

# Reservation wildlife survey coming up in December

(Andrea Karoglanian, wildlife biologist with the Confederated Tribes, shared this information recently about the wildlife populations on the reservation.)

Conducting wildlife surveys can be difficult, time consuming and expensive, depending on what you are surveying and the method you use to survey.

Deer and elk surveys are conducted by helicopter, and are done at a time when the animals are most concentrated. This is during winter or spring green up.

The entire reservation is not flown, due to time and cost constraints.

Deer and elk winter range, the lower elevation area primarily on the east half of the reservation, is broken down into 94 units. Each of those units are ranked as a high or low unit.

Units are ranked before each survey, based on habitat information, weather and tribal member input. We ask tribal hunters, and people who spend a lot of time on the ground, where they are seeing a lot of deer and elk.

We also look at some of the hunting results to see where people are harvesting deer and elk, which indicates where there may be a decent population of animals.

We then look at what the weather is doing, or has done the weeks prior to the surveys. The snow and cold event that just happened will be very helpful for us conducting our

surveys in mid December. The snow and cold will help push the animals down into the lower elevation habitat, where they will be more concentrated and more easily visible.

Once the units are ranked, we can determine what units we will fly. We will fly all of the high ranked units, and then the low ranked units will be randomly selected.

We will fly a total of 35 to 40 units. When we fly the units there are two or three observers and the pilot.

We fly the entire unit in a grid pattern to ensure we cover the entire area and don't miss animals or double count animals.

We use a GPS to track our flight and to record the animals seen. When we see an animal we record the location, the number of animals seen, the sex of the animals, whether they are an adult or juvenile; and, if it is male, the number of points.

Once the surveys are completed, we compile all the data and run it through a model. This can give an estimate of the population for the entire reservation. This is an estimate, so there is some error that is accounted for.

If we do not rank the units properly as high or low units before the survey it can skew the estimate, so it takes good knowledge of the animals and the area being surveyed to get an accurate estimate.

*Question: Why does the*

## Fawn-to-doe ratio a concern on reservation

A wildlife population is dependent on the amount of recruitment, or the number of young produced each year, to sustain or increase its population size.

The sustainable threshold is the ratio of fawns to does that the population needs just to maintain its population, not increase.

Population models indicate that when fawn to doe ratios drop below 50-60 fawns per 100 does,

mule deer populations cannot sustain themselves and decline.

Fawn recruitment has been low for more than a decade, and is cause for concern.

There has not been a study on the reservation to determine the cause of the low fawn ratios.

This type of study would be very time intensive and expensive. However, there have been many mule deer studies conducted that try to determine the cause of

low fawn ratios, and many have found that often fawn ratios are correlated with the doe's body condition.

And a doe's body condition is strongly related to habitat conditions. Deer and elk particularly need a certain amount of body fat accumulated by fall to survive the winter months.

If the does don't accumulate enough fat a number of things could happen: the doe may not impregnate, they may miscarry during the winter, the doe may not produce

enough milk for the fawn, or the fawn may not find enough food once weaned to survive.

The many variables influencing deer survival have the greatest impact on fawns.

Fawns accumulate less fat reserves than adults during summer and fall, making them more susceptible to weather severity, poor quality habitat, predators, harassment and disease.

See **WILDLIFE** on page 8

*Wildlife Department request hunter harvest information to be returned after hunting season?*

The answer is that it helps us with our deer and elk population estimates, as well as determining our buck ratios. It helps us determine the impact that the hunting activities are having on the populations.

It also helps us focus our wildlife habitat restoration efforts.

All the information hunters provide helps us to better manage the long-term sustainability of the wildlife populations on and off the reservation.

One of the main duties of my job is to provide the tech-

nical guidance to ensure that wildlife populations are responsibly managed not only for the current generations, but also the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of these generations.

So that's why I try to collect and provide as much wildlife information as possible, to help the tribes make management decisions that are in their best interest. That being said, as the wildlife biologist, my main focus, of course, is going to be geared toward responsible wildlife management.

### Sheep, goats

Big horn sheep are surveyed at the same time as the deer and elk from the heli-

copter.

They are easier to survey, and we usually count all the animals because they are found in a distinct small area.

The mountain goat surveys are also conducted by helicopter for obvious reasons: They are found in very steep rugged terrain that would be extremely difficult to access from the ground.

We coordinate with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct the surveys because the state agency pays for and organizes the surveys. Warm Springs Natural Resources are included in the surveys. All habitat for the goats is surveyed, because they are also found within a limited area.

### Eagles, spotted owls

We also monitor Bald and Golden eagle populations on the reservation. Those are conducted on the ground during the nesting season.

Mainly we monitor reproductive success to determine whether the population is going up or down. Those surveys are not very time intensive.

Northern spotted owls are monitored annually during the nesting season.

Spotted owls are a Threatened species and are protected under the Endangered Species Act, so the monitoring is due to an agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

See **SURVEY** on page 8

## Shop local on Small Business Saturday

Saturday, Nov. 29, will be Small Business Saturday, a national day to encourage people to shop at small businesses.

As you go about your holiday shopping, remember to support your local small busi-

nesses and consider purchases close to home.

It not only helps grow the local economy but also saves you travel money, and lessens the environmental impact of your holiday shopping.



## 39th Annual Christmas Bazaar

Saturday, Dec. 13 ~ 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

at the Community Center Gym and Social Hall

Find those perfect Christmas gifts for the whole family, while enjoying homemade goods. For more information contact us at 541-553-3243 or -3244.



## Miss Warm Springs pageant on Dec. 26

The Miss Warm Springs Pageant is coming up on December 26.

Miss Warm Springs 2014 Charmaine Billey will present the 2015 crown to the new Miss Warm Springs at the pageant, held at the Agency Longhouse.

Applicants are between 18 and 24 years, must be a Warm Springs member, drug- and alcohol free, and a role model. She must reside on the reservation, though there are exceptions for off-reservation students.

The contestants receive prizes for taking part in the pageant. The new Miss Warm Springs will receive a full beaded crown and banner.

During the year, Miss



Miss Warm Springs 2014 Charmaine Billey

Warm Springs travels to tribal events around the region—the Gathering of Nations,

and conferences of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and the National Indian Education Association, among others.

Miss Warm Springs participates in parades in Warm Springs, Redmond, Prineville, Madras, etc. The tribes provide some travel expenses for Miss Warm Springs.

The Tribal Council staff organize the Miss Warm Springs Pageant.

Applications can be picked up and returned at the Tribal Council office. If you have any questions, call Minnie Yahtin or Emily Yazzie at 541-553-3257.

At the pageant the contestants are judged on their knowledge of the Confederated Tribes and the reserva-

tion; and knowledge of traditional foods, ceremonies, clothing, crafts and social activities.

The judges also look for poise, personality and beauty, speaking ability and appearance.

Contestants are asked to perform two tribal dances. They are asked to type essays on "Why I want to be Miss Warm Springs," and "What will be my civic project for the community during my reign?"

A table will be available at the pageant to showcase personal talents, academic and sports achievements, as well as traditional.

Applications are due at the Tribal Council office by 5 p.m. on Dec. 22.

## Firewood

Western Juniper	\$210
Old growth Douglas Fir	\$210
Lodge pole pine	\$210
Old growth Ponderosa pine	\$190
Tamarack	\$250

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One cord of wood BTU rating is equivalent to 150-160 gallons of furnace oil. You save a whopping \$430 by burning firewood. Save even more if you heat by electricity.

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