

CTUIR executive director resigns

Ted Wright taking position with Spokane Indian Tribe

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

MISSION — After two years at the helm, Ted Wright, executive director of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, resigned his position.

According to a Nov. 2 press release, Wright is leaving Eastern Oregon to take the same position with the Spokane Indian Tribe, a tribe with a reservation northwest of the city of Spokane.

The press release credited Wright for his role in working with a consultant to conduct an organizational assessment of tribal government. The assessment resulted in the hiring of Chuck Sams as deputy executive director, and he will serve as the interim executive director until a permanent successor is named.

“We are extremely thankful to Ted for the time, effort, and professionalism that he has brought to the position of Executive Director,” CTUIR Board of Trustees Chair Kat Brigham said in a statement. “2020 has been a very tough year but his ability to adapt and contribute to the protection and enhancement of CTUIR’s rights and interests has been clear. One of the things Ted did was to have an operational review of our tribal government to seek ways to

improve and we are working on implementation now. He always wanted to do the best he could for us and we hope that he will come back to visit when he can.”

An enrolled member of the Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska, Wright was involved with some of the challenges of tribal government.

Wright acted as a spokesman for the Board of Trustees when its members vacated a seat held by at-large member Sally Kosey in 2019, alleging she didn’t meet residency requirements. Both sides reached a settlement that allowed Kosey to keep her seat through the remainder of her term, and after a couple of ensuing elections, she was elected to a new term as board secretary and voters approved an amendment to the tribal election clarifying residency requirements for elected officials.

Wright has also led tribal government during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to more than 100 positive cases among tribal members and one death.

Interim executive director duties now fall to Sams, who was promoted from communications director to deputy director in July after the position was revived. As deputy director, Sams split department supervisory duties with Wright, but CTUIR Communications Director Matt Johnson said tribal leaders were still discussing whether to appoint an interim deputy director to assist Sams.

Johnson said the tribes have formed a search committee comprised of Board of Trustees members and department heads to determine how the executive director hiring process will work.



Wright

Windy weekend storm in store for Columbia Basin

By ALEX CASTLE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The first snowstorm of the season is headed to the Pacific Northwest this weekend, but residents of the Columbia Basin should primarily expect to contend with high winds through the afternoon and night of Friday, Nov. 13, according to the National Weather Service.

“For the Columbia Basin the most significant impact is probably going to be wind,” said Joe Solomon, a meteorologist with the weather service in Pendleton. “That’s our main concern.”

According to Solomon, winds are expected to pick up the afternoon of Nov. 13 before peaking that night and then declining through Saturday, Nov. 14. Forecasts expect sustained winds to reach up to 40 mph, with potential for wind gusts up to 60 mph.

Solomon said the Pend-



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Traffic navigates a snowy section of Interstate 84 near Meacham on Monday, Nov. 9, 2020.

leton office has yet to issue any wind advisories, though one may be coming as they watch the storm develop and head toward the region.

The storm system isn’t expected to be relatively cold, he said, and precipitation at lower elevations isn’t expected to exceed a quarter of an inch between Nov. 13 and Nov. 14.

“We will get some rain when this system comes in on Friday and Friday night,

but those strong winds kind of kill off some of the precipitation,” Solomon said.

However, Solomon said the storm is expected to bring a significant amount of snowfall at higher elevations above 2,500 feet in the Blue and Wallowa mountains.

“I wouldn’t be surprised if we don’t end up with upwards of maybe over a foot of snow in the mountains of Eastern Oregon out

of this event,” Solomon said. The Associated Press reported that the storm system is forecasted to hit the coasts of Oregon, Washington and Northern California, and may present weather hazards for some metro areas.

“This will be the first significant snowstorm of the season for the Washington Cascades,” AccuWeather Senior Meteorologist Mike Doll told the Associated Press. “Snow levels will fall to pass level and travel on U.S. 2 and Interstate 90 could become dangerous due to the combination of heavy snow and blowing snow.”

Wind-driven rain and blowing and drifting snow can drastically reduce visibility.

“The concern is winds will be strong enough to down trees and power lines. Power outages are a risk for the Seattle and Portland metro areas,” Doll told the Associated Press.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Lost hunters found uninjured at Coyote Ridge

WESTON — Umatilla County Search and Rescue safely located a man and his grandson after they were lost on the Coyote Ridge Trailhead outside of Weston for more than 12 hours on Sunday, Nov. 8, according to a press release.

The search and rescue team was activated after Umatilla County Dispatch received a call around 7:40 p.m. on Nov. 8 from Bruce Bryan, 64, who reported that he and his 17-year-old grandson, Jesse Bryan, had been lost since 4 p.m. while elk hunting in the area.

Volunteers Bob Carrell, Dottie Carrell and Shari

Mueller responded to the trailhead and located the hikers’ vehicle, the release stated, while Sgt. Dwight Johnson and searchers Tom Phelan and Scott Schuening drove to Bingham Road and began hiking toward the hikers.

“Phelan, Schuening and Johnson hiked for approximately four hours through snow, washed out areas from the spring floods, fallen trees, thick brush and waded across Coyote Creek before locating the hunters,” the release stated.

The Bryans were located around 3 a.m. and were “cold and wet but not injured,” according to the release. Search and rescue led the hikers back to their vehicle, which they reached at about 8:30 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 9.

— EO Media Group

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Come Play (PG-13)
12:40p 3:40p 6:40p

The Informer (R)
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