

Alternative timber sought

A field tour was held Feb. 3 to discuss a 4 million board foot timber sale being planned for areas outside the commercial forest. The tour gave tribal members an opportunity to see the areas being proposed for harvest and to offer comments.

A second tour was postponed, and rescheduled for Feb. 14. Participants will leave the Forestry complex at 9 a.m. Lunch will be provided.

The primary focus of the tours is 4 million board feet of timber being planned for harvest in visual corridors and riparian zones adjacent to highways 26 and 216. The "Gang of Four" appointed by Tribal Council to seek short- and long-term solutions to an economic crisis at Warm Springs Forest Products Industry (WSFPI) recommended the volume.

Project leader Mark Brown described some of the harvest methods and prescriptions being considered for the sale during his presentation last week. He said all of the blocks selected for harvest will be thinned to alleviate forest health problems such as overcrowding, mistletoe or root rot.

"All of the harvest units will be thinned to promote health of the residuals," said Brown. "We also want to minimize the visual impacts as much as possible."

All of the logging will be done with ground-based equipment and planners do not want to change the visual corridor in any radical way, so special care will have to be taken in order to preserve the scenic quality of the areas being harvested. Trees will be cut close to the ground to shorten stump heights and heavy equipment will be kept out of sensitive areas as precautions against visual impacts.

Most of the logging will occur



Trees in visual corridors along Highway 26 may be thinned under timber sale planned by Forestry.

in areas that are not included in the annual allowable cut calculation. This will include riparian B zone buffers, but not the A zone buffers that are closest to the streams. For example, Beaver Creek, which runs adjacent to Highway 26, has an A zone buffer of 100 feet (each side of the stream), so

nothing will be cut within 100 feet of Beaver Creek.

WSFPI had planned to lay off approximately 65 workers before the first of the year, but Tribal Council appointed the Gang of Four to seek solutions to the problem and their short-term recommendation was to

harvest the 4 million board feet of timber and delay employee layoffs until February.

The Forestry and Natural Resources branches were directed to find the timber in areas outside the commercial forest base, so as not to affect the annual allowable cut.

Hood River site pursued for gaming facility

The Tribal Council, by a vote of 10-0, decided to pursue the possibility of building a gaming facility on trust land located in the Columbia River Gorge just east of Hood River. Tribal Council directed the Gaming Board of Directors and other tribal officials to move forward on the Hood River site, which could generate annual gaming revenues in excess of \$100 million.

The trust land overlooking the Columbia River east of Hood River could be developed for gaming purposes under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. The 40-acre parcel is located just off the area's most heavily traveled highway (Interstate 84) approximately 60 miles from downtown Portland.

Early efforts to build a casino in the Columbia Gorge focused on tribal fee lands near Cascade Locks. Local residents supported the idea, but the governor would not approve the project, as required under the Gaming Act, so Tribal Council has decided to pursue other options.

While some residents in Hood River have vocally opposed a tribal casino in their county, the property in question lies outside the city's urban growth boundary and is exempt from strict land-use regulations specified under the Gorge Scenic Act. Even more importantly, the property can be developed without the governor's approval.

Most of the hurdles associated with the Hood River property have to do with construction. The trust parcel is situated on a steep slope that will require considerable excavation to create a suitable building site. Planners have estimated the cost of building a two-story gaming facility, six-level parking structure and related amenities at approximately \$150 million.

Offsetting the lofty price tag associated with development are the equally lofty projections of potential income. Forecast studies suggest gross annual gaming revenues could top \$130 million annually. The site's close proximity to Interstate 84 and easy access from Portland make it a prime location for tribal gaming facilities.

Several issues related to development of the Hood River property have yet to be resolved. The Gaming Board is currently trying to obtain legal access to the site, securing additional engineering assessments, and negotiating with state and local agencies having regulatory authority in the region.

Tribal officials will hold public meetings to discuss strategies for gaming expansion in the months ahead.



The Family Resource Center, top left, will be in the renovated former Indian Health Services building. Del Towell, bottom left, discusses preparations, above, for construction of the wastewater treatment plant.

Construction an enterprise

Warm Springs Construction Enterprises soon will be working on highway and other construction projects off the Warm Springs Reservation.

That possibility comes thanks to its recent designation as a tribal enterprise by the Warm Springs Tribal Council.

The construction office joins several other tribal enterprises, including Warm Springs Power Enterprises, Kah-Nee-Ta, Indian Head Casino, Warm Springs Composite Products and Warm Springs Forest Products.

In the year 2000, construction administered just more than \$9 million in contracts, some of them com-

pleted from previous years. The enterprise designation is to allow the department to bring in outside income to the tribes.

"We have to act like any other business now," said Del Towell, general manager of Construction Enterprises.

In addition to bringing in money, Towell's goal is to increase employment opportunities.

"My goal here is to totally employ tribal members," said Towell, "and to keep our people working year-round."

