

Tribal farm project picking up

The Natural Resources Branch is developing two tribal farm areas near Kah-Nee-Ta.

Range and Ag, Water and Soil, Land-Use, OSU Extension and others cooperated on planning and implementing the project, said Jason Smith, director of Range and Ag.

"We got together to find a way to revitalize some farm land that has been idle," Smith said.

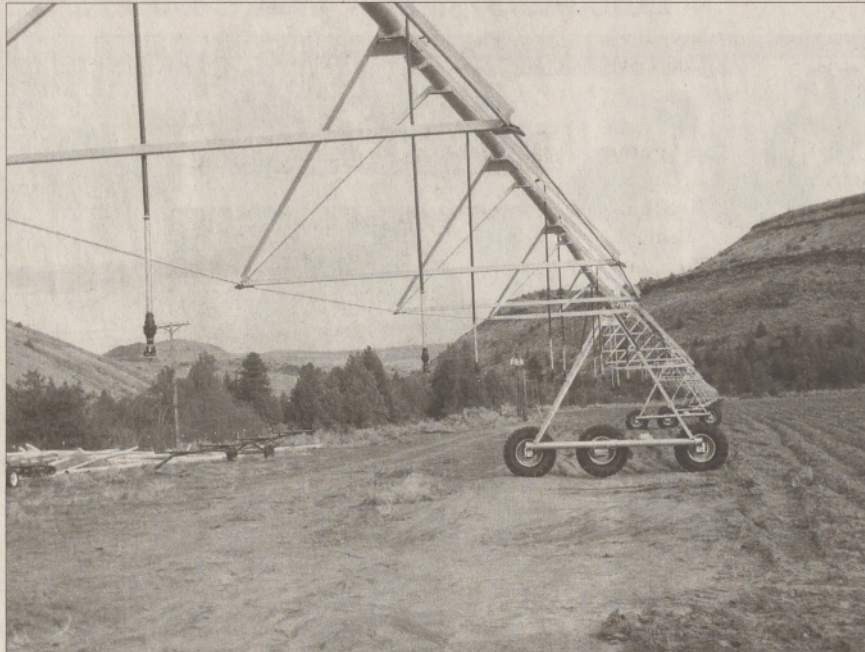
Land being worked on now is by the Culpus bridge at the Warm Springs River, near Kah-Nee-Ta. Next will be a larger parcel farther down the river toward the Deschutes, called Moody property.

Natural Resources intends for the tribal farms to become financially self-sufficient, said Bill Reynolds, Range and Ag specialist.

The property by Culpus bridge is about 110 acres in size. The plan is to grow alfalfa on this parcel this spring and summer, said Reynolds.

The hay would be sold at fair market value, either to interested tribal members or off the reservation.

The Moody property is



Courtesy of Branch of Natural Resources

The farm is located by Culpus Bridge on the way to Kah-Nee-Ta.

about 300 acres in size. This land could be used for growing hay, and possibly some other crops such as blueberries, cherries, grass seed, etc.

The idea for a tribal farm has been around for some time. Natural Resources went to Tribal Council two years ago, requesting the use of restoration funds to get the operation going. Council

approved the request. There was some delay, but the project is now going forward.

The farm supervisor is Zane Wilson, an experienced grower originally from Fossil. The tribal farm will create one or two new job opportunities this spring.

Both the Culpus bridge and the Moody property were

farmed decades ago. They fell into disuse, and are now being reclaimed for farming.

Along with the tribal farm, there has been talk in the past about developing a plant nursery and greenhouse in the area of the farms. The tribes currently have a greenhouse operation in the John Day area.

— Dave McMechan

Columbia going barbless

(AP) — State of Washington officials have had an itch for years to shift to barbless hooks for salmon and steelhead sport fishing in the Columbia River.

It's been proposed—then postponed because Oregon was not on board—before. Well, it became reality on Jan. 1.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife announced late last month that barbless hooks will be required when fishing for salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout from the mouth of the Columbia upstream to the state boundary with Oregon, 17 miles east of McNary Dam.

Sportsmen still may use double-point or treble hooks, so long as the barbs have been filed off or pinched down.

Oregon's Fish and Wildlife Commission in early December approved a measure prohibiting Oregon license holders from using barbed hooks in the Columbia and the Willamette River downstream of Willamette Falls, including Mult-

nomah Channel. Washington and Oregon have talked a lot about requiring sportsmen to use barbless hooks in the Columbia as part of the revamping of Columbia River harvest rules starting in 2013. It's all part of transitioning the gillnetters to off-channel areas, requiring use of seines for commercial harvest in the main Columbia and making sport fishing the priority by 2017.

Washington's commission is expected to bless the ban on barbed hooks when it decides on the Columbia River fisheries harvest reforms Jan. 12 in Olympia.

