

Spilyay Tymo

Coyote News, est. 1976

May 12, 2005 Vol. 30, No. 10

University of Oregon Library
Received on: 05-16-05
Spilyay tymo.

P.O. Box 870
97761

RWSS
Patron

U.S. Postage
PRSRT STD
Warm Springs, OR 97761

50 cents

Fishing stopped due to small salmon run

Treaty tribes of the Columbia River stopped ceremonial fishing last week, due to the small return of salmon. This year only about 100,000 salmon are expected to swim up the fish ladders at the Bonneville Dam on their return journey to spawn, less than half the 250,000 that had earlier been forecast.

Fishermen of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs had already caught the tribes' 2,000-fish ceremonial quota when the tribes agreed to end fishing.

The other tribes - Yakama, Umatilla and Nez Perce - had not reached the 2,000-fish limit when the tribes ended ceremonial fishing. Yakama Nation had 1,148 fish; Umatilla, 744; and Nez Perce, 120.

Bruce Jim, chairman of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Off-Reservation Fish Committee, said this was the first time the tribes had agreed to end ceremonial fishing early, due to the small return of salmon. Ceremonial fish are used during funerals, marriages and other community events.

Scientists don't have an explanation for the scarcity of the 2005 Chinook run, especially given that 437,000 fish swam past the Bonneville Dam in 2001. Their offspring should be returning this year.

Some blame federal hydropower dams for the scarcity, but biologists aren't sure what accounts for the surprising turn for the worse. "The hydro system is a big killer of fish - but it's always a big killer of fish," said Stuart Ellis, fisheries scientist with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC). "I don't think it's necessarily fair to blame them with killing all these missing fish."

Along with the issue of the low salmon run is the problem of sea lions feasting on the fish at Bonneville Dam.

Last week fisheries workers chased off sea lions with underwater firecrackers and noisemaking guns that biologists hope will keep them away for good.

But if this scare tactic fails, the states of Oregon and Washington may have to ask for federal permission to trap or even kill the sea lions, which are protected under federal law, just like the salmon.

At the rate the sea lions are gobbling up the passing salmon - each eats from 25 to 50 fish a day - biologists are caught between saving salmon and trying to avoid injuring their protected predators.

The states and the Army Corps of Engineers, which operates Columbia River dams, had to get special permission from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Coast Guard to run last week's two-day hazing experiment at Bonneville Dam.

The operation involved dropping 21 "seal bombs," underwater firecrackers that send a mild shock wave that spreads about 20 to 30 feet beneath the surface of the river to scare the sea lions. There is no harmful effect on the fish, biologists say.

Indian tribes have already asked Oregon and Washington fishery officials to request federal permission to kill sea lions that prove to be repeat offenders at the dam. Approval could take years, however. The other alternative is trapping the animals and relocating them, but approval could take from six months to six years under current federal law.

"The sea lion predation problem in the Columbia River has increased seven-fold in the past few years," said Olney Patt Jr., CRITFC executive director.

See FISH on page 9

When the River Ran Wild! Aguilar writes a fascinating book of tribal history

By Dave McMechan
Spilyay Tymo

The way it was long ago, when the river ran wild! It is a great and sweeping subject, sometimes controversial, always fascinating.

Ten years ago George Aguilar set about documenting a history of Indian names of his family. His motive was to give his grandchildren an idea of who they are and where they came from.

