

Umatilla tribe will assert right to hunt bighorn

BAKER CITY—The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla will revive one of their ancestors' ancient traditions this summer.

For the first time in more than half a century, tribal members will hunt bighorn sheep and mountain goats in northeastern Oregon, under a right the tribes reserved in a treaty they signed with the U.S. government 151 years ago.

That was in 1855, four years before Oregon became a state.

Umatilla tribal members, whose forebears for millennia hunted sheep and goats to get food, hides and other products, hope to kill two bighorns and one mountain goat in Baker County outside their reservation between late August and late September.

Baker County is unique among Oregon's 36 counties in that it harbors herds of mountain goats and both subspecies of bighorn sheep native to the

Rocky Mountains and California.

The Umatilla are now asserting their right to hunt for bighorn and mountain goats in Baker County.

Elsewhere in Oregon in recent years, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs have taken a similar course in hunting bighorn sheep and antelope in Eastern Oregon, according to Ron Anglin, ODFW Wildlife Division administrator.

The Umatilla's hunting rights are limited to tribal members — three lottery tags will be distributed to tribal members, who can't sell the hunting rights to a non-tribal hunter.

One tribal member will hunt for California bighorns in the Burnt River Canyon between Durkee and Bridgeport, and another will go after Rocky Mountain bighorns on Lookout Mountain near Huntington, said Carl Scheeler, who manages the wildlife program for the

Umatilla.

Another tribal hunter will try to bag a mountain goat in the Elkhorn Mountains west of Baker City, Scheeler said.

Although the Umatillas' 1855 treaty guarantees them the right to hunt and fish, Oregon officials have at times tried to regulate tribal hunting and fishing, said Stephanie Soden, a spokeswoman at state Attorney General Hardy Myers' office.

Scheeler, though, contends the 1855 treaty supersedes the state's authority.

Regardless, the state's stance now is to not contest tribal hunting unless the hunting could cause the extinction of a species in Oregon, Soden said.

The Umatillas' hunts pose no such threat to Baker County's bighorns and mountain goats, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

"The state tries to respect that (hunting) is a culturally significant thing for the tribes to do," Soden

said. "As long as the herds are maintained, it's allowed."

Scheeler said tribal officials would not have asserted their treaty rights had any of the affected herds been struggling. In fact, he thinks the Umatilla have been admirably patient. He points out that ODFW has allowed non-tribal hunters to pursue mountain goats and bighorns in Baker County for more than a decade.

The bottom line, Scheeler said, is that the tribes want to work with, not against, ODFW.

"The tribes will be coordinating with the state to assure all data collection and pre-hunt orientation that (non-tribal) hunters adhere to will be done by the tribal hunters," Scheeler said.

For instance, ODFW requires non-tribal hunters who kill a bighorn or mountain goat to take the animal to an ODFW office within 72 hours so state biologists can examine the carcass and compile data, such as the

animal's age, that help the agency keep track of how herds are doing.

The Umatilla tribal hunters will have to comply with the same schedule, Scheeler said.

The 172,000-acre reservation near Pendleton, comprise the Umatilla, Walla Walla and Cayuse peoples.

The tribes once occupied 6.4 million acres in Eastern Oregon, but in 1855 they signed a treaty that gave the federal government control over most of that land.

In exchange, the tribes kept their comparatively small reservation and retained the right to hunt, fish and gather berries on what are known as "ceded territory" — lands outside the reservation, but inside the tribes' original 6.4-million-acre homeland, which includes most of Baker County, Scheeler said.

He said Umatilla officials will award the three hunting tags by

way of a lottery system similar to the one ODFW uses to distribute big game tags to non-tribal hunters.

He said tribal hunters will have to use either a centerfire rifle or a bow.

The Umatilla tribal hunts will not force ODFW to cut the number of sheep or goat tags it sells this year to non-tribal hunters, said Ryan Torland, a wildlife biologist at the ODFW's Baker City office.

ODFW has already awarded five tags to non-tribal hunters: one for the Burnt River Canyon sheep hunt, two tags for the Lookout Mountain sheep hunt and two tags for the mountain goat hunt in the Elkhorns.

