

## Outdoor video features huckleberry harvest

Huckleberry picking season is still some months away, usually starting around mid summer.

Meanwhile, though, there is a great introduction to the tribal perspective on huckleberries—*Wiwinu* in Ichishkeen—on the website [outsideonline.com](http://outsideonline.com)

The 13-minute film, produced by Brutis Baez of Warm Springs, features several members of the Confederated Tribes, sharing stories of harvesting huckleberries with family and friends.

The documentary—called *Wiwinu*—was filmed near a traditional berry picking spot. Romona Baez talks about growing up and gathering berries with her elders.

The day they were making *Wiwinu*, Romona was on a huckleberry outing with two of her children and a grandson, sharing the traditional knowledge with the next generations.

The film narration begins: “The *wiwinu*, or huckleberry, is a traditional food for the Indigenous Warm Springs tribe of north-central Oregon. Every Au-



Jefferson Greene in scene from *Wiwinu*

gust, members set out in search of huckleberry bushes to pick, harvesting a bounty for the community’s annual feast that celebrates the fruit.”

*Wiwinu* then share some of the narrative of how the berries have remained important for Warm Springs people to this day.

With Ramona in *Wiwinu* are Veronica Baez, Koa Greene and Jefferson Greene, who shares an origin story about the huckleber-

ries and the bear. Others who were part of the film are Mykael Sam, Koa Greene, Kristy Kopplin and Sarah Gonzalez. Special thank you to the Confederated Tribes and the Culture and Heritage Department. *Wiwinu* is dedicated to Verbena Greene, Alex and Blanche Tohet, all Huckleberry pickers, Drummers, Bel Ringers, hunters and fishers. The film was made possible through an Eddie Bauer One Outside Grant.

## BIA plan for infrastructure spending

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has submitted to Congress its initial spend plan for funding authorized in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The plan says award announcement for water infrastructure improvements in Indian Country—such as on the Warm Springs Reservation—will be made this year.

The spending plan is a blueprint for how BIA will invest directly in tribal communities across the country to bolster community resilience, replace aging infrastructure and expand access to clean drinking water.

The BIA participated in three department-wide consultations with tribes in the development of the submitted spend plan, and to inform further program implementation.

“The funding in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is essential to advancing the all-of-government approach to supporting and empowering tribal communities as they simultaneously face environmental impacts to physical, cultural, and subsistence-based infrastructure and relocate to higher ground,” said Assistant Secretary

for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland.

“I look forward to seeing this historic piece of legislation begin yielding meaningful results for tribal communities.”

The law provides a total of \$466 million to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, including \$216 million for climate resilience programs and \$250 million to support water and health infrastructure. Funding is provided as emergency appropriations and is available for obligation until expended.

The bill language directs that \$130 million is provided for community relocation, \$86 million is provided for tribal climate resilience and adaptation projects, and \$43.2 million will be available to spend annually for five years.

As the effects of climate change continue to intensify, Indigenous communities are facing unique climate-related challenges. Flooding, erosion, permafrost subsidence, sea level rise and storm surges are presenting existential threats to communities’ economies, infrastructure, livelihoods and health.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also includes \$250 million to

support construction, repair, improvement and maintenance of irrigation and power systems, safety of dams and public health and safety compliance issues at water sanitation systems. This includes \$50 million to address deferred maintenance needs at 17 congressionally authorized irrigation projects located on Indian reservations across the Rocky Mountain, Northwest, Southwest, Navajo and Western Regions. The initial spend plan includes \$50 million as stipulated in the Infrastructure Law for irrigation and power projects allocated in equal \$10 million amounts per year for FY 2022-2026, all of which is available until expended.

The initial spend plan includes \$200 million for Safety of Dams and Water Sanitation to be allocated in \$50 million increments over FY 2022-2026. In FY 2022, \$10.65 million will be allocated for Water Sanitation purposes to address Environment Protection Agency notice of violations, identify contamination issues, reduce system failure risk, reduce exposure to contaminants for Indian Affairs and tribal staff and address critical gaps in water delivery.

## CRITFC seeking to fill positions

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

**Public information specialist.** This position works to forward the culture, goals and aspirations of the commission and its member tribes to the broader public through media and outreach activities. The position will write press releases, news stories, website and social media posts, and other creative writing to share the work, priorities, and views of CRITFC and its member tribes. Salary \$65,137–71,651. Portland. Closes February 22.

**Treaty fisheries community outreach liaison.** This position will be support outreach, contract tracing and wrap around support services for tribal communities along the Columbia River gorge. \$37,540–39,520. Portland.

