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Chance for tribal housing at the river

The construction of dams on the Columbia River displaced many tribal families that had been living and fishing there for generations, since time immemorial.

The displacement and destruction of fishing sites, individual homes and villages along the river creates an obligation on the part of the federal government.

To address part of this obligation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked with the Columbia River tribes to create fishing access and in-lieu sites at the river. This took several years and millions of dollars to accomplish, the result being 31 tribal in-lieu and access sites at the river.

As part compensation, the Corps of Engineers also built a new longhouse, infrastructure and homes at Celilo Village.

These accomplishments are to be

celebrated, because of the years of work that went into the projects, said Louie Pitt, director of tribal Governmental Affairs.

But the outcome has been imperfect, he said, because of the scope of the damage from the dams. For instance, the Celilo Village project was and remains contentious, in part because of the question of who was receive a new home.

The planners used historical records, and to the best of their ability tried to come up with a fair solution. But the result was imperfect, "And some people are still unhappy about it," Mr. Pitt was saying last week at Tribal Council.

In these situations—because of the size and cost of the obligation—the only options seem to be to come up with some solution in a reasonably timely way, or to do nothing at

all.

Several decades after the construction of the dams, the federal government now appears ready to address another obligation that exists at the river—that of housing to displaced tribal families.

The process for this project will be at least as complex as the Celilo Village project, and possibly much more so.

Time is now

All parties agree that as long as the dams exist, the federal government has an obligation to provide housing for families and villages that were displaced by the construction of the dams.

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission has been coordinating the effort to hold the government accountable to the obligation. CRITFC executive director

Paul Lumley, and CRITFC policy analyst Laurie Jordan met last week with Tribal Council on the issue.

"The potential for tribal housing at the Columbia River is the best I've ever seen," Mr. Lumley said.

"But if we don't get something going now," he said, "we'll have to start over."

There will be a change in the Presidential administration next year, Mr. Lumley said. And the House and some Senate seats are up for election.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Senators from Oregon and Washington, and Congressman Earl Blumenauer sent a letter in November of last year in support the project.

See TRIBAL HOUSING on 5

School district agreement at Council

Deanie Smith came across an interesting and important federal law that has to do with tribal languages and public schools.

Deanie, the tribal Language Program director, attended the National Indian Education Association conference last October in Portland.

At one policy session, she met a group of Hawaiian Natives who shared information on how they have been working to keep their languages.

They shared with her a copy of the Native American Languages Act of 1990. Here is some of the language in the law:

"The traditional languages of Native Americans are an integral part of their cultures and identities, and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival of Native American cultures, literature, histories, religions, political institutions and values..."

See EDUCATION on 3

Council discussion on Bonneville fishery

The Tribal Council this month will take up the question of spring subsistence fishing below the Bonneville dam. The fishery opened last year in early April.

Council members at a meeting last week said they want to see the subsistence fishery open again this spring below Bonneville.

The tribes first re-opened this fishery in 2010, and it proved to be popular with hook-and-line subsistence fishermen. Before the 2010 season, there had been no subsistence fishery at the location for some years.

In 2014 the below-Bonneville fishery remained closed to subsistence fishermen, although the 2014 spring chinook run was one of the best in several years. Meanwhile, the commercial fishery at the area was open in 2014, and many saw this as unfair to the subsistence fishermen.

Tribal Council agreed, and in 2015 opened the subsistence fishery at Bonneville. Council is planning to meet with the Branch of Natural Resources on January 25 to discuss the 2016 below-Bonneville subsistence fishery.

They may also look at some of the regulations that apply at the fishing site, such as regulations regarding the number of poles per fisherman, reasonable access for elders, and law and regulation enforcement.

Youth Art, 'Kindred Spirits' and more at museum in 2016



Reservation photography by Edward Heath

Courtesy photos.



New Zealand lead crystal She Who Watches, by Lillian Pitt.

The Museum at Warm Springs will open its first exhibit of 2016 next week, with the Twenty-third Annual Warm Springs Tribal Youth Art Exhibit.

Young people can submit items for the exhibit until 5 p.m. this Friday, Jan. 22. The exhibit will have its grand opening on Thursday, Jan. 28.

The Youth Art Exhibit features original works by young people of the community from toddlers

through high school. Talk to Natalie Kirk at the museum if you need more information, 541-553-3331.

In April the museum will feature, *An Eye for the Rez: Edward Heath Photography*.

"More than just snapshots, this exhibition showcases nature, scenery and cherished memories, and reveals the beauty of daily life on the rez."

See MUSEUM on 8

Youth opportunities with Heart of Oregon

Six young people from Warm Springs have joined YouthBuild. They are the first group from the reservation to join the education and job skills training program.

"We're hoping to get more students this March, after word gets out," said Butch David, Madras High School community liaison.

YouthBuild is a program of Heart of Oregon Corps, a Central Oregon non-profit helping young people and local communities.

To the students the benefits of YouthBuild are many: they can earn high school credits, a high school diploma, or a college scholarship. And they learn job skills while earning a stipend.

In YouthBuild, the students first

attend a two-week orientation at the Sisters classroom center. This session is called 'Mental Toughness.' The six Warm Springs students will be finishing Mental Toughness at the end of this week.

The students meet early in the morning at the community center, and then take a bus to Sisters. The school district provides the transportation. After the two weeks, the students will spend some days at the classroom, and some days working on community projects, such as building houses.

YouthBuild is 12-month program, open to young people ages 16 to 24. Here is an example of when YouthBuild may be the answer:

A student at the high school gets

behind in credits, for whatever reason. "Sometimes school is not for everyone," said Laura Handy, executive director of Heart of Oregon Corps.

At some point the student gets too far behind and gives up hope of graduating. Through YouthBuild the student can earn up to 15 credits in one year, about two and a half years worth of high school credits. Graduation is now possible.

Butch David learned of YouthBuild last year while working with a summer youth crew. "I had three seniors on my crew, and they ended up getting scholarships to go to college," Butch was saying recently.

He looked into the program, and

introduced it to about 30 students, some at the Roots program, for instance. Six of the students liked the program, and they joined.

The classroom experience through YouthBuild is different from the high school, said Kara Johnson, director of YouthBuild. There are three educators for each student, as an example.

The YouthBuild experience out the classroom teaches job skills. And the students make employment contacts that can to job opportunities.

See YouthBuild on 5



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