

Aja K. DeCoteau is the new CRITFC executive director

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is pleased to announce that Aja K. DeCoteau was selected as the organization's new executive director at its October meeting.

"This is a great day for CRITFC and its member tribes," said CRITFC Treasurer Jeremy Takala, (Yakama).

"It is an honor as we see more and more Native American women take leadership roles nationally, in our tribal governments, and in the care and management of our First Foods. I believe Aja will carry on the tribal vision of putting fish back in the rivers that this organization has been working toward for nearly 50 years."

DeCoteau had been serving in the executive director role on an interim basis since April; however, this is the first time the organization has a woman serving as its official executive director.

"Our resilience is how the tribes have overcome challenges," said CRITFC Vice-chair Ron Suppah (Warm Springs).

"We bend and change, but always stay true to our culture and values. Our selection of Ms. DeCoteau is a positive change and I know that the future of CRITFC is in good hands."

The selection committee, comprised of leadership from all four of CRITFC's member tribes, was impressed by Ms. DeCoteau's expertise shown in her career, as well as the leadership abilities exhibited while serving as the organization's interim executive director.

"Aja has shown her skill in the needs and demands of this role over the past six months," said CRITFC Secretary Jeremy Wolf (Umatilla). "I want to express my pride and congratulations, not only in her abilities, but also the unique perspectives she will bring to our work."

DeCoteau is a citizen of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and has other tribal lineage with the Cayuse, Nez Perce, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. She grew up in Wapato, Washington on the Yakama Reservation. She has worked in natural resources her entire career.

For the past 12 years, she was the manager of CRITFC's Watershed Department, where she led a team focused on the implementation of Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi-Wa-Kish-Wit—the tribes' salmon restoration plan, activities that impact ecosystems at the watershed, river basin, and regional landscape levels and coordinated the organization's li-



Aja K. DeCoteau

mate change research and response.

"Since I was a child, my family, elders, and tribal leaders have taught me the significance of salmon as one of our First Foods and the importance of tribal treaty fishing rights," Ms. DeCoteau said.

"As tribal people, our natural resources are our cultural resources, which is why I have dedicated my career to protect them. I am honored and excited to lead CRITFC and work together with our member tribes to bridge traditional knowledge, scientific expertise, and cultural connection to ensure that we have salmon and other natural resources for generations to come."

As CRITFC's executive director, DeCoteau will work closely with its governing body to lead the organization's strategic direction and a team of more than 130 employees in four locations in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to put fish back in the rivers, protect treaty fishing rights, share salmon culture, and provide direct services to tribal fishers along the Columbia River.

"I thank Aja for her time, commitment, and dedication, not only the service to her tribe, but to Native Americans and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission," said CRITFC Chair Quincy Ellenwood (Nez Perce).

"There is a long road ahead of us and I have the ultimate confidence in her and look forward to working with her."

DeCoteau also sits on the Board of Trustees for Earthjustice, the Board of Directors for the Columbia Land Trust and the Portland Energy Conservation, Inc, and the Board of Advisors for WorldOregon. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and Native American Studies from Dartmouth College and holds a Master of Environmental Management from Yale University, School of the Environment.

Spawning season on the Deschutes

After a long, hot and very dry summer, the region is finally headed into fall. The hope is for more rain, and some cool weather.

Fall weather also means it's also spawning season on the Deschutes.

The Confederated Tribes and Pelton-Round Butte biologists have been busy in the field conducting redd surveys in the Metolius, and tracking returning adult fish as they travel through the upper basin.

The team recently received some help in this work from fellow fish biologists from around the region at this year's conference for the Association of Power Biologists.

Scientists attending the event spent a day searching for Chinook redds, kokanee and sockeye in the Metolius River.

This was a great chance to connect with other experts from around the country and

share some of our own research and best practices.

Following the fish

Radio-tagging returning adult fish at our Pelton trap allows us to track where fish go as they migrate upstream to spawn. Here's the story of one Chinook we've been monitoring this year:

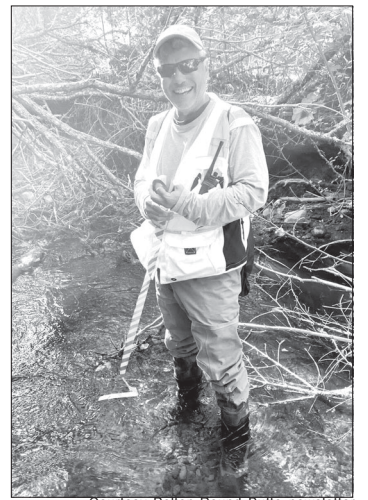
This fish was captured at the Pelton trap, radio-tagged and released into Lake Billy Chinook on May 24.

Of the three tributaries—Crooked, Deschutes or Metolius—the fish chose to migrate up the Crooked River.

On May 29, it passed through the Opal Springs Fish Ladder and continued its upstream migration despite low flows in the Crooked.

In September, biologists tried to get eyes on the Chinook again to verify its location.

Fish biologist Terry Shrader operated a radio-receiver and antenna, guiding fellow biologist Becky Burchell, equipped with snorkeling gear, toward the



Courtesy Pelton-Round Butte newsletter

Fish biologist Gonzalo Mendez flags bull trout redds along a tributary of the Metolius River. These efforts are led by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife with support from the Confederated Tribes, PGE, the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

Chinook's location. Unfortunately, Becky was unable to spot the fish due to poor visibility in the water that day.

\$760,000 funding for CRITFC program

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is receiving \$760,000 in funding to improve and expand the Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction program.

The funding is included in the recent federal Commerce, Justice and Science appropriations bill, as supported by Oregon's U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden.

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission treaty tribes—including the Confeder-

ated Tribes of Warm Springs—assumed stewardship of the Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction program last year.

CRITFC and tribes see the facility as a perfect complement to the effort to combine cutting edge scientific research with traditional ecological knowledge in the estuary and ocean environments.

"Our co-management ethos dictates that wherever the salmon go, we go with them," said CRITFC chairman Quincy Ellenwood.

The work of the state's senate delegation to expand the important work of Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction program is greatly appreciated, Mr. Ellenwood said.

The work furthers the understanding of the linkage between the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean, both in terms of how it impacts the region's salmon runs and how it helps quantify the effects of climate change on this important and delicate ecosystem.

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CRITFC hiring

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is hiring for the following positions:

Accounting technician. Salary: \$42,731 - \$55,546. Location: Portland.

Staff accountant. Salary: \$44,155 - \$67,946. Portland.

Genetics laboratory technician. Salary: \$39,738 - \$45,035. Location: Hagerman, Idaho.

Fishing site maintenance worker, two positions. Salary: \$34,496 - \$36,796. Location: The Dalles.

Columbia River Inter-Tribal Police Department officer, multiple vacancies. Salary: \$51,516 - \$56,261. Location: Hood River or Boardman.

Dispatcher. Salary: \$39,937 - \$43,661. Location: Hood River.

The complete job description, minimum skills, application requirements, deadlines, and pay information are available on the CRITFC website: critfc.org

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