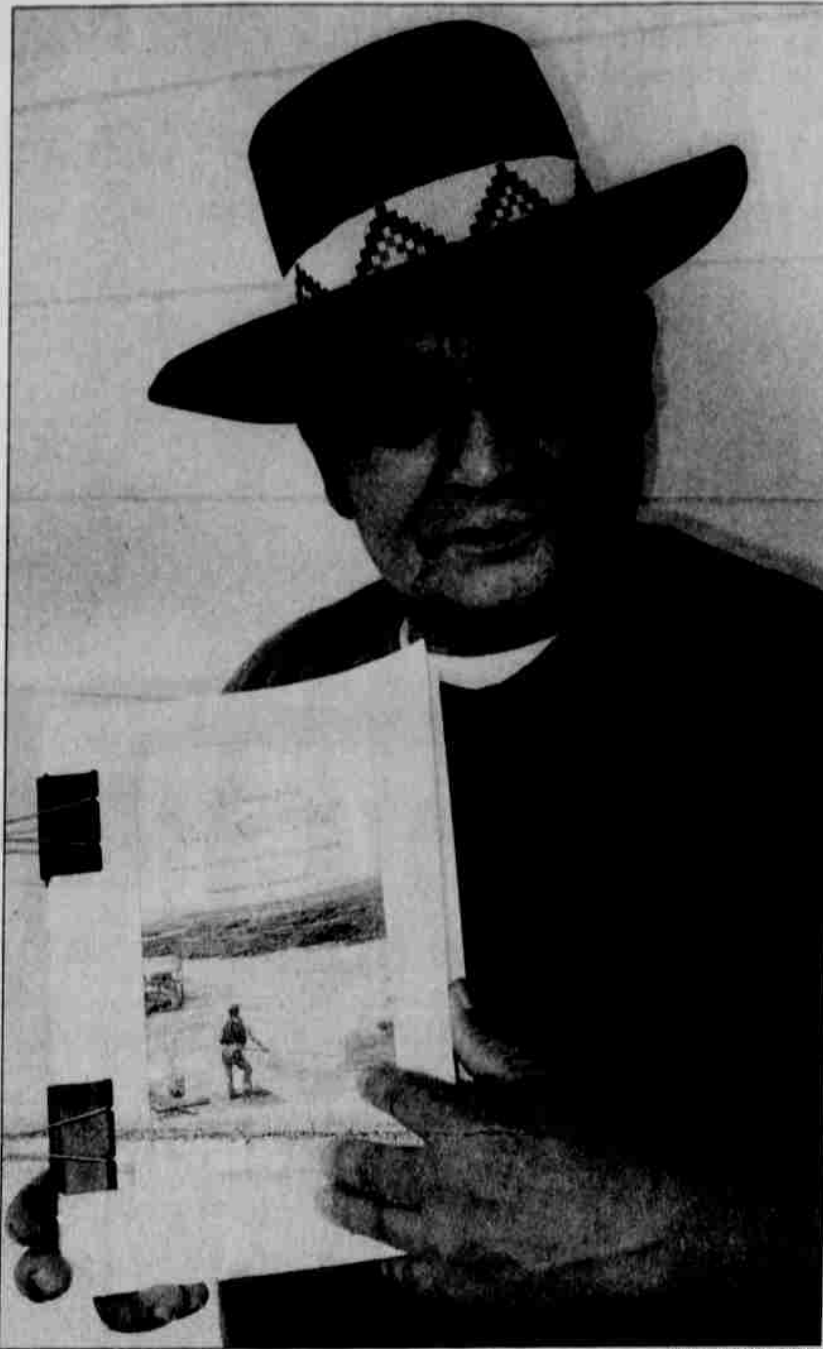
At first he used information from tribal Vital Statistics, Bureau of Indian Affairs Realty, and old census information, some dating back to the 1880s. The research grew over time, until Aguilar had written a book of great interest to readers well beyond his immediate family.

His book is *When the River Ran Wild! Indian Traditions on the Mid-Columbia and the Warm Springs Reservation*. The 272-page book will be published in June by the University of Washington Press and the Oregon Historical Society.

There have been a number of books written about the Indians of the Columbia River, but *When the River Ran Wild!* is much different from the others. As Aguilar explains:

"Many people have written about our people from the view of looking into our way of life. In this situation, this is an uneducated Native American that is writing looking to the outside from the inside, and telling it the way it was."

Aguilar was born in 1930 at The Dalles. His father was Estanislaus (Easton) Aguilar, born in the Philippines. His mother was Evelyn Polk. His father drowned at the Cascade Rapids while fishing with George's



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

George Aguilar with the manuscript of *When the River Ran Wild!*

grandfather James Polk Jr. His mother died a short time later.

George Aguilar was an orphan at age 21 months. He was raised by his grand-

parents, James Jr. and Hattie Polk, at their home in the Wolford Canyon on the reservation.

"It was here that I was brought up

"Nearly 75 years of my lifetime have come and gone since hearing of the sparse historical events from the old-timers. It's my turn now."

George Aguilar

in the old Indian traditional methods. Just watching, doing, and above all being a good listener, I acquired the learning of these old methods."

When the River Ran Wild! includes some of what he learned of these traditional Indian skills and knowledge. The book includes chapters on traditional uses of plants and animals, fisheries, the history of Indian names, customs, the Treaty of 1855, warfare, religion and beliefs, myths and legends.

His book is a history of people and places that are gone. "Some of the elders still remember, however, and some have heard stories of the times when the river ran wild through the Columbia Gorge. Those times are no more," writes Aguilar in the epilogue to *When the River Ran Wild!*

After the book is published next month, Aguilar will go on a speaking tour around the region. He will be at the Museum at Warm Springs for a book-signing on June 23, also the opening of the museum Treaty of 1855 exhibit.

