letter from Charles Wilkinson, author of the Siletz

Tribal history book *The People Are Dancing Again* and an attorney who helped the Tribe achieve Restoration in 1977.

"You are a model for many, certainly young Indian people, and may they always appreciate that your public decisions and demeanor are anchored in your truest personal qualities, for you are at once big-hearted and tough-minded, efficient and compassionate, cautious and courageous," he wrote.

Siletz Tribal members Bud Lane, Agnes Pilgrim and Dave Hatch have been award finalists in the last 10 years.



Photo by Diane Rodriguez

Siletz singers Justin Mason, Buddy Lane, Bud Lane, Halli Skauge, Alissa Lane, Tiffany Stuart, Lasha Mason, Angeline Poirier and Jennifer Easter sing at the welcoming reception of the National Congress of American Indians conference in Portland, Ore., on Oct. 30.