

Changing management at W.S. Telecom

After many years of providing leadership in the planning, funding, climbing all the regulatory hurdles and finally constructing and installing the equipment at Warm Springs Telecom, Adam Haas is stepping down from his role as interim general manager.

Operations manager Jose Matanane has been promoted to Warm Springs Telecom General Manager beginning in January.

With nearly 400 customers, and most of the technology hurdles of the new company resolved, this transition will enable Haas to return to his role as independent telecommunications consultant to the tribes, with Matanane moving into a position he held previously for 14 years at Ft. Mojave Telecom, another tribally owned telecom company, located in the Southwest.

For more than 11 years, Haas has worked with the tribes to update and improve telecommunications services on the Reservation. Tribal leadership realized the growing disparity between the telecommunications available on the reservation compared to services in other parts of the country.

Telecommunications capability was becoming critical for personal, economic, educational and other areas of life important to the people of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

After an initial Needs Assessment and a follow up strategic plan, Adam and his business partner, Marsha Spellman, have continued to work with the tribes to upgrade basic telephone, broadband Internet and public safety radio.

Warm Springs Telecom is now a fully functioning telecommunications operation and the ninth tribally owned telephone and broadband Internet company in the United States.

This past October, WST received the Oregon Connections Award for Excellence in Telecommunications, from



Adam Haas congratulates Jose Matanane, who is taking over the Telecom general manager.

the State of Oregon. It has also been honored by the federal Rural Utility Service (RUS) with a story and picture of the tribes on its website and posters in the halls of the federal building in Washington, DC.

"With tribal leadership provided by Lonny Macy, Sal Sahme, Dan Martinez, Don Courtney, Aurolyn Stwyer and others, we have created the ninth tribally owned telecom in the country," Haas said. "Warm Springs tribal members should feel proud of this accomplishment."

Planned change

Now that the company is up and running, and with most of the technology kinks resolved, Adam is handing the reins of leadership to Jose Matanane, who moved to Warm Springs in April 2011, to be the operations manager of this new company.

Adam explained that, "This may seem like a surprise to some, but this transition plan has been in the works for quite some time."

Jose was responsible for overseeing and managing the creation of the WSTC network, with the difficulties that come with building a brand new company, as well as the

very difficult geography and large service area.

"Jose, who began his career in telecommunications working in the outside plant side of the business, has done an amazing job overseeing the build out of this very sophisticated network," Haas continued. "Jose often worked day and night to resolve problems and ensure that the network that the new company installed is sound and able to provide top-notch service."

Jose spent 14 years as the general manager of Ft. Mojave Telecom, another tribally owned telecom company. With his background, Jose agreed to move to Oregon with his wife and two young children, and leave his position as general manager at Ft. Mojave to become the operations manager at Warm Springs Telecom.

Adam and Warm Springs Ventures chief executive officer Jeff Anspach had approached Jose with the idea that after the network was developed, Jose would then move up to the position as General Manager.

According to Haas, "We built an amazingly sophisticated network in Warm Springs, one that faced many

technology challenges in order to bring phone and broadband to the reservation. Jose did a heroic job overseeing the installation and construction of the network. I believe that with all of our accomplishments to date, now is the right time for me to step down as interim general manager and to hand over the reins to Jose Matanane. I can't think of a more qualified individual than Jose to lead the company into its next phase of success. Not only does he have all the experience we hoped to find in a person to run this company, he's one heck of a nice guy."

Jose explained, "When I moved my family here to Oregon more than a year ago, I knew I was taking a risk. But I also have seen how a tribally owned telecommunications company can improve the lives of tribal members and I believed this was possible for Warm Springs."

"In little more than a year, that dream is being realized," Jose continued. "I very much appreciate the vote of confidence from Jeff Anspach and the Warm Springs Telecom Board of Directors and I look forward to working closely with our excellent staff to bring high quality phone and internet service to everyone on the reservation."

Adam and business partner Marsha Spellman, JD, owners of Converge Communications, a nationally recognized telecommunications consulting company, will continue to work closely with Jose and the WST team.

Marsha will continue to provide Regulatory oversight to ensure compliance as well as representing the company at the FCC and Oregon Public Utility Commission, working on various proceedings that impact WST.

Adam will be involved in future projects for WST, including the potential for television on the reservation and potential economic development projects that are natural outgrowths of the company.

In his role of telecommunications consultant to the Tribes, he will also focus on implementing the homeland security grants that the Tribes have been awarded, which will help build more towers and improve public safety communications in the North end

of the reservation, as well as Seekseequa.

The Warm Springs Telecommunications Company is a tribally chartered enterprise whose mission is to bring advanced broadband services to the Warm Springs tribes, including voice, data and video.

What Telecom has accomplished so far

As Adam Haas steps down as interim general manager, and Jose Matanane fills his shoes, here is a little synopsis of what has been accomplished in the last few years, as Warm Springs Telecom has grown from a seed of an idea, to a fully functioning company.

The Warm Springs Telecom is still a new company, and will continue to grow and expand its footprint to provide service to every part of the reservation. However, it is impressive what has been accomplished to this point.

1. Formed the company to include corporation status and by-laws.

2. Received all necessary regulatory approvals from the state and federal agencies including the Eligible Telecom Carrier (ETC) status enabling qualified tribal members to get Lifeline support (telephone service for \$1/month), and WST receives Oregon Universal Service Funds.

