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Cannabis retail store referendum this spring

The membership of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will decide in early April regarding whether the tribes should operate a cannabis retail store on the reservation, or on tribal trust land. Tribal Council voted in December to conduct the referendum on April 3, a suggestion from the Warm Springs Economic Development Corporation.

The referendum question will ask: "Shall the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation authorize the Tribal Council to: Allow, license, regulate and operate a tribally-owned retail sales facility to be located on-reservation and/or on trust land for sales of marijuana and related products for the legal possession and use of small quantities of marijuana by adults 21 years of age or older on-reservation." If the referendum passes, several steps will need to be taken to legalize marijuana on the reservation.

Warm Springs Economic Development supports the referendum, which would create a potential economic growth opportunity for the Warm Springs CP enterprise, 'Daminwa,' also a project of Economic Development. Daminwa is the brand name that currently features hemp products, for sale online and at the Plateau Travel Plaza in Madras.

In 2015 the membership of the tribes voted in favor of a cannabis referendum that allows the tribes to operate a cannabis production operation. The vote was five to one in favor, and saw the largest referendum voter participation.

River adventure in South America

Three young tribal members are training in the field of river advocacy, and fish and culture preservation and restoration, all while becoming expert whitewater kayakers. They are spending this semester in Chile, on the west coast area of South America, kayaking the rivers there with instructors and other Native students, and connecting with the indigenous people of Chile.

Representing Warm Springs at the kayaking and advocacy academy are Kiahna Allen, Julia Wolfe and Bianca Plazola, who are in their junior years of high school. "I'm nervous and excited," Kiahna was saying last week, as she prepared to go to the airport and make the flight to Chile.

"This is a really big opportunity for me," she said. "I'm excited to see new places."

This all started a couple years ago, when Julia and Kiahna joined the organization



Courtesy Lorien Scott

Julia Wolfe, Bianca Plazola and Kiahna Allen (from left), now on a kayaking and river advocacy journey in Chile.

Ríos to Rivers, a group that works with river systems from the U.S. to Chile, Peru, Argentina and Bolivia. Bianca then joined them in the program.

Working with Ríos to Rivers are educators, artists, filmmakers, writers, scientists, coaches, philanthropists, energy experts, environmentalists and humanitarians. The

team brings diverse backgrounds with the shared goal of healthy rivers and fish.

The Warm Springs team trained with other Native kayakers during the summers in preparing for a kayaking first-descent of the Klamath River, when a major dam-removal project is finished later this year. The summers involved a lot of work and training, and the girls would often come home in the evening exhausted, said Lorien Scott, Kiahna's mother.

Their dedication to Ríos to Rivers led to an opportunity with the World Class Academy, to attend this semester kayaking and working with the professional and student teams in Chile. This is an advanced program at a cost of \$55,000 each student per semester. Making it possible is Ríos to Rivers, which secured scholarship funds for the girls. So this semester the three are studying, working and kayaking in Chile and, as they are in South America, enjoying the summer weather.

— Dave McMechan

Housing study moving soon to survey stage

In the near future the field staff of the Warm Springs Housing Authority will begin the door-to-door canvassing of a cross-section sample group of some residents of the reservation.

The survey data will help guide the development of the housing study and needs assessment, a project of the tribes as managed by Housing.

The Housing Authority, Survey Committee and project stakeholders have been meeting regularly to develop the scope and approach of the survey, said Brevin Holliday, coordinator of

the Housing Study and Needs Assessment project.

The field staff will likely include a team of three canvassers, Mr. Holliday said. Soon they will be meeting door-to-door with residents who have been chosen as the sample group of the survey, Brevin said.

Their work will help provide an accurate picture of the housing situation, and needs among the current and future reservation households.

This and other demographic information, compiled into a final report, can then guide future plan-

ning and funding decisions at Housing, with the tribes and other stakeholders such as Health and Human Services, Utilities, and Roads, for instance. A final report may be ready around June, Brevin said.

The door-to-door canvassing team will be collecting the information in-person, and there will also be mailers and doorknob flyers allowing people to be aware of the importance of their participation, he said.

This is the first such overall study and future needs assessment conducted by Housing and the tribes, and both are investing sig-



nificant resources toward the project, as much is at stake—strategic planning, project funding and grant applications, infrastructure, program design etc.

And because of the long-term importance, Housing and the tribes are working toward the most accurate assessment of the current situation, and projected needs.

Winter storm was a major disruption to roads, schools

The winter weather over the past two weeks disrupted roadways, the tribal organization, schools and households. Last Thursday, January 18 for instance, saw Highway 26 closed for more than nine hours. The closure area was from the 26 junction with Highway 3 to the northwest on the reservation.

This happened following a wreck on the highway in the area past the Catholic Church; involving eight trucks, one of which went off the roadway into the Brunoe rock pit. Other trucks jackknifed on the highway, forcing the extended closure, said Dan Martinez, director of tribal Emergency Management.

The highway was closed again the following day for several hours following an accident in the HeHe area. Another closure incident happened on Highway 97 at the bridge over the Warm



D.McMechan/Spilyay

A trucking accident last week on Highway 26 northwest of Warm Springs closed the highway.

Springs River.

Meanwhile, there were several reports of residents who experi-

enced frozen pipes, and driveways blocked by snow. At the time the Utilities vehicle used in the winter

for plowing was out of service. BIA Roads was taking care of the main roadways, though not avail-

able for residential driveway service. During the several days of frozen roads, some residents had to call for help getting food, Mr. Martinez said. In all, his department received more than 210 assistance calls, including from some who had experienced a serious fall on the ice.

Fortunately, the emergency warming shelter has stayed open the whole time during the daytime. The shelter is located in the gymnasium of the former elementary school. The homeless shelter also had overnight lodging available upon request.

Schools were closed for several days over the past two weeks, including Monday and Tuesday of this week. Similarly, the tribal organization had several late-start and early-release days, and a closure last Friday.

— Dave McMechan



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