**SCHISM Modeler/Oceanographer.** This position will work collaboratively with fish scientists and managers to integrate numerical hydrodynamic modeling into conservation and management programs for critical fish species and stocks in the Columbia River, focusing on Upper Columbia summer and fall chinook and Snake River fall chinook, but including other salmonid species,

lamprey, and sturgeon. \$75,799–\$80,854.

**Fishing site maintenance worker** (2 positions). These positions will provide the maintenance of the 31 Tribal In-Lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites located along 150 miles of the Columbia River. \$34,496–\$36,796. The Dalles.

**CRITPD-Police officer.** Based in Hood River. \$51,516–\$56,261.

**Dispatcher.** Hood River. \$39,937–\$43,661.

**HR generalist.** \$57,560–63,315.

The complete job description, minimum skills, application requirements, deadlines, and pay information are available at [critfc.or](http://critfc.or)

## Gray wolves may return to Endangered Species List

After a 15-month break, the gray wolf is back on the endangered species list. That might sound like bad news, but it’s actually seen as a victory for the iconic species, which is revered by Indigenous tribes and a powerful symbol of wildlife conservation.

Several wolves reside on the Warm Springs Reservation.

The gray wolf gained the protections of “endangered” status in 1974 but lost them in 2020 when

federal officials removed the animal from the list.

The current administration defended the removal in court, but a federal judge overturned it last week, and restored protections for the species across much of the US.

The Department of the Interior now has a few weeks to decide whether or not to appeal.

But what is an endangered species? The answer is surprisingly complicated, said John Vucetich,

a renowned wolf expert and professor at Michigan Technological University.

Vucetich led one of the longest-running research projects of any animal, in Isle Royale National Park, a set of islands in Lake Superior. He said that wolves deserve to be protected—but they’ve gotten caught up in the culture wars, which gave them the reputation as one of the nation’s most controversial species.

## Winter fishery extension

A 2022 tribal winter fishery has been extended for the John Day Pool only through 6 p.m. on Saturday, February 26. All gear is gillnets with no mesh size restriction.

Allowable sales are sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length, salmon (any species), steelhead, walleye, bass, carp, catfish, shad, and yellow perch may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes only.

River mouth and dam closed areas applicable to gillnet gear are in effect. The

zone 6 platform and hook and line fishery remains unchanged at this time.

If you have any fishing enforcement problems or need assistance or information, day or night, contact the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement Office, 541-386-6363.

Show pride in your tribe’s treaty rights by carrying your tribal ID. Please consult the Natural Resources Fisheries Department for additional details on tribal regulations.

## Chinook forecast best in 3 years

Spring chinook futures are looking up, even if only modestly, for the first time in about three years.

A collection of tribal, state and federal fisheries managers is forecasting 122,900 spring chinook bound for tributaries above Bonneville Dam will make it at least as far as the mouth of the Columbia River this year.

That number includes about 73,400 chinook that will be bound for the Snake River and its tributaries, an increase of about 20,000 compared to last year.

The forecast for Snake River-bound springers includes 60,200 hatchery-origin fish and about

13,200 wild fish.

If the forecast proves accurate, it would be the first time the total return of upriver spring chinook—those bound for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam—has exceeded 100,000 fish since 2018, when the return to the mouth of the Columbia was estimated at 115,081.

It also would be the highest return of Snake River-bound fish since the estimated return of 111,072 in 2016. The estimated return of 13,200 wild chinook bound for the Snake River would be the second-highest return in the previous five years but still only 63 percent of the 10-year average.

## Howlak Tichum Rex Buck Jr. ~ 1956-2022

The leader of the Wanapum band has died. Rex Buck Jr., 66, died February 11 at his ancestral village of P’na at Priest Rapids on the Columbia River in Grant County, Washington.

The Wanapum band lived at what is now the Hanford nuclear reservation site until the land was seized during World War II and the Wanapum were forced to resettle at their winter campsite in Priest Rapids.

Buck was given the responsibility of leading the Wanapum people while still in his 20s.

He had an easy-going way about him, but was relentless in his support of Wanapum culture. He spent decades developing and maintaining relationships with agency leads and land managers of the Wanapum traditional territory, which the Wanapum use to support their traditional lifestyle.

Rex viewed the current landowners as stewards of the landscape for now, understanding

that land-use decisions today will make a difference in its health and long-term viability to support future generations of Wanapum people.

Buck led the cultural protocol as the Burke Museum became the court-appointed repository for Kennewick Man, known by Native Americans as The Ancient One, in 1998.

Buck ensured proper care for The Ancient One for 19 years, until the bones were reburied by Native Americans.

He also helped repatriate hundreds of ancestors and tens of thousands of objects for multiple Columbia River tribal nations, as part of the Burke Museum’s commitments under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

“I was praying all the time to understand what my elders told me: Bring the people home. I tried to stick with their word,” Buck said when he was honored by the Burke museum.



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