3. Received initial planning funding and the Broadband Stimulus ARRA award for \$5.6 million.

4. Hired a great staff with mostly tribal reservation members.

5. Built out the Customer Service Center.

6. Integrated the Central Office into the new building, with sophisticated, hi-tec equipment.

7. Expanded the fiber optic network to sites around the Reservation.

8. Improved connectivity

to the outside world.

9. Provided redundancy by having two providers for internet access.

10. Have nearly 400 customer phone lines connected via our fixed-wireless to the home network.

11. Have 281 Internet customers connected to our fixed-wireless network, including Kah Nee Ta resort.

12. Hooked up the VFW Hall with both phone and internet service.

13. Have key large customers connected via fiber, including:

- Indian Head Casino for both Internet and Phone Service

- Warm Springs Ventures for Internet and Phone Service

- Tribal Administration for Internet Service

14. OSU Extension Office/Education Department for Internet service.

15. Providing phone and internet services to the Senior Center and to businesses in the Plaza including Skyn Style and Blue Sky Market.

16. We will also be the telephone provider for the new Community Counseling Center when it opens next year.

Upcoming

Still to be accomplished:

- Continue to build-out fiber network and new towers throughout the Reservation,

- Provide additional service to Seekseequa, Simnasho and Sidwalter; and,

- Increase product offering to customers.

Oregon State begins solar power project

(AP) — Oregon State University will begin generating its own solar power in January.

The university, in conjunction with SolarWorld and SolarCity, is close to completing the installation of solar panels at two sites that will be capable of producing 860,000 kilowatt-hours a year.

That much power is the equivalent of reducing the carbon dioxide emissions of more than 66,000 gallons of gasoline.

The panels are being set up on four acres of OSU land adjacent to Trysting Tree Golf Club and east of the Benton County Fairgrounds near Southwest 53rd Street.

SolarWorld supplied more than 3,000 high-performance solar panels. SolarCity in-

stalled, owns, maintains and operates the equipment. OSU will buy the power from SolarCity at a rate that is "a little bit more than half" of what the university pays Pacific Power, according to university sustainability coordinator Brandon Trelstad.

"Energy efficiency is still a top priority, but solar power will play an increasingly key role in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions," Trelstad said. "There is no way OSU can invest in renewable energy infrastructure at this scale without developing public-private partnerships."

The OSU project is one of five renewable energy demonstration projects coordinated by the Oregon University System. OSU's project, which is the first one to be completed, will expand to 10

acres by the fall of 2013 and will provide from 3 to 5 percent of OSU's power needs, Trelstad said.

The installation is all but complete, with final work taking place this week. After inspections from Linn County and Benton County officials the university will apply for "final connection" with Pacific Power.

There is no firm date for the project to begin producing power, but Trelstad said that early January was likely. The panels will be capable of producing power at full strength on day one. "The capacity will be ready as soon as full sun hits the arrays," said Trelstad. "But we might have to wait for a summer day to get the full benefit."

Trelstad, who has been sustainability coordinator at OSU since 2005, has been involved with the project for more than four years. Most of that time has been spent on financial arrangements. Construction did not begin until last summer.

Initial plans with a differ-

ent solar developer collapsed amid the economic downturn of 2008-09.

"We needed a more-experienced and bigger partner," said Trelstad. "SolarCity had the experience and size to do this."

"SolarCity is proud to play a part in Oregon State's ambitious efforts to produce and consume cleaner energy," said Rob Lavigne, SolarCity regional vice president.

"The university is also showing its students how institutions can rise above the status quo and take a leadership role in addressing the world's most pressing challenges."

Students stand to benefit from the project as well. The university has an internship agreement with SolarCity, and Trelstad said that students in energy-related programs at both the Corvallis and Bend campuses also might get involved in the project.

"There are quite a few different opportunities," said Trelstad. "We're going to work on this for the fall."

FDA: fast-growing fish would not harm nature

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal health regulators say a genetically engineered salmon that grows twice as fast as normal is unlikely to harm the environment, clearing the way for the first approval of a genetically engineered animal for human consumption.

The Food and Drug Administration on Friday released its environmental assessment of the AquaAdvantage salmon, a faster-growing fish which has been subject to a contentious, yearslong debate at the agency. The document concludes that the fish "will not have any significant impacts on the quality of the human environment of the United States." Regulators also said that the fish is unlikely to harm populations of natural salmon, a key concern for environmental activists.

The FDA will take comments from the public on its report for 60 days before making it final.

The FDA said more than two years ago that the fish

appears to be safe to eat, but the agency had taken no public action since then. Executives for the company behind the fish, Maynard, Mass.-based AquaBounty, speculated that the government was delaying action on their application due to push-back from groups who oppose genetically modified food animals.

Experts view the release of the environmental report as the final step before approval.

If FDA regulators clear the salmon, as expected, it would be the first scientifically altered animal approved for food anywhere in the world.

Critics call the modified salmon a "frankenfish." They worry that it could cause human allergies and the eventual decimation of the natural salmon population if it escapes and breeds in the wild.

AquaBounty has maintained that the fish is safe and that there are several safeguards against environmental problems.

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