

# Pinkham takes Corps of Engineers oversight position

Jaimie Pinkham is leaving his position as executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission for an oversight position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, civil works. Mr. Pinkham is a Nez Perce member, and has been CRITFC executive director since 2017.

He recently accepted the position of principal deputy assistant secretary of the Corps of Engineers for civil works. Large-scale dams of the Columbia River and tributaries are among the Army Corps of Engineers civil works, for example.

In his new position Mr. Pinkham will focus on energy and the environment. As his move from CRITFC is a very recent decision, the parties are still working on the transition. The change was first publicly reported at the winter conference of the National Congress of American Indians.

Mr. Pinkham noted he will be working for the present administration and its policy direction: "I'm not ready to point to any particular outcome of any particular issue at this time," he said. "I will take my lead from the administration."

Pinkham will be joining the ad-



Jaime Pinkham

ministration before a push later this year for a sizable infrastructure package in Congress.

The package could include a \$33 billion proposal to breach the four lower Snake River dams. This could help save Snake River salmon and steelhead from extinction. U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, last month introduced this initiative.

The proposal includes removing the earthen berms adjacent to all four Lower Snake River hydro-

electric dams to let the river run free, while spending billions to alleviate the impact on agriculture, industry and transportation, and communities affected by the loss of slackwater and hydroelectric generation.

Prior to returning to CRITFC in 2017, Pinkham worked for the Bush Foundation Native Nations Program; the Trust for Public Land's Tribal Initiative and held elective office on the Nez Perce Tribe Executive Committee. He also ran tribe's Department of Fisheries Resources Management.

Regarding Mr. Pinkham's new position with the Corps of Engineers, National Wildlife Federation director of water resources and coastal policy Jessie Ritter said:

"The Army Corps of Engineers has an essential role in managing America's rivers, wetlands, floodplains, and coasts to make communities and the nation's wildlife more resilient to climate change. Jamie Pinkham has the experience and perspective needed to guide the Army Corps of Engineers as it works to improve the health of the nation's waters and invest in natural solutions to protect communities and wildlife alike."



Lower Snake River dam that may be breached under new initiative.

Last month U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson unveiled a sweeping \$33.5 billion plan to bring back the Snake River salmon. Rep. Simpson and advocates hope this will be part of the multitrillion-dollar infrastructure and clean-energy package set for unveiling later this year.

The centerpiece of Rep. Simpson's plan is the breaching of the four lower Snake River dams, in Washington State, that stand between migrating Chinook salmon and 5,500 miles of near-pristine spawning habitat in central Idaho.

"We looked at every possible situation to try to find a way to keep the dams. There's no way," Simpson said. "I can't be certain that removing these four dams will bring back Idaho's salmon, but I am certain that if we don't remove them, the salmon are on a certain path to extinction." The plan also proposes a Northwest State and Tribal Fish and Wildlife Council, which would give the region's tribes equal control over fishery management with states. Northwest treaty tribes with fishing rights are in support of the proposal.

## Tribal water bill back at Senate

Oregon's U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley this month reintroduced legislation to help improve water quality and services for Oregon tribal communities. This bill, first introduced two years ago, was in part a federal response to the water infrastructure of the Warm Springs Reservation. Two summers in a row—2019 and 2020—saw extended boil-water notices, and water outages to many residents of the Agency District. Other tribes of the West face similar, though less drastic problems.

Sens. Wyden and Merkley reintroduced their Western Tribal Water Infrastructure Act would help move these communities out of the cycle of temporary and emergency fixes, finally ensuring stable and reliable federal investments in water infrastructure projects.

Mr. Wyden raised the issue during Interior Secretary-Designate Deb Haaland's nomination hearing in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and secured her

commitment to work on solutions.

"Clean drinking water is a human right. Yet the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and other Native American tribes around America have to rely on inadequate water infrastructure that has left many with limited or no access to clean water in the middle of a pandemic," Sen. Wyden said.

"Boil water notices and crumbling pipes are not acceptable. Congress must do more to bring urgently needed resources to build sustainable tribal water infrastructure that has been neglected for far too long. And I look forward to working on this with Congresswoman Deb Haaland when she takes the helm of the Interior Department."

Rep. Haaland, of New Mexico, is a member of the Pueblo Laguna tribe. If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, as recommended recently by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The Western Tribal Water Infrastructure Act introduced Wednesday would:

- Help Oregon tribes connect, expand or repair existing public water systems to improve water quality, water pressure or water services by ensuring tribes in the Columbia River Basin, and its adjacent coastal river basins, are eligible for the Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program;
- Authorize the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to fund up to 10 water improvement projects per year for tribes in the Columbia River Basin and its adjacent coastal river basins;
- Require that at least one of the 10 authorized water improvement projects help Western Oregon tribal governments improve water infrastructure; and
- Make the Indian Reservation Drinking Water program permanent and increase its funding from \$20 million per year to \$50 million per year.