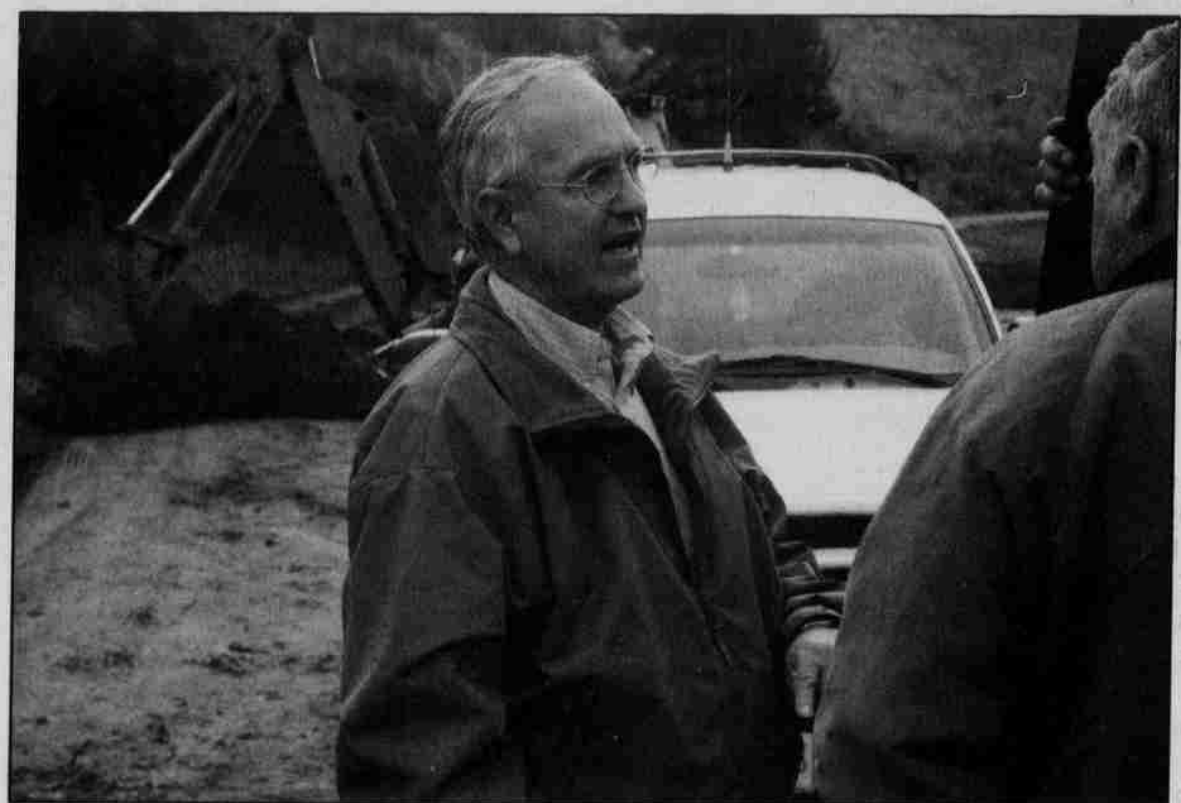
In 2000, 76 workers were employed in construction for a payroll of just over \$1 million. Of those, 50

were Warm Springs tribal members, with another 20 married into the tribe or from other tribes.

The enterprise builds roads, bridges and buildings; it also operates the rock quarries around the reservation.

Recent projects include the renovated Family Resource Center on the campus (the brick building that used to house Indian Health Services), a number of new homes and five bridges replaced last year.

The tribal council has asked Construction Enterprises to bring in \$150,000 in profits this year. Towell estimates that will require a contract or contracts totaling \$2 million.



Tribal Council candidate promises openness if elected

To the editor,
I would like to thank those of you who are encouraging my bid for Tribal Council Simnasho District. I was approached three years ago to run, but decided to wait for awhile. I am now humbled and moved to be approached again to run, in which I have decided I will run for office. The younger generations are becoming more aware and want more involvement in all aspects of Tribal Government. This is a good indication of all of our intentions. We all want the best for our children, grandchildren and the unborn. This is something we all strive for, as one family, one Tribe.
I will not make any promises I can't keep. I will, however, do what I

can to build a rapport and enhance communication between the Council, Management, Committees, Enterprises and most importantly the people. Without these key ingredients, the Council cannot function and be successful. No communication, no success; it's that simple. District Representatives must strive to get along with each other and the Chiefs. We can no longer allow petty differences, politics and personal agendas get in the way and put our Tribe in jeopardy.

I will also take the initiative to call for a General Council once a month, quarterly written reports to the people and set aside at least 30 minutes to 1 hour one the daily agenda

for any Tribal member to come in and talk with the Council. Tribal members should not have to fight for an audience with the Council. It shouldn't matter what age you are; anyone should be able to come in and talk.

The Council needs to open up the lines of communication. There should only be a minimum of "Executive Sessions" and the secret ballots need to be done away with. The people deserve to know where their representatives stand. The Casino bid for Hood River. This should have been taken to the people from the very onset. A lot of money, time and resources could have been spared for this futile bid. The people wanted here

on our own Reservation as evident with the Referendum regarding gaming. Overwhelmingly the people shut it down for a Madras Casino. If the Council went to the people first, I believe we could have already been planning or building a Casino right here in Warm Springs. Another example is the Rose Garden Sky Box. This should have been taken to the people for this huge financial commitment; are we getting a return on this investment? There are many issues that face the Tribes and they all are important. The above issues I touched on are only a few examples that can be easily solved. The Council just needs to take a better initia-

tive to talk with the people. In order for the organization and enterprises to run smoothly and effectively we must rely on the people who know it best. These people are the front line employees. It is they who are the arms and legs of our economic livelihood. Why must we continue to rely on outside sources, consultants and overlook our Tribal members that have been working here for years? Without a few basic key ingredients where will the Council take us? It only takes bare bones common sense to get a feel for what the people want.

Like I said earlier, I will not make any promises I can't keep. However, I will promise to make writ-

ten reports to the people on a quarterly basis, written reports on traveling, and go and speak with all of the employees about the day-to-day operations of our Tribes. I would bring back Honesty, Integrity and fairness back to the Council by my own example. It is time for the rules, regulations and holding everybody and every department and enterprise accountable. There needs to be leadership by example, thus earning respect. These are only a few things I wanted to touch on.

Thank you,
Floyd Calica
Simnasho District member
Warm Springs