Oregon's action required Washington to follow suit by Jan. 1 in order to have concurrent rules in the Columbia.

The Washington and Oregon commissions heard more than a dozen hours of testimony last month about the Columbia fisheries reform. Interspersed among the comments about gillnets, purse seines and off-channel areas were frequent opinions about barbless hooks.

Goats doing fine at Mt. Jefferson

(AP) — The mountain goat population appears to be growing on Mount Jefferson, two years after the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and state of Oregon returned the high-climbing animals to the peak.

A second release last summer helped increase the number of Rocky Mountain goats on and around the 10,495-foot volcano.

The goats seem to be successfully breeding and caring for new young, biologists reported recently.

Nanny goats typically produce twins when they are receiving good nutrients and are generally healthy, and aerial surveys show several pairs of kids.

Half of the mountain is on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation and the other half lies within the Willamette National Forest.

Tribal Natural Resources and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in July



Courtesy photo.

Mountain goats are doing well at Mt. Jefferson.

2010 released 45 mountain goats onto a flank of Mount Jefferson in a remote section of the reservation.

In July 2012, the state agency and the tribes released an additional 24 goats, said Doug Calvin, program manager for wildlife, parks and enforcement with the tribes.

Three mountain goats died shortly after the 2010 release—two in falls and one

Overhunting wiped out the goats in the 1850s...

possibly in a cougar attack. Calvin said he believes none of the goats released this year have died.

There are no plans for more releases, he said. "We've

got a pretty good start on the population," Calvin said.

Overhunting wiped out the goats in the 1850s. They were prized for their horns and hide but not their meat.

Oregon began a program to reintroduce mountain goats in the Wallowa Mountains in Eastern Oregon, starting with five goats from northern Washington.

Eastern Oregon now boasts a strong mountain goat population, with about half of the 800 mountain goats statewide found in the Elkhorn Mountains near Baker City. The tribes and ODFW plucked goats from the Elkhorns for release onto Mount Jefferson.

A separate program 10 years ago succeeded in reintroducing bighorn sheep to the Mutton Mountains.

If the mountain goats continue to thrive on Mount Jefferson, Calvin said tribal members may eventually hunt the animals.

Around the Region

Parties renew agreement to restore Klamath Basin

(AP) — A companion agreement to a historic deal to remove four dams from the Klamath River has been renewed, giving supporters another two years to try to get Congress to pay for the work, officials said Monday.

Supporters of the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement announced that all 42 signatories—including Indian tribes, local governments, irrigation districts, salmon fishermen and conservation groups—agreed to the renewal.

The agreement lays out how water will be shared between farms and fish during drought years, and calls on Congress to provide \$800 million for environmental restoration.

Greg Addington, executive director of the Klamath Water Users Association, said some in the basin oppose the measure—notably two newly elected members of the Klamath County Board of Commissioners—but the people who depend most on the water are solidly behind it.

"The dam removal piece of it gets the headlines, but the reality is that for most of our guys looking at this thing, it is about water in the ditch," Addington said. "They are looking at this and saying this is the best chance of making sure that continues."

Straddling the Oregon-California border, the Klamath Basin regularly has trouble meeting the water demands of farms on the federal irrigation project at the top of the basin, endangered sucker fish in the irrigation system's main reservoir, and threatened coho salmon in the Klamath River.

The federal government shut off water to most of the farms in 2001 to protect the salmon. After a summer of bitter protests and political battles, the Bush administra-

tion restored irrigation in 2002, only to see tens of thousands of adult salmon die of gill rot diseases that spread rapidly between fish crowded into low pools of warm water.

The two events led many farmers, tribes, conservation groups and salmon fishermen to overcome their longstanding differences and agree to a water-sharing plan that is linked to removing four small hydroelectric dams owned by PacifiCorp on the Klamath River to help salmon. But Republican opposition in the House has blocked enabling legislation in Congress.

The renewal also extends an agreement settling a potential battle between the Klamath tribes and irrigators over senior water rights, which the tribes appear to be on the verge of having affirmed by a long and complex adjudication process.

The restoration agreement calls for the tribes to receive timberland lost when their reservation was dissolved in the 1950s, and to limit asserting their water rights. Irrigators would not contest tribal water rights.

Malin farmer Rob Unruh, vice president of the water users group, said in a statement that while demands by the Endangered Species Act that fish get water have been in the spotlight, the water rights agreement is a key achievement for farmers, eliminating a huge future conflict, and helping assure future irrigation.

The dams produce enough power for 70,000 people. Removal is not scheduled to start before 2020 and depends on funding, authorization from Congress, and a federal determination that it will actually help salmon and is in the public interest.

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