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Friday event to launch power project

New transmission lines a tranformative opportunity

The Confederated Tribes, Power and Water Enterprises and Portland General Electric this Friday, December 1 are launching the start of the Bethel-Round Butte transmission line upgrade project. The kick-off event will feature remarks from tribal, utility and national leaders, as this is a large-scale, long-term and regionally transformative power improvement project.

Power and Water Enterprises last month learned the tribes had received a \$250 million investment in the improvement project from the U.S. Department of Energy. Overall estimated cost of the work, which will take a number of years, is \$614 million.

The Bethel-Round Butte transmission lines carry power from the Pelton-Round Butte hydro system approximately 100 miles west to the Salem area. The lines were built in the 1960s, and are at capacity.

To help address the situation, Power and Water Enterprises early this year applied for a grant through U.S. Department of Energy Grid Resilience Innovative Partnership (GRIP) program.

The application was successful, allowing for the start of a project that will benefit the tribes, the region and overall environment for generations to come.

At Tribal Council

The following are some of the items coming up on the Tribal Council agenda during the month of December (subject to change at Council discretion):

Monday, December 4 morning session: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Trust Funds Administration, and BIA Realty updates.

Afternoon session: Legislative conference calls, federal and state; and tribal attorneys updates.

Tuesday, December 5

9 a.m.: Pi-Ume-Sha discussion.

10: Cannabis referendum discussion with Jim Souers of the Warm Springs Economic Development Corporation.

11: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife-Grand Ronde agreement, discussion with tribal attorneys.

1:30 p.m.: Adoption discussion with Vital Statistics, Lucille Suppach-Samson.

2:30: Tribal Youth Council.

Monday, December 11 morning session: Secretary-Treasurer update with Robert Brunoe, and January 2024 agenda.

Afternoon session: Enrollments with Vital Statistics; Indian Health Services, Health and Human Services, and Managed Care updates. (To continue in following Spilyay.)

Housing study a guide for the future

The Warm Springs Housing Authority and Confederated Tribes this week kick off a comprehensive study of tribal housing on the reservation, and the projected housing needs into the future. This is the first such overall study and future needs assessment conducted by Housing and the tribes, said Danielle Wood, Housing Authority executive director.

The tribes and Housing are investing significant resources into the project, as it will guide strategic planning, project funding and grant applications, infrastructure, program design and other key decision-making

for decades into the future, Ms. Wood said.

And because of its long-term importance, she said, Housing and the tribes need the most accurate assessment of the current situation, and the projected needs, both immediate and for years to come. Danielle adds, “We will need strong support from the tribes, the many programs that serve our people, and of course our membership for this project to be successful.”

To learn more, the community is invited to the Housing and tribes’ kick-off event this Thursday evening, November 30 starting at five o’clock at the Agency Longhouse. This is also an opportunity for the membership and



community to provide some initial input, and share ideas and concerns. Dinner will be served.

This is a generational study and assessment concerning the most basic elements of the community, and the health and welfare of the membership. The project has the full backing of the Tribal Council.

Because of the scope and impact of the study, its accuracy and success will help “strengthen the

tribal sovereignty, expand self-determination, more effectively guide resource management, and better address the needs of the tribal members.”

This project includes obtaining the most accurate demographic and statistical data concerning the communities of the reservation, as a baseline for the future policy and management decisions, and planning efforts of the tribes and the departments, as stated in Council resolution 13,089.

Full and welcome participation of the membership, beginning this Thursday evening at the Agency Longhouse will be a great start.

— Dave McMechan



Cheryl Taylor photo

The actress Cara Jade Myers visited with tribal community members last week, and hosted a screening of *Killers of the Flower Moon* at the Madras Cinema 5 (left). In this Martin Scorsese film, Ms. Jade Myers, in a breakout performance, portrays the part of Anna Brown. The event last week at the Madras cinema, hosted by the Warm Springs Community Action Team, was a chance for community members to the meet and talk with the actress. Film director Laronn Katchia was also on hand. Cara Jade Myers earlier this year also hosted an acting workshop for young Warm Springs community members. She is a member of the Kiowa and Wichita tribes.

Plan for tribes to co-manage forest ‘treaty zones’

Oregon’s federal lawmakers have re-introduced a bill to create a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to co-manage areas of the Mt. Hood National Forest.

The Wy’east Tribal Resources Restoration Act would direct the Forest Service to work with the tribes to create ‘treaty resource emphasis zones.’ These zones would then be co-managed by the tribes and the Forest Service.

The bill would be a precedent in that it would create one of the first place-based co-management models in the nation.

The bill is co-sponsored by Oregon’s U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, and Rep. Earl Blumenauer.

The proposed co-management plan for the Mt. Hood National Forest aims to “enhance tribal treaty resources, and protect the reservation from wildfire.” The fire aspect would involve retaining large trees for historic forest structure and fire resiliency; and completing a wildfire risk assessment, for instance.

The bill would authorize \$3.5 million in annual appropriations and existing Forest Service funding to ensure tribes have needed resources for forest management.

This month introducing the bills in both the U.S. House and Senate, the lawmakers emphasized the importance of the partnership “because of the tribes’ generational knowledge of the land and shared goals of protecting it.”

Word of the bills’ reintroduction was welcomed by the Confederated Tribes. Thanking the lawmakers for their support, Tribal Council Chairman Jonathan Smith commented:

“Warm Springs people have cared for the land since the Creator placed us here, and this legislation will help reconnect Wy’east to its original inhabitants, and integrate traditional ecological knowledge into federal land management.

“The bill would allow the Warm Springs Tribe to improve fish and wildlife habitat, reduce forest fuels and wildfire risk in the borderlands of our reservation—an area designated as a priority fire shed by the U.S. Forest Service. The result will improve forest and wildlife health for the benefit of all Oregonians,”



Chairman Smith said.

Some specific provisions of the proposed Wy’east Tribal Resources Restoration Act include:

- Implementation of the Cultural Foods Obligations, which were included in the Public Lands Management Act of 2009. These have never been implemented
- Integration of traditional ecological knowledge as an important part of the best available scientific information used in forest and resource management areas within the zones. And importantly:

- The Forest Service is to develop a co-management plan with the Confederated Tribes to protect and enhance tribal treaty resources, and protect the reservation from wildfire within agreed-upon ‘treaty resources emphasis zones.’

“The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs have generations-long knowledge of best ecological practices and treaty rights with the federal government that must be protected,” said Sen. Wyden.

Sen. Merkley noted that the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs are the largest neighbor to the Mt. Hood National Forest, and are essential in maintaining and protecting the region’s cultural and ecological resources. Rep. Blumenauer adds, “Indigenous communities have been responsible stewards of these lands and wildlife since time immemorial. We must do more to capitalize on their leadership in conservation efforts—not just because the government has a moral obligation to do so but because we will not be successful without them.”



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