



# Spilyay Tymo

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## Mill working on payment plan, downsizing

### Would operate with 85 employees

The mill board and management presented a downsizing plan to Tribal Council last week.

The plan—reducing the number of employees from about 115 to 85—is a short-term solution, lasting two years.

The idea after two years is to transform the mill into a more efficient operation, designed for the timber resources of the reservation.

The mill operation would lose about \$320,000 this year, according to the Warm Springs Forest

Products Industries estimate. The year 2016 “would be a break-even or better year,” said Doug Jacobson, WSFPI controller.

After downsizing, the mill would operate on a split shift, said John Katchia Jr., WSFPI chief executive officer. Working on a split shift means that one crew works all aspects of the milling process, he said.

Another aspect of the downsizing plan is to sell the white-wood logs off the reservation. Milling these logs is too costly at the WSFPI mill, Katchia said.

As another cost-saving measure, the mill employees are transferring to the tribal insurance program. The

tribes are a self-insuring organization.

### The payment plan

The allowable cut of reservation timber would be above the sustainable level for a few years, but then would average out to a sustainable level over 10 years.

An important part of the downsizing plan is coming up with a payment plan for the 2014 timber stumpage payments. The mill is a year behind on these payments, according to the Council discussion last week.

BIA Warm Springs Agency Superintendent John Halliday said fed-

eral law requires the agency to take account of this situation.

Federal regulations say the natural resources of the tribe must be sold at no less than fair market value, Halliday said.

The BIA, he said, cannot sign off any future timber sales until the Tribal Council is satisfied that the payments from WSFPI will be made.

Otherwise, the BIA is not carrying out the trust responsibility, Halliday said. A monthly payment plan would be a good idea, said Ken Borchert, from the BIA Regional office.

See **WSFPI** on page 5

## Statement from Tribal Council

Tribal Council members are planning district meetings and a General Council meeting in the near future regarding tribal management.

For now, the acting secretary-treasurer is Mike Collins, finance director. Alfred Estimo is the acting finance director.

Tribal Council voted last week to make these changes after reviewing the initial results of an investigation. Further review and investigation of the matter is ongoing.

As this is a personnel matter involving the right to privacy and due process, the Council discussion last week was in executive session.

Specific dates for the district and General Council meetings have not yet been set, but look for them in March.

## Tribal Day at state Capitol

Tribal Government Day at the Capitol in Salem is set for this Thursday, Feb. 19.

The day provides tribal leaders a chance to work on important state legislative matters with the lawmakers.

This year Tribal Government Day falls the day after the swearing-in of the new Oregon Governor Kate Brown. Tribal leaders will have a chance to meet with her on Thursday.

The Thursday itinerary for Tribal Government Day starts at 8 a.m. with a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Senate Bill 343.

This bill would make permanent Senate Bill 412, the Tribal Law Enforcement Act; and Senate Bill 448, to expand juvenile case transfer authority to include Wasco and Hood River counties.

A 10 a.m. meeting is scheduled with Sen. Ted Ferrioli in the Senate Republican Office; followed by an 11 a.m. meeting with Rep. John Huffman, The Dalles.

At 1 p.m. is a House Rural Communities, Land Use and Water Committee work session on House Bill 2148.

This bill is in regard to property tax exemption on permanent improvements in Indian Country.

### New governor

The meeting with Gov. Brown is scheduled for 2 p.m. Gov. Brown has an extensive background working with Oregon tribes.

She served on the Commission on Indian Services, and worked on a variety of Indian Country legislative matters, going back at least 15 years.

(See page 4 for more about Gov. Brown's work on tribal issues).

## A Day at the Rink

The Recreation Department hosted an ice-skating trip to Sun River in February.

A total of 31 kids and adults enjoyed the day.

“We really had a good time skating,” said Carol Sahme, Recreation arts and crafts coordinator.

The next Recreation field trip will be on March 25, to the bowling alley in Madras.

Recreation will also be hosting many spring break youth activities in March.



Dave McMechan/Spilyay



## Smelt fishing season opens early this year

Tribal Council voted to open the smelt fishing season early this year, after consulting with the Branch of Natural Resources.

Council voted last week to open the smelt, or Pacific eulachon, season on the Cowlitz River and tributaries, as the fish were already in the river.

They are expected soon the Sandy River and tributaries as well. The initial plan was to open the season on March 1, but this was moved up, as the fish had already arrived in the Cowlitz.

Last year tribal members har-

vested about 2,000 pounds of the smelt.

The regulation this year call for a tribal allocation of 6,500 pounds, or about 93,820 fish. The tribal regulation calls for fishing between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Gear is limited to dipnets. Other regulations:

Members must carry enrollment cards on their person at all times fishing or transporting fish. Tribal members must report catch to BNR personnel on-site at fishery locations; or within 24 hours to the branch office in Warm Springs. (Resolution on page 8.)

## Tribal Council hears casino, resort updates

Tribal Council heard enterprise updates last week from Indian Head Casino and Kah-Nee-Ta Resort and Spa

Kah-Nee-Ta saw a significant increase in revenue in 2014, said resort general manager Carlos Smith.

Part of the improved performance comes from working with Travel Oregon and Japanese visitors, he said. Another factor was that the 2013 season was badly impacted by a structural, and a wildfire, Smith said.

Looking toward the future, he said, it is not too early to start planning for the 2017 solar eclipse. The reservation will be among the ideal spots to view the event. A Japanese group has already booked the resort for the time when the eclipse will happen, Smith said.

And there may be a chance, he said, for the tribes to generate some revenue by allowing visitors, for a fee, to travel to the ideal viewing areas on the reservation.

See **ENTERPRISES** on page 7



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