He began 10 years ago writing what was to be a personal and family history. In the end the book became filled with fascinating and little-known history of the people, history and culture of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

Bear Drive housing taking shape

By Brian Mortensen
Spilyay Tymo

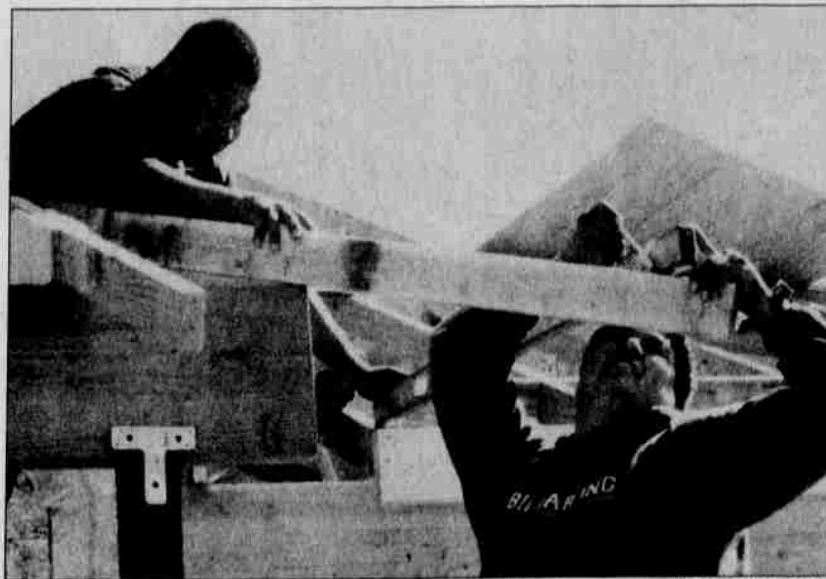
Spend a few moments with Tom Strong at the site of the new family-sized houses under construction on Bear Drive in northwest Warm Springs, and you almost feel pride oozing out of him. He feels pride in hiring an all-tribal crew for the concrete and framework of each house.

He feels pride in how the 20 houses, once they're all built, will look, how well they're built, and how energy and maintenance-efficient they will be. But he said what gives him the most pride is that the people who will live in the four- and five-bedroom homes will themselves have pride in their new homes.

The four homes at the east end of Bear Drive, part of the first phase of the three-phase project, are scheduled for completion, ready for the families to move in, by June 30.

"We want them to be nice," said Strong, who is the tribal construction manager. "We want the people to take pride in their homes. We want to give them something nice, instead of just throwing up a house that's a project house."

Strong said the houses would, in fact, be modern dwellings, with heat pumps, and ventilation to prevent molding, addressing a concern Strong has in terms of the longevity of the houses.



Brian Mortensen/Spilyay

Alvis Smith III, left, and Kanim Smith Jr., work on the frame of a house on Bear Drive. The six houses now being built are the first of a group of 20 that may be finished within two years.

"We're raising the bar on the life-expectancy of homes, and we're doing it with tribal members," Strong said, adding that the life of an average house is about 50 years. He said he expects each of the new homes to last at least 65 years.

Of the first four to be soon completed, two of them, four-bedroom homes, are 1,396 square feet, while the other two, five-bedroom houses, are 1,588 square feet.

The dwellings are administered through both the tribal Housing Department and U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD), called Mutual Help housing. Strong figures the houses

will cost as much as \$60 to 70 per square foot. Other recently built homes on the reservation may have cost as much as \$80 a square foot, mainly due to overhead from hiring outside contractors.

"We've got qualified tribal members here," said Strong. "I really like to hire tribal members. That's a big thing for me. We'll try to put as many tribal members to work as possible, and we'll put out a good product."

Two of the framers on the crew, Strong said, worked for Kirby Nagelhout Construction, including job foreman Alvis Smith III and carpenter Andy Stacona. Also on the crew are

Kanim Smith Jr., Frank Reese Jr., Ron Bennett and Austin Smith.

"I've always believed we have the skill here, but we've always gone outside the reservation," Strong said.

After the first six houses of the first phase are built, a second phase of eight homes is scheduled, followed by a final phase of six houses. Strong said his crew may be ready to pour concrete for the second-phase houses within weeks.

"We figured 24 months on all 20, and we'll probably do it in 20 months," he said. "We do want to shoot for something underneath 24 months because there is some incentive. Anytime you do work through HUD, there is incentive, for quality and building under time limits."

Each of the homes will use a forced-air furnace and each will be wired and fitted for a heat pump. For an additional \$2,000, the homeowner can get a heat pump. They each have an architectural roof, and covered carports.

By eliminating the contractor, Strong said, the Housing Department was able to hire a tribal member to run a backhoe and dig all of the water and sewer lines. "We did a lot of the major stuff right out of our office," he said.

The houses on Bear Drive will have a different look than the older houses in the Greeley Heights neighborhood, across Quail Trail.

See HOUSING on page 9