## Howlak Tichum

Perpit'lee oo ~ Agnes Evelyn Tulee – 1930-2021

Agnes Evelyn Tulee, age 90, was called to the sacred Creator on February 17, 2021. She passed away peacefully and of natural causes at her home in Toppenish, Washington, surrounded by her family.

She was born to Salaleet Martha Smartlowit and Curtis Klutman at the Kusshei homestead in Toppenish. She was orphaned at age 8 and was placed under her kuthla Nettie Kusskei's care, where she attended Wiley City, Simnasho, and White Swan school districts.

Her kuthla's home was rich in the in the mamachat dialect of the Ichiskin sinwit, which young Agnes and her older sister Julia Charley learned to communicate in having the elders.

Agnes traveled with her kuthla and because there were no able men in their family to drive, they traveled on horseback, buckboards, horse and buggy, and the hack. They pitched up their encampments at the Pendleton Round Up, He He Mill Longhouse, and other areas where the Indian people gathered for horse racing, ka oisha, and pi-umes.

Agnes married Reginald W. Tulee and spent ten years with him on the Colville Indian Reservation, and another 16 years upon the Spokane Indian Reservation, where she got acquainted with many people.

Agnes worked as a school cook, museum technician, and certified Nursing Assistant, as

well as early jobs in the canneries and hard work of harvesting and produce.

She retired as a root and medicinal gatherer, cook, cornhusk weaver, beadworker, circle dancer and homemaker. Also, stickgames, bingo, and dice games at home where she holds the highest score. She also served many years on the Yakama Nation General Council as an alternate counter, and then as an interpreter before retiring in 2017.

She is preceded in death by sisters Julia Charley, Sarah Yallup and Gladys Lewis. Brothers Kenneth and Victor Lewis, Husband Reginald W. Tulee, and sons Dale and Randy Unyto Tulee.

She is survived by sisters Leona Jack, Lola Totus, Lavina Wilkins and Theresa Ashue. Special nieces Annette Starr and Delpine Dave-Lopez. Daughters, Evangeline Kishwalk-Piel, Melissa, Jeanette and Salaleet Martha Tulee. Sons, Leo Hellon, Victor Reggie Jr., Mike Kusheosh Arthur, Jason Sattakalas and Paul Tulee. Her beloved ullas and kuthlas, and the most important people grandchildren, great grandchild and great great grandchildren.

She was taken to the Methodist Cemetery in White Swan after a short viewing. She was laid to rest after the uplifting two songs were sung by Eagle Spirit on February 19, 2021.

## Heart of Oregon recruiting new Madras store manager

If you're strolling down Fifth Street in Madras you may notice some changes at the Heart of Oregon Thrift Store front window. The popular store is preparing to reopen this spring, and is welcoming students back for pre-opening training.

In addition to being a non-profit business, the store serves as a job-skills training program for Jefferson County students with varying abilities. The store has been closed since this time last year due to the pandemic, but now that schools are returning in-person, the store plans to reopen for customers and donations in April or May.

Heart of Oregon is also recruiting for the Thrift Store program manager position, as long-time manager and Culver resident Linda Graham relocated to Louisiana earlier this winter.

"The position is a unique opportunity to both run a vibrant downtown Madras business and teach job skills to a diverse group of local youth," shares program director Kara Johnson. Applications are due March 15.



"As much as we miss our customers," Ms. Johnson says, "We have decided to ensure student safety by beginning our reopening process with a training period for students only before customers return or we begin accepting donations." In training, students will be refreshing inventory of goods, practicing customer service skills, learning safety protocol, and setting up store displays.

Heart of Oregon Corps would

like to thank all of the Thrift Store's loyal customers and donors. The store is not currently accepting donations or open for retail sales. For more information, please call the Thrift Store at 541-475-7559 or visit [heartoforegon.org](http://heartoforegon.org). The store also makes announcements at: [facebook.com/HOCThriftStore](http://facebook.com/HOCThriftStore).

Heart of Oregon Corps is a nonprofit organization invested in inspiring and empowering change in the lives of Central Oregon youth through jobs, education, and stewardship. Their programming creates pathways out of poverty while stimulating regional economic growth.

**Now Hiring!**

**Thrift Store Program Manager in Madras**

Apply now for this unique opportunity to run a store while training diverse local youth!

Full-time, salaried Manager with great benefits. Tuesday-Saturday schedule.

Applications due March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

[www.heartoforegon.org](http://www.heartoforegon.org)

#EmpowerWarmSprings

PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19

- KNOW THE FACTS
- TAKE ALL PRECAUTIONS
- GET VACCINATED

COMMUNITY STRONG