In addition, the hunter who won a rattled mountain goat tag, which entitles that hunter to pursue goats in the Elkhorns, Walloway or Hells Canyon, plans to hunt in the Elkhorns in September, Torland said.

Technology helps to preserve Indian languages

WHITE EAGLE, Okla.—Suzanne White Eagle never dreamed in her 71 years that she would see her native tongue—the Ponca language—speak back at her the way it did with new technology.

White Eagle, a Ponca tribal citizen, and Henry A. Lieb, Jr., 80, are two of the few people who speak the Ponca language. The Ponca Tribe has only about two dozen fluent speakers among its 3,000 tribal members, said Dan Jones, tribal chairman.

With the help of the Phraselator P2, a handheld device capable of recording and playing back thousands of

phrases, words, songs and stories, White Eagle and Lieb recorded their native language Wednesday.

The Phraselator was developed for the U.S. military after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, but Don Thornton, a Cherokee citizen from California, knew this device could be useful for more than just national security.

"My mother was part of that boarding school era where Indian kids were made to be ashamed to be Indian," Thornton said.

After a couple of years of endless requests, Thornton fi-

nally was able to purchase the Phraselator from the defense contractor Voxtec International to be used for Indian language revitalization. He said he spent about \$12 million developing the device for use by tribes. The Phraselator costs about \$3,300.

"It's the only thing invented for communication," Thornton said. "The inventor of the device never imagined it could be used for language revitalization."

Thornton and his wife, Kara, run Thornton Media Inc., which is based out of Banning, Calif. They spend most of their time traveling around the country and Canada recording the language

of many different tribes.

Some of the tribes in Oklahoma whose languages have been recorded are the Choctaw Nation, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, Comanche Nation, Ponca Tribe and the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma.

About a dozen tribes have already recorded their speakers and have purchased the Phraselator.

Thornton said the next couple of stops to record with tribes include the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and tribes in Montana and Alberta, Canada.

The Ponca speakers said they can't believe that they are going to have this sort of help in preserving their language.

White Eagle has lived most of her life in White Eagle, which is about five miles south of Ponca City and has the namesake of her husband's grandfather. She moved away for about 15 years while her husband was in the military.

White Eagle said even before she left home she felt her tribe's language was "fading away."

"It scared me—to see our language slipping away," White Eagle said. "So I said, 'let's get started. Let's teach our lan-

guage.'"

White Eagle said despite her determination and willingness to help teach the language, she knew it was going to take much more than just her to get done. "So I thought, 'I'm going to pray about this,'" White Eagle said.

Tuesday, White Eagle's prayers were answered.

The Thorntons recorded with White Eagle and Lieb for two days, and by mid-afternoon Wednesday, the two had recorded several hundred words and phrases.

Mark's Auto Repair

541-475-6140

Hours: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mon. - Fri.

FREE ESTIMATES • GUARANTEED WORK
CUSTOM EXHAUST • MUFFLERS • RADIATORS
ENGINES • TRANSMISSIONS • HEATERS
AIR CONDITIONING • ELECTRICAL • BRAKES
SUSPENSION AND MORE . . .

Fax: 475-2677

880 S. Adams Dr., Madras, OR

Apparel Express

NOW OPEN in Madras - 510 SW 5th Street

Discount quality clothing for the family

Brands like

Woolrich	Alfred Dunner
Columbia	Skechers
One Tuff Babe	Kids Headquarters
John Deere	Russell
Energie	AND1

And much more

Clothing for: Men, Young Men, Children, Women, & Juniors; including Lingerie and Accessories.

Open
M-F 10-7
Sat 9-6
Sun 12-5

In the old Factory2U Building
across from Thriftway.
541-475-4262

Great AMERICAN Home Furnishings

732 SW 6th St., at the "Y" in Redmond

Desks, Living Room, Dining Room, Tables, Lamps, Recliners, Mattresses, Bedroom, Daybeds, Sleepers, Bunk Beds, Leather, Entertainment Centers, and MORE!



FREE DELIVERY to MOST Central Oregon areas.



Major credit cards accepted



Open 7 Days a week
10-6 Mon.-Sat.
11-5 Sun.

HOME FURNISHINGS - REDMOND
Locally Owned & Operated since 1980

923-4155

Your Favorite Home Furnishings For Less