

Letters to the editor and opion

Warm Springs Power and Water Enterprises’ vision to support the tribes

By Cathy Ehli,  
executive director,  
Power and Water  
Enterprises



Cathy Ehli

This has been a productive year for Warm Springs Power and Water Enterprises, and we wanted to give you an update.

But first, a little history.

The tribes first got involved in the hydroelectric business in the 1950s. Tribal members authorized the Confederated Tribes to enter into an agreement with Portland General Electric, PGE, allowing PGE to build, own and operate the Pelton Dam that adjoined and inundated tribal land.

Once the Reregulating dam was built, the tribes reserved the right to own and operate a powerhouse at the Reregulating dam, if it ever became feasible. With the construction of the Round Butte Dam in 1964, the Pelton Round Butte Project was complete.

In 1980, the tribes built the powerhouse in the Reregulating dam.

Power and Water was then formed in 1981 to manage power generation from the Re-regulating dam powerhouse, as well as to manage the tribes’ interests in the Pelton Project.

In 2000, tribal members approved the proposal to become joint owners of the Pelton Project with PGE—and today, the tribes own 49.9 perce4nt of the entire project.

This partnership has brought many benefits to the reservation, such as re-establishing a salmon run above the project; purchasing several thousand acres along the Deschutes River for wildlife use; and having the tribes in a more powerful position to protect treaty rights related to fish, wildlife, and water.

But that was only the

we’ll share more about it in the coming months.

**Community** — Funds from selling energy enable the tribes’ work on the Deschutes River of removing fish passage barriers, stabilizing stream banks, restoring channels and floodplains and conserving water—as well as addressing economic inequities. Power and Water is negotiating for tribal members to be prioritized in the employment opportunities that will come from increasing tribal renewable energy development.

**Individual** — Power and Water’s new projects will offer more jobs and business opportunities, as well as renewable energy education and career training programs.

We’ll also partner with Oregon Tradeswomen to develop an apprenticeship program.

And while the reservation gets its power from Pacific Corp, we plan to bring Power and Water-owned solar energy into the mix, which we want to use to power designated places within the community where you can find relief during especially hot or cold days.

We have a big vision for how the enterprises can support tribal sovereignty, and we do this by honoring the Creator’s gifts that guide the tribes’ way of life, spiritually, and give connection to the lands and how they are managed.

Power and Water might work more ‘behind the scenes,’ but we are still proud to help provide for a strong future. In owning and selling renewable energy, the enterprises exist to support the sovereignty of the tribes and bring members like you as many direct benefits as possible.

start of realizing the tribes’ vision of their role in a clean energy future.

Enter 2024

Power and Water has a broad vision for how the enterprises can support the tribes in becoming leaders in renewable energy.

The tribes are exploring expanded renewable energy production capability to unlock more opportunities to manage natural resources and invest in the community’s well-being.

This vision breaks down into three broad categories:

**Utility** — Power ad Water maintains a strong partnership with PGE as we collaboratively operate and maintain the dams. It’s an expensive operation that we must ensure works properly so the reservation can continue to benefit from it.

One of the biggest barriers preventing us from doing more is the limited capacity of the transmission line that delivers our hydroelectric power to the Willamette Valley, where the dams’ customer base lives.

In the last month, we completed final steps to secure the \$250 million grant from the Department of Energy that we announced in 2023, which will allow us to upgrade this transmission line to deliver more power and better protect from potential fires.

It is a multi-year project that’s just getting started, and

rently recruiting applicants for our next cohort, which will begin classes in the summer of 2025 at our beautiful campus at the University of Oregon.

The Sapsik’alá Program is

a rigorous, 12-month program that prepares future Indigenous educators.

Sapsik’alá students earn a Master’s Degree in Curriculum and Teaching in partnership with the university Teach

Master’s/Licensure program, while gaining Indigenous methodologies for teaching.

Please see our admissions checklist for details on how to apply. Applications are open and priority is given to applications submitted by January 15.

Please contact: sapsikwala@uoregon.edu or by phone at (541) 346-2454 for program details!

Iheedn (Thank you). Sincerely,

**Haeyalyn Muniz** (Jicarilla Apache), program coordinator, Sapsik’alá Teacher Education Program, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. Phone 541-346-2454. sapsikwala@uoregon.edu

Candidate

Gossip and rumors should have no business in politics. New policies and action filled game plans are what we want to hear about!

I worked for the citizens of Jefferson County in the Assessor’s office from 2007 until my retirement in 2021. During that time, I had the privilege of working with many department heads, staff, and elected officials including Brandie McNamee.

Our department’s shared open, adjoining office space. I found Brandie to be a team player and very helpful whenever I reached out with questions or concerns on the budget, tax collection, staffing shortages, and so much more.

In her role as Tax Collector-Treasurer, our department’s worked closely together during a very stressful time, certifying a tax roll, sending out statements, tax payer interactions and tax collections.

