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Reservation UAV program taking off

The Warm Springs unmanned aerial vehicles testing program is showing real potential for revenue and jobs on the reservation.

Three new jobs could be open within the next several months, said Don Sampson, interim chief executive officer of Warm Springs Ventures.

These jobs are the UAV testing business developer, the project manager, and range manager.

The business developer would work with and recruit the UAV companies that are in need of a testing site.

The project manager would oversee engineering, making sure the flight plans, for instance, are properly engineered.

The range manager would be at the sites ensuring that the tests are conducted in compliance with regulation.

These initial jobs are possible through state funding earmarked for development of UAV testing in the state.

Up to \$1.5 million would go toward the UAV testing infrastructure, and up to \$1 million for testing operations, Sampson said.

Some funding could be used for scholarships. Central Oregon Community College has a two-year UAV program, and Ventures would like to have tribal members pursue this growing field, Sampson said.

The COCC program will be using the Warm Springs test range for training. The UAV field is perfect for young people who are already computer literate, he said.

Ventures would then look to hire UAV interns to gain further experience in the field.

"This is a growing industry, and Warm Springs is the only tribe in

the nation that is going to have a test range," Sampson said.

There will be direct revenue to the tribes from the fees charged to the companies that use the reservation test range. There are other opportunities as well:

Kah-Nee-Ta will see ancillary revenue, as companies will need somewhere for their testing teams to stay. Ventures and the resort are looking at developing a simulation center and meeting space for the companies.

Please see **UAVS** on 3

Herding in unclaimed horses

Tribal Range and Agriculture has been working to reduce the environmental damage caused by the unclaimed horse population on the reservation.

Range and Ag has rounded up about 1,300 horses this year, and is going for 1,500 to 1,600 by the end of the year, said Jason Smith, Range and Ag manager.

Last year Range and Ag removed about 1,200 horses from the reservation, Smith said. The removal program is in its fourth year, he said.

Four years ago there were an estimated 6,000 unclaimed horses on the reservation. The animals damage and destroy fish habitat, elk and deer habitat, berry and other traditional foods habitat.

The goal is to get the number of unclaimed horses down to a manageable level in the Range and Ag districts.

Habitat restoration funding is helping to get the problem under control.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs are among the tribes, including Yakama and the Navajo Nation, that have been contending with this problem for the past several years.

On the job with Composite Products CEO

Jake Coochise started working at Warm Springs Composite Products back in 1997. His first job with Composite Products was on the production floor.

He had just graduated from Willamette University with a degree in Business and Economics. So at first Jake was thinking the production floor job would be short term.

But Composite Products turned out to be a good place to work; so he stayed on, learning more about Tectonite and how Composite manufactures its world-class fire-rated doors.

Jake worked on the production floor for six years in various capacities, and then moved in to a sales position.

At the time all of the Composite sales were in the United States, as all of the testing of the fire-rated doors was to U.S. standards.

Jake learned about the British standard for the doors, and which other countries follow the British standard. He made contacts with people from the Commerce Department, and in time a whole new market—countries in the fast-growing Middle East—opened up to Composite Products.

Jake became the director of global marketing, building busi-



Jake Coochise at Composite Products.

Dave McMechan/Spilyay

ness relationships with companies in places like Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The overseas sales are now more than a third of Composite Products overall business. This helped the enterprise weather the bad economic post-2008.

Earlier this year, Duane Darnell retired from full-time work as the Composite Products chief executive officer. The enterprise board this summer chose Jake as the next CEO.

Jake now oversees the overall

operation, and remains the lead person in the global sales aspect of the business.

Composite Products employs 44 people. The plant operates in two shifts. About 80 percent of the employees are tribal members or other Natives living on the reservation.

The architectural fire-rated doors—used in office buildings, hotels, and other commercial buildings—are the main product at Composite Products. The enterprise also produces some secondary wood

products, and most recently is looking into developing an acoustic door component.

Acoustic doors are sound-proof, and there appears to be a growing market for these doors in the Middle East, Jake said.

Jake is a Madras High School graduate who grew up in Warm Springs. His mother is Libby Chase of Warm Springs, and his father is Elbridge Coochise of Arizona.

— Dave McMechan

Audit, sports items at 509-J school board

The Jefferson County 509-J School District board met on Monday, accepting the annual district audit report, and hearing updates on various items. The audit was clean, showing no problems.

The board heard a report from student Sophia Gemelas regarding the Madras High School Homecoming.

Homecoming was a great time for everyone, with the exception of the outcome of the football game. Mariah Stacona and Hector Baez were the Homecoming Queen and King, Sophia reported.

Student Josh Hocker reported on the MHS water polo team. Water polo is not a recognized sport by the Oregon School Activities Association, but the school could look into making it a letter sport, Josh reported.

School board members said they would be interested in having water polo as a letter sport at the high school.

The board heard a draft report on the incidence of students with "not yet proficient" marks in some of their classes. The board is interested in seeing how many students at the school had "not yet proficient," or "NYP" grades.

Please see **SCHOOL** on 10

The diverse and extraordinary artistic talents of the tribes are on display at the Museum at Warm Springs.

The Twenty-First Annual Member Art Show, 'Creative Natives,' features different kinds of beadwork, paintings, jewelry, photography and other pieces.

Barbara Starr won the Judges Choice Award Traditional for her beaded tapestry, 'Wolf' (far right). And Owen Wallulatum won the Judges Choice Award Contemporary for his painting, 'Chief Wallulatum' (right). One of the Honorable Mention Awards goes to Terry Stradley for the beadwork, 'She Who Watches' (lower right).



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