



# Spilyay Tymoo

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## Tribes, BPA renew corridor agreement

By Dave McMechan  
Spilyay Tymoo

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Bonneville Power Administration have negotiated a new agreement allowing BPA the continued use of an existing transmission line corridor on the reservation.

BPA will pay the tribes \$17 million for the use of the corridor for the next 50 years.

BPA also agreed to contribute \$100,000 for the tribes' First Food pro-

gram on the reservation, and BPA agreed to pay for lost timber stumpage within the corridor.

The new agreement replaces one from 50 years ago. The terms of the new agreement are favorable to the tribes, said Tribal Council Chairman Ron Suppah.

"Our negotiating team did an excellent job," he said. With the tribes facing hard economic times, "We need to supplement our revenue as best we can," Chairman Suppah said.

Tribal Council has scheduled an

agreement signing ceremony with BPA on Nov. 16.

The \$100,000 from BPA for the First Food program will provide for huckleberry improvement projects on the reservation. The improvement projects can be anywhere on the reservation, not necessarily within the corridor.

The tribal-BPA agreement contains another significant provision that is a benefit to the tribes, said Jim Manion, manager of Warm Springs Power and Water Enterprises.

In exchange for allowing BPA to replace an existing transmission line with one that holds more energy, BPA agrees to allow the tribes to own a part of the line.

This would provide the tribes with a way to put power into the energy grid, said Manion.

This would be important as the tribes explore energy-generation options, such as the wind-power project in the Mutton Mountains, said Manion.

## Horse coalition gathering in Reno

The Northwest Tribal Horse Coalition is meeting this week in Reno, Nev.

Tribal representatives of the coalition are also scheduled to tour a rendering plant in Chico, Calif., prior to the Reno meeting.

The coalition includes five tribal nations—Warm Springs, Yakama, Umatilla, Colville and Shoshone—and is dedicated to addressing the problem of excessive numbers of wild horses roaming the reservations.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management and other tribes are also participating in the coalition discussions.

The tribes have received a \$60,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to study the feasibility of operating a rendering plant on a reservation, perhaps on the Warm Springs reservation.

The BIA has also provided some funding for a processing plant feasibility study, said Grant Clements, member of the Northwest Tribal Horse Coalition.

A rendering plant could be easier to develop on the reservation, compared to a processing plant, said Clements.

Federal law has made processing plants impossible or nearly impossible to operate in the U.S.

The proliferation of unclaimed horses on tribal and federal rangelands has greatly reduced the market for horses, said Clements.

There are instances where people are cutting the brands off of horses and then dumping the animals on reservations, said Clements.

The horses then roam the rangeland, depleting and destroying the resource that could be used by wildlife and livestock.

A rendering or processing plant could be a source of new jobs on the reservation, said Warm Springs Tribal Council Chairman Ron Suppah. The idea deserves to be looked into, he said.

The number of unclaimed or wild horses on the Warm Springs reservation is estimated at more than 4,000.

The Northwest Tribal Horse Coalition formed earlier this year to address the problem.

The coalition started with two tribes, Warm Springs and Umatilla, and has expanded as other tribes, facing the same problem, also are seeking a solution.

## Challenging times for enterprises

By Duran Bobb  
Spilyay Tymoo

Two General Council meetings were held Oct. 26 and 27 at the Agency Longhouse, as a way for the tribal enterprises to inform the membership of their financial status.

On the agendas were updates from Warm Springs Forest Products Industries, Warm Springs Power Enterprises, Kah-Nee-Ta, Composite Products, the Credit Enterprise, the Museum at Warm Springs, High Look Lodge, the Housing Authority and Warm Springs Ventures.

Ralph Minnick, Warm Springs Forest Products Industries, said that these are financially hard times. The mill once employed 396 people, but the number of workers has been cut back to 130.

They work on a single-shift basis, with a current 70 percent being either tribal members or married into the tribes.

Tribal Council Vice Chairwoman Aurolyn Stwyer-Pinkham said that she has spoken to a handful of mill workers, and most of them are grateful to have jobs.

"They can feed their families," Stwyer-Pinkham said, "and make house payments. They can put food on their tables."

Tribal members at the meeting asked whether or not people were being trained and certified to operate machinery at the mill.

There were also questions about Vanport, the company that is partnered with Forest Products Industries to develop international mar-



Duran Bobb/Spilyay

Mona Jim addresses the General Council gathering, as Councilwoman Bernice Mitchell listens and Council staff member Joelden Surface takes minutes. Some others in attendance were (in back left to right) Roberta Kirk, Thea Smith, Willie Quinn, Seegray Littleleaf, Tony Littleleaf, Sam Kentura, Marge Kentura and Luther Clements.

ket opportunities.

And the question came up more than once: Would it be better for the tribes to close the mill, or continue the operation, employing as many workers as possible?

Pipeline questions

Jim Manion, General Manager for Warm Springs Power & Water Enterprises, gave an update that included the revenue outlook, sources of potential renewable energy, the water marketing potential, the BPA Right of Way, and the proposed Palomar gas pipeline crossing.

The main concern of the tribal members in attendance was the Palomar pipeline project. However, Manion stressed that nothing has been finalized, as Tribal Council has not approved it. "The pipeline is not a Tribal Coun-

cil project," Stwyer-Pinkham said. "We're not signed up as a business partner. We're active in this because it involves our territory."

Gaming business

Deepak Sehgal, chairman for the Kah-Nee-Ta board of directors, also spoke about tough economic times during his update.

"We're in a recession," Sehgal said. Meanwhile, the resort needs to upgrade some of its equipment, he said.

For 2009, tribal members made up about 40 percent of the resort and casino's staff. Forty-two percent of employees are non-tribal members. About 10 percent are other Indian, and 7 percent are married into the tribes.

"The board desires to increase the recruitment and retention of tribal members," Sehgal said.

Despite the recession, Kah-Nee-Ta has been able to sustain revenues very close to what was achieved in 2008.

Tribal members voiced a concern over how many Indians were being trained for management positions at the resort. There was also concern from participants regarding the Gorge casino.

According to Sehgal, over the last eight to ten years the tribes have spent around \$27 million to make the Gorge casino a reality. Harry Taylor, Kah-Nee-Ta general manager, said that at this point all efforts are being put forth for the Secretary of the Interior to make a favorable decision for the tribes.

See GENERAL COUNCIL on 8

## Census Bureau expects to hire locals for 2010 count

By Terri Harber  
Spilyay Tymoo

The U.S. Census Bureau recently opened an office in Redmond and expects to hire Warm Springs tribal members to complete a head count of its population next year, a group of officials told tribal council members last week.

Federal stimulus funds will bolster the census effort by allowing additional money to pay for more workers and materials. It also allows increased public awareness of the process, which makes it an easier, more accurate process, said Michelle Maher, a tribal partnership specialist with the bureau.

For 2000, the last census, "why was

there an undercount?" Council member Bernice Mitchell asked.

A group of people living in one section of the community got missed during the 2000 Census, she had heard. She then asked how the bureau plans to avoid an undercount of tribal members this time around.

"It's the most important question we need to address," Maher said, and it will require preparation, legwork and community knowledge to ensure everyone is found and counted.

For instance, Warm Springs residents have post office boxes. People without physical mailing addresses can complicate the job of counting every person living in every dwelling.

Because census forms are only

*Including Native Americans and Alaska natives in the count has become a higher priority since 2007, when the bureau began to improve its relationships with these sovereign nations.*

mailed to physical addresses, bureau employees have to leave census forms at physical locations when someone only has a box number on file with the United States Postal Service. They then depend on citizens mailing the form back.

People who don't return forms for one reason or another end up receiving a visit from a bureau employee—who poses the same questions.

Counting everyone is important to census takers and community officials alike because creating and funding crucial tribal programs and services is based on population and demographics, she said.

There also is confusion about making out the census forms. Council member Aurolyn Stwyer-Pinkham said people should know how to properly fill them out so the information is documented accurately.

The bureau asked tribal council members for one or more sites where residents can go to ask census ques-

tions, or obtain or drop off forms.

Including Native Americans and Alaska natives in the count has become a higher priority since 2007, when the bureau began to improve its relationships with these sovereign nations.

While the census provides a wealth of information about the United States and its people, it also allows for unethical behavior by imitators who use personal information for ill-gotten gain. Census questions focus on age, race and address. Someone asking highly detailed personal financial questions is an imposter, Maher warned.

Census workers carry special identification cards that people can ask to see if they are unsure about a questioner's motives, she added.