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2020 U.S. Census kicks off in W.S.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will kick off the 2020 U.S. Census count for Oregon this Thursday, March 12.

The tribes were formally requested to host this inaugural event by the United States Census Bureau.

Before the start of the Thursday public presentation, George Aguilar Sr. will complete the first count for the state of Oregon 2020 U.S. Census. He will do this online earlier in the morning at his home.

The Warm Springs Complete Count Committee requested that Mr. Aguilar perform the service on behalf of the Confederated Tribes and the committee.

Mr. Aguilar is a Wasco elder and life-long resident of Warm Springs. He is a Korean War veteran who during his life has worked as a laborer, fisherman, logger and construction manager. He is the author of the tribal history study *When the River Ran Wild*. Mr. Aguilar turns 90 this year.

The public census kick-off events will follow at the Agency Longhouse. This is the agenda for Thursday:

9 a.m.: A meet and greet with Mr. Aguilar.

9:30: Welcome address and comments.

10: Warm Springs Early Childhood Education Mini Powwow.

11: to 1 p.m.: Community meal, with the opportunity to complete the census online

Census data directly impacts how the federal government allocates more than \$675 billion every year for programs and services vital for tribal communities. These include Medicaid, social services, housing, public safety, veterans services, emergency preparedness, education, school lunches and more.

Tribal members and reservation have historically been undercounted in the census, which happens only once every 10 years.

Under-counting of tribes and reservations can lead to underfunding of the very communities most in need. The Census Bureau values tribal partnerships, and is committed to a complete and accurate count of tribal nations.

The goal the 2020 Census is to correct the under-counting:

"I encourage all our tribal members and Warm Springs residents to participate in the census to help provide a better future for our community and future generations," says Tribal Council Chairman Raymond Tsumpti Sr.

In March Census enumerators will bring you an invitation to your home, with information about participating in the 2020 census.

National recognition for Geo Visions

Warm Springs Geo Visions is a semi-finalist in Honoring Nations 2020, an award recognition given only to the most deserving of tribal enterprises across the country.

Honoring Nations is an award of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, and the Native Nations Institute of the University of Arizona. At the heart of the program:

"The principle that tribes themselves hold the key to positive social, political, cultural, and economic prosperity—and that self-governance plays a crucial role in building and sustaining strong, healthy Indian nations. Honoring Nations serves as a vehicle for shifting the focus from what does not work to what does, fostering pride and confidence in the ability of American Indian governments to make positive contributions to the wellbeing of their respective communities and citizens."

And the program is founded on the idea that "Native nations can benefit from having greater access to innovative ideas and effective governing approaches. Honored programs serve as important sources of knowledge and inspiration, and our experience shows that they are drawn upon by communities throughout Indian Country and far beyond."

Geo Visions is one of only



Photoby Mariana Wallig/Heart On Studios

Geo Visions crew, left to right are Brandon Gilliland Project Manager, Alex Atkins Crew Chief, Angelina Howell CEO, and Rich Danzuka Cultural Monitor.

six semi-finalists across Indian Country to be considered for the Honoring Nations 2020 award. The winning enterprise receives national recognition, among government entities and beyond. As the Harvard Project states:

"The high public visibility and news coverage of Honoring Nations also permit non-Native policymakers, the media and the general public to see what Native nations are actually doing in the drive for self-determination."

The tribes' Geo Visions enterprise provides a unique service in the region. The team works for the protection and preservation of cultural resources of the tribes.

Projects of the enterprise include archaeological research at specific sensitive sites, with oral history research and indigenous knowledge to give the tribal context to each site.

This work includes not only the lands of the reservation, but the vast Ceded territory of the Confederated Tribes. Geo Visions provides its service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bonneville Power Administration, Portland General Electric, and the Oregon Department of Transportation, among others.

And there is a great potential for growth of the enterprise, said Angelina Howell, Geo Visions di-

rector.

The Geo Visions team includes Ms. Howell. Larry Squiemphen, Geo Visions GIS manager and oral history coordinator, who has been with the enterprise since it began. Lindon Hylton, primary investigator and lead archaeologist. Alex Atkins, lead crew chief and archaeologist. Brandon Gilliland, project manager. Rich Danzuka, cultural technician.

The Confederated Tribes formed Geo Visions 15 years ago. From a modest beginning the enterprise has established a reputation for professionalism in its field, as witnessed by the Honoring Nations recognition.

Vital water matter before Tribal Council

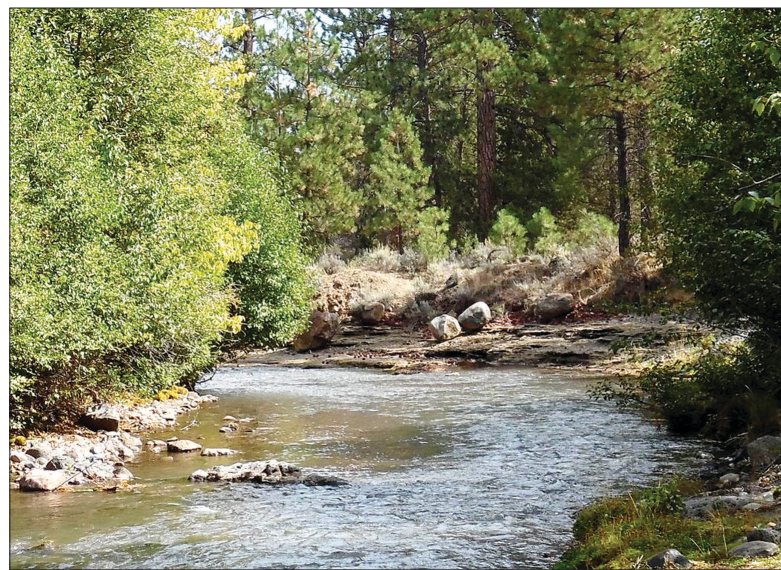
There are five separate irrigation districts in the upper Deschutes River basin, the North Unit and the Central Oregon districts being the biggest.

For 70 years the districts have competed for river water, which they would then distribute to the farm operations and irrigators throughout the region.

The practice so far has been to store water in reservoirs during the cool months of winter, and then release large quantities of water within a relatively short period of time, during the summer months. This has led to serious degradation of tributaries of the Upper Deschutes.

The scenario is now in the process of changing, as the irrigation districts would face perilous legal and financial consequences, were the practice to continue. The districts are now forced to cooperate, and develop a management approach that considers a much wider range of elements.

This is clearly a matter of great significance to the Confed-



Courtesy

Whychus Creek, Upper Deschutes basin.

erated Tribes, a large and senior water right holder in the basin. The tribes are also working, at great expense and effort, to restore fish runs in the upper reaches.

Bobby Brunoe, general manager of tribal Natural Resources, has been the lead contact person for the tribes, as the new upper basin irrigation plan unfolds.

Mr. Brunoe and Tribal Council met last week with officials of the

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—Fisheries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Bridget Moran, of U.S. Fish and Wildlife, reviewed how the situation has developed to this point: The past irrigation practices, Ms. Moran said, led eventually to conflict with the Endangered Species Act, specifically regarding the Oregon spotted frog.

The potential for litigation, and an imposed restriction on irrigation water, then led the irrigation districts to develop a draft management plan, called a Habitat Conservation Plan for an incidental take permit, to be issued by the federal agency.

From the tribal perspective—and with nothing against the spotted frog—the salmon is the most important species to be protected, said Tribal Councilman Captain Moody.

The situation, he said, is reminiscent of what happened some years ago with the spotted owl. Like the spotted frog, the owl became endangered due to activities carried out beyond the reservation. Then in addressing the crisis, Councilman Moody said, the agencies and parties involved seek to impose restrictions upon the tribes, who had nothing to do with it.

The goal of the new plan is to return a more natural flow to the tributaries and river, Ms. Moran said, as opposed to the winter storage-summer release practice. A hope is that this will also benefit the fish, she said.

— Dave McMechan



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