

# New Director For Economic Development

By Rose Marie Isley

Ted Werth has been appointed executive director of Siletz Tribal Economic Development Commission (STEDCO).

His goal is to develop a sound economic base for the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz that will provide job opportunities for those who need them.

"The tribe took a survey and it showed that a lot of tribal members would like to move back to Siletz. We want to provide job opportunities for them," he said.

Werth, 27, was chosen from among 88 applicants for the position. He has been an employee of the tribe for three years. He and his wife, Cheryl, live in Siletz.

Werth's first position with the tribe was as editor of the tribal newspaper, a job at which he won a national award. Later he was the tribe's economic planner.

As economic planner for the tribe, Werth has been involved with STEDCO since it was formed one year ago.

"We spent a lot of time in joint meetings with the tribal council to see what direction the council wanted this to go. We did a lot of brainstorming," he said.

Out of that brainstorming came plans for retail stores, wood products industries and recreational facilities.

"Any wood products type of industry has some potential. We think Lincoln County has potential for more recreation and tourism. We'd like to develop retail activities. We would like to see those go hand in hand with other development because they are dependent on the economy," Werth said.

The tribe had hoped to get grants to build a mall that would house several retail businesses, he said. Grants were not forthcoming from the Economic Development Administration, however.

"They pulled out because of conflicts with existing businesses," he said.

"We haven't ruled the mall out yet," he added.

Funds for tribal activities come from the sale of timber. A large portion of the 3,600-acre reservation is covered with mature timber. The tribe hopes to get another 12,000 acres transferred from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

"The BLM land acquisition may be resolved later this year. It will take an act of Congress to transfer the land," Werth said.

The 12,000 acres, under BLM management, provides 50 jobs per year and \$21,500 for local and state government. A study shows tribal management could provide 150 jobs per year, according to Werth. Under that plan, state and local government would receive \$84,375 in timber revenues.

A third type of management, Siletz Trust Private Management, Werth believes, could provide 250 jobs per year with revenue to state and local government in the amount of \$203,125.

"That is the reason there is a lot of interest in the land acquisition. The way the BLM manages it now a lot of those trees will rot on the stumps," he said.

Last year Lincoln County commissioners stated opposition to the land transfer for two reasons. First, they feared the loss of tax revenues to the county because reservation land is exempt.

Second, they did not want to lose control of 22 acres of old growth Douglas fir known as the Valley of the Giants. The trees, in northeast Lincoln County, are said to be more than 25 feet around and more than 200 feet tall.

Addressing the first issue, Werth said, "We are currently paying the county 5 percent of timber revenues in lieu of taxes. The county (commissioners) support the land transfer as long as they receive the 5 percent."

"If the Valley of the Giants is a big issue it could be excluded from the transfer. If we get it, of course we would preserve it."

Plans for economic development do not depend on the BLM transfer entirely, but the additional land would help, Werth said. "It would make a big difference. We could plan more aggressively. STEDCO is being real careful. We'd still be really careful, but we could think a little bigger."

The BLM land transfer is supported by the Port of Toledo, the City of Newport, the State Trade and Economic Development Commission and others. County commissioners have put their stamp of approval on it, said Werth.

"No one has come out in flat opposition," he said. "All we can do is do what we can with what we've got."

So far the tribe has sold two parcels of timber from reservation land.



TED WERTH has been appointed executive director of the Siletz Tribal Economic Development Commission. A tribal

Photo courtesy of News-Times/Lincoln County Leader

member, he formerly was employed as the tribal newspaper editor and later as economic planner.

"Standing timber was sold on a competitive bid to

Hampton Mills. Lampton Mills just bought Smurfit in Toledo," Werth said.

"The second sale was to STEDCO. STEDCO bought the timber from the tribe and will market it when the market peaks. STEDCO will pay taxes to the tribe on the overall profit," he said.

Werth grew up in Springfield and came to Siletz to work for the tribe after college. He is a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz.

The new executive director of Werth has an associate

degree in electronic technology from Lane Community College in Eugene. He majored in marketing and earned a bachelor's degree in industrial management from Oregon Institute of Technology, Klamath Falls.

Werth is a member of the Siletz Planning Commission and is a church trustee at the Abundant Life Center in Toledo. He is also a leader of the Royal Rangers, a church group similar to Boy Scouts of America.

"We like to go camping several times a year and

fishing when I can find the time. Church activities take up a large part of our free time. I like to golf, too," he said.

Werth also likes baseball.

"I did a lot of softball umpiring all over the state while I was still in college," he said.

The new STEDCO executive director doesn't have to plan alone for the tribe's economic future. He has some advisors.

"The commission is made up of nine members. Five

are from the tribe, four are from the business community. Of the five tribal members, two are on the tribal council, one is a stockbroker, one is a businessman and one is a retired civil engineer. Of the other four, two are developers, one is a banker and one is professor of forestry economics.

"They bring a lot of expertise," Werth concluded.

## Council Completes New Budgeting Process

By Ted Werth

The Tribal Council completed work on their Fiscal Year 1987 budget during their January 17th meeting. The new budget is the first one completed since the Tribal Council adopted a long term financial planning proposal. The new budgeting system is designed to provide for long term government stability while still allowing funding for the Tribe's economic development program.

By adopting the plan, the Tribal Council agreed to limit tribal government expenditures to \$455,000 for FY '87 (Oct. 1, 1986 to Sept. 30, 1987). The Council further agreed to limit spending increases to 1½% from one year to the next. This will allow the Tribe to establish a "reserve" fund from the timber revenue received as a result of the accelerated cut program. This revenue is expected to be received during the next five years. The proposed reserve fund will provide a higher level of interest than is now received on timber funds invested by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This is possible because the Tribe will be able to invest for longer periods of time since it has carefully planned and limited future expenditures.

Where does all this leave the Tribe's economic development program? By limiting budget increases to 1½% annually the Tribe will be able to earmark approximately \$1.5 million for investment in economic

development enterprises. Some would argue "that this money should be spent on programs on per capita payments". Consider this. If the Council budget were allowed to increase at a rate of 5%, (only \$11,375 more than a 21/5% increase), with no funds set aside for economic development the Tribe would be unable to provide little more than a skeleton government and bare minimum maintenance on the buildings and grounds after 25 years. During this 25 year period no new programs would be allowed to replace or supplement programs hurt by federal cuts. Further, this situation would not improve after 25 years.

By staying with the proposed program the Tribe can be assured that it will be able to operate at the present level for at least 40 years. Forty years of stability while still providing funding for economic development. Economic development that when successful, will provide funds to supplement programs that are presently being cut by the BIA. Economic development is also the only existing method that will generate numerous, long term, stable jobs for tribal members.

It is continually emphasized that the Tribe needs to provide for future generations. By committing to a sound, long term financial plan the Tribal Council has taken a large step towards attaining this goal.