I have truly been disappointed to hear the other Commissioner candidate make accusations against Brandie and her employment with Jefferson County when he was not there!

As a potential County Commission candidate, the bigger concerns should be in looking at our economy, livability here, new industry, current issues facing our county, rather than trying to make dirt where there is none on your fellow County Commissioner candidate.

What about dog control and a kennel? Water restrictions for our farmers? Potential new Industry? How about the high rate of turnover in department heads within the County? I cannot even remember the names or the number of all the different department heads revolving

in and out of the Community Development department during my career.

Jefferson County has now hired it’s second finance director since Brandie resigned in 2022, with Interim CPA’s filling in the gaps.

How many have come and gone in the Human Resources Department? I can think of four in recent years. What’s wrong with Jefferson County? Pay scale and benefit packages are competitive. Why the turnover?

Brandie is very Black and White, if she did not have an answer or solution readily available, she would research it and respond back.

She is a thinker and a problem solver. She brings a great background to our current commission and the ‘Bulldog’ attitude to fight for what is right and best for our county.

She has the years of government and financial experience to allow her to hit the ground running when sworn in as our next Jefferson County Commissioner. Brandie has our vote.

**Jean McCloskey**, retired Jefferson County Assessor. **John McCloskey**, Jefferson County Fair Board member.

Indigenous People’s Day at COCC

In recognition of Indigenous People’s Day on October 14, Central Oregon Community College hosted a free panel discussion for the community titled ‘Central Oregon Native Americans in Higher Education.’

The panel explored a range of topics, including cultural appropriation and sharing the perspectives of staff and students within higher education.

Moderated by Jackie Currie, COCC’s Native American college prep coordinator, the panel featured Jeremiah Rector, COCC Native American student program coordinator; Samiak

Allen of radio station KWSO, a former COCC and OSU-Cascades student; and Raye Lynn McCabe, Oregon State University-Cascades graduate student recruitment coordinator. For more information on COCC and Native American support, contact Jeremiah Rector at jrector@cocc.edu

A few yeras ago, COCC formally adopted a land acknowledgment in 2020 to recognize and pay respect to the original stewards of the lands on which its campuses reside. To further this recognition, COCC in 2021 formally designated the second Monday of each October as Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

Dance groups and drummers

Kah-nee-ta Hot Springs Resort is in search of local dance groups and drum groups or individuals to provide dance performances at Kah-Nee-Ta Resort for our guests. Some considerations:

- Dancers in full regalia, drummers in shirts or vests. Minimum of five adult and two youth dancers.
- Drummers provide own drum.

• Each group must provide a speaker with good public speaking skills to provide proper cultural education on the dances shared, our history and culture.

A list is being formed. Contracts will need to be completed. Groups and dancers will be paid a stipend.

Individual families or dancers and drummers are encouraged to submit name to be added to the list. Not required to have a group to be on the list.

Please contact me immediately: **Starla Green**, Kah-Nee-Ta Cultural Ambassador. We have an upcoming private group.

Starla.green@kahneeta.com  
Phone 541-460-1972 or 541-553-1112.

Spilyay Tymoo  
(Coyote News, Est. 1976)

**Publisher Emeritus in Memorium:** Sid Miller  
**Editor:** Dave McMechan

**Spilyay Tymoo** is published bi-weekly by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Our offices are located at 4174 Highway 3 in Warm Springs.

Any written materials submitted to **Spilyay Tymoo** should be addressed to:  
**Spilyay Tymoo**, P.O. Box 489, Warm Springs, OR 97761.

**Phone:** 541-553-2210 or 541-771-7521  
**E-Mail:** david.mcmehan@wstribes.org.  
Annual Subscription rates: Within U.S.: \$20.00

Indigenous educators

We are seeking future Indigenous educators.

The Sapsik’alá (teacher) Education Program is cur-

# Madras Possibilities Thrift Store

Empowering People of Diverse Abilities

Store Open Weekly Tuesday through Saturday

You can help us by  
*Donating & Shopping*

Store Hours: Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat 10:00-5:00, Thurs 12:00-5:00  
Donation Hours: Fri, Sat 10:00-3:00, Thurs 12:00-3:00

\$5 OFF

Any Purchase

\$10 or more

COUPON REQUIRED. CANNOT COMBINE WITH OTHER OFFERS. Madras

Please come in to support us! We have great deals on clothing, books, kitchen items, and furniture!

MADRAS 1412 SW Hwy 97 - Next to Dollar Tree 541-475-6961  
opportunityfound.org

# Black Bear Diner

Good Old Fashioned Family Food!

## BREAKFAST

Served All Day

## LUNCH

Quick & Satisfying

## DINNER

Comfort Food Classics

237 S.W. 4th St. • Madras, OR • (541) 475-6632

BlackBearDiner.com | Facebook.com/BlackBearDiner | #blackbeardiner