

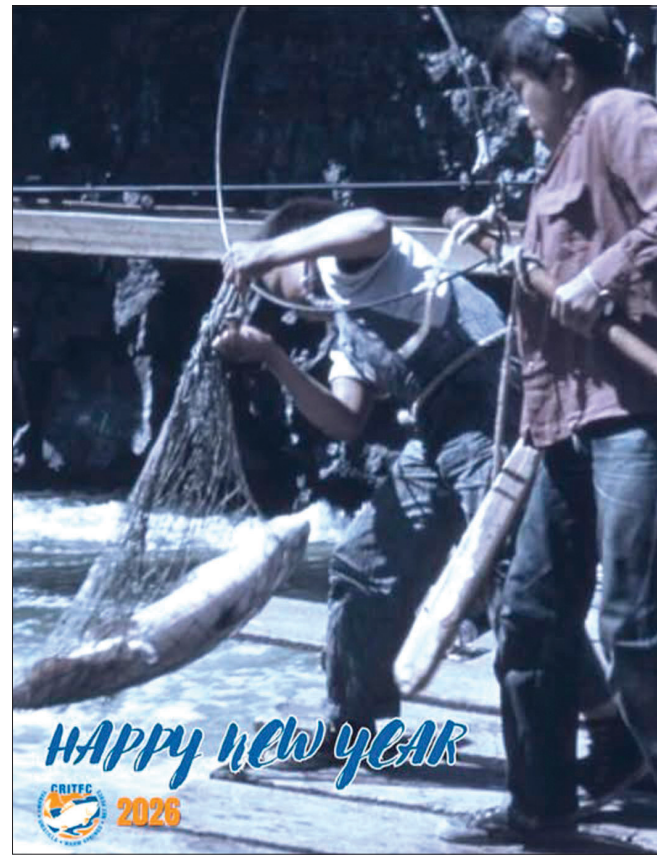
The year to come for the river tribes

As we begin 2026, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission celebrates a new year of shared commitment with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Nez Perce Tribe.

Since our founding in 1977, our four tribes have united to protect the salmon that sustain our people culturally, spiritually, and economically.

Operating on a consensus model, where each tribe has an equal voice, we continue to speak with one unified voice in the management of Columbia River Basin fishery resources.

This year, we renew our mission to ensure that our treaty rights are honored and protected, our salmon runs are restored, and our fishing families can maintain the traditions and way of life passed down through gen-



erations.

To our tribal fishers and their families: Your dedication to preserving our sacred First Foods and the health of our rivers strengthens us all.

Together, we move for-

ward in 2026, committed to the restoration work that honors both our treaties and the salmon that have always been central to who we are as peoples of the Columbia River Plateau. **CRITFC.**

Pacific salmon returns projected as moderate

Juvenile salmon experienced a mix of favorable and challenging ocean conditions off the West Coast in 2025, according to an annual analysis by National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, and Oregon State University researchers.

Warmer ocean conditions leading into last win-

ter suggested that juvenile salmon entering the ocean in spring 2025 would encounter less abundant prey dominated by species historically associated with lower survival. Seasonal upwelling of cold, nutrient-rich water began strongly in the spring, typically a positive signal for salmon, and sampling in June showed the highest abundance of juvenile coho

salmon observed across all survey years.

The upwelling weakened in July, however, resulting in overall ocean conditions that ranged from good to moderate for physical and biological indicators.

These factors and others, taken together, point to a moderate outlook for salmon survival.



Photo by Matheny/courtesy CRITFC

A look back

Chief Tommy Thompson, Henry Thompson, Flora Thompson, Jimmy George, John Whiz, Tom Frank Yallup, 1952.

“The Salmon fish was not created by Indians or by Whites or any human race. But it was created by the Creator of this world and it was created as food for the Indians...”

- Chief Tommy Thompson, addressing members of Congress

in 1938 as they were considering the effects of the Bonneville Dam and other dams proposed for the Columbia River.

Chief Thompson was the leader of the Wy-am Indians.

He was reminding them of their commitment to honor the fishing rights of

the Columbia River's Native people.

According to Sapsikaan, Jerry Meninick (Yakama), Chief Thompson was not