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Grand Ronde seeks recognition in Gorge act

The Grand Ronde tribe is seeking to amend the 1988 Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act to insert the Grand Ronde tribe in land management decisions in the Scenic Area.

Sources in Oregon and Washington, D.C. have confirmed that Grand Ronde has proposed an amendment to the law that would include the Grand Ronde tribe in the definition of "Indian Tribes" that have rights and interests in the Gorge.

Such an amendment would give Grand Ronde consultation rights regarding how the Columbia Gorge Commission and the U.S. Agriculture Secretary carry out their management responsibilities under the Gorge Act.

Currently, the Gorge Act recognizes the Warm Springs, Yakama, Umatilla and Nez Perce tribes as having rights and interests in the Gorge. This entitles these tribes to a voice in management of the National Scenic Area.

These rights are off-reservation 1855 Treaty fishing, hunting and gathering rights, and certain interests in land within the National Scenic Area boundaries. Warm Springs and Yakama, for example, own thousands of acres of trust land in the Gorge.

In addition, all four tribes have the right to use Treaty Fishing Access and In Lieu Sites along the shore of the Columbia River within the Scenic Area.

In contrast to Warm Springs and the other three tribes now recognized by the Gorge Act, Grand Ronde has no treaty rights or land ownership inter-

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ests in the Gorge.

However, Grand Ronde representatives have asserted they have ancestral burial sites in the Scenic Area, which they believe entitles the tribe to consultation rights regarding the management of lands in the National Scenic Area.

The Gorge Act has not been opened up for amendment since its enactment in 1988.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs actively participated in the drafting of the Gorge Act to ensure that the act properly recognized the tribe's Treaty and trust interest in the Gorge.

Grand Ronde representatives insist that their proposed amendment to the Gorge Act has nothing to do with the tribe's strong opposition to the proposed Warm Springs tribal casino at the Cascade Locks Industrial Park.

The site is within the Columbia Gorge, but is not subject to the Gorge Act's land use restrictions.

Election is Monday

The Tribal Council election is Monday, April 2. Cast your ballots at the Community Center between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Tune in to KWSO 91.9 FM for candidate interviews and information. See page 5 for a schedule of candidate interviews on KWSO.

The results of the election will be posted around the community on Tuesday, April 3. Further election information will be in the next edition of the paper.

Demand for eagle feathers creates black market

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

The issue of eagle feathers being sold on the black market is gaining national attention—and it's something that could potentially become a local problem.

While it's not a widespread problem locally, the poaching of eagle feathers and other parts is contributing to the establishment of a black market nationwide.

According to Doug Calvin, acting wildlife and parks manager, "We've had some issues in the past with some eagles taken illegally."

Though it's not necessarily a local problem yet, Calvin said, "It's obviously a national issue."

But illegal trafficking of eagle feathers and other parts isn't something that has a long history, Calvin said—it has only become a problem during the last 10 to 20 years.

Nationally, the poaching of feathers is being linked to the need for feathers as decoration on costumes for powwows—though many are quick to point out that selling feathers on the black market goes against traditional practices.

Because of an increased demand for eagle feathers, the method of legally obtaining the feathers has become a lengthy process. "That's why I think that it's a supply and demand issue, currently," Calvin said.

Federally recognized tribes can legally possess eagles, eagle parts and feathers for religious and ceremonial use.

To obtain legal feathers, tribal members must file a request with the National Eagle Repository in Commerce City, Colo.

At this point, Calvin said, the wait period can be as long as two to three years.

The repository collects eagles that die naturally or accidentally—and in the past decade, requests have skyrocketed, causing a long waiting list.

Calvin said they have sent several eagles to the repository in recent years. One eagle died from old age, and another died while fighting with another bird. However, eagle populations are also currently growing steadily and the effects are something that can be seen locally.

In this area, Calvin said, "We're fortunate in that we have a handful of residential pairs." In addition to eagles that migrate through surrounding areas, Calvin said, there are some that reside in local nesting areas.



Eighteen tribal members are part of this year's Madras High School track team. Competing for the team this season are: Jordan Holliday, a 15-year-old sophomore; Emerson Culpus, a 15-year-old sophomore; Rolin Morningowl, a 16-year-old sophomore; James Scott, a 16-year-old junior; LaRonn Katchia, a 16-year-old sophomore; Terence Wolfe, a 16-year-old sophomore; Victoria Katchia, a 17-year-old junior; Nicholas Katchia, a 17-year-old senior; Red Sky Suppah, a 14-year-old freshman; Kelsey Haywahe, a 15-year-old sophomore; Wyatt Frank, a 15-year-old sophomore; Karlen Yallup, a 14-year-old freshman; Briana Stacona, a 16-year-old junior; Jacoba Smith, an 18-year-old senior; Jason Smartlowit, a 15-year-old freshman; Robert Main, a 16-year-old junior; Freddy Hernandez, a 16-year-old junior; and Lex Anguiano, a 17-year-old junior.

Council update on improvement initiative

By Maren Cohn
Warm Springs Ventures

Tribal Council spent an afternoon last week hearing a team from Warm Springs Ventures report progress on two major initiatives currently under way to improve the reservation's administration and economy.

The presentation marked the first report back to Tribal Council since Council passed two related resolutions last fall.

The first resolution charged several reservation groups to evaluate a series of economic projects. The second asked for a similar evaluation of tribal administration.

The resolutions required the different teams to return to Council with proposals for specific action plans for improving both areas.

Tribal Council set the evaluation process in motion in October, after learning the results of the summer's membership opinion survey.

Last week's presentation, which took about two and a half hours, reviewed the current status of nearly five months' worth of activity on the part of some 50 people.

Room for improvement

In the survey, members said they viewed tribal administration as unfair, inefficient, and difficult to deal with.

They saw tribal policies and procedures as too often unclear and inconsistent, and many felt that government officials were mostly looking out for themselves.

To address these concerns, Council asked Secretary-Treasurer Jody Calica to assemble a tribal governance team to assess the administration and recommend a comprehensive restructuring plan.

In its charge, Council asked for proposals on some specific issues, including what administrative structure would best serve the tribes, what policies should be implemented, how the ad-

ministration could better respond to the needs of the people, and how to focus better on performance and results.

The secretary-treasurer put two teams together. The first included over a dozen members, most drawn from the administration. The second, a citizens advisory committee, consisted of Terry Courtney, Frank Charley, Viola Kalama, Brigitte Whipple, Russell Charley, and Delford Johnson (though Johnson had to resign later due to scheduling conflicts). Tom Decker, a consultant working with the Portland turnaround firm Hamstreet & Associates, led the project. Decker gave the administrative part of the status report to Council.

His report covered the assessment process and the findings about tribal administration that resulted from it.

Decker conducted 18 extensive interviews with senior-level administrators, met several times with the governance team and the citizens advisory committee, examined tribal budgets and

financial documents, and compared figures with other governments in rural Oregon to get a sense of how the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs measured up.

Although Decker's report was preliminary and did not include a detailed analysis, his presentation confirmed the membership's sense that there is much to improve in tribal administration.

"Many of our findings track the results from last year's survey of tribal membership," Decker said. "A big task ahead for the administration is to enhance its effectiveness by communicating high expectations for employees, improving teamwork and collaboration, and establishing accountability for results. By results, we mean better, timelier service to tribal members. The good news in our findings is that most people in tribal government are interested in improvement and finding better ways to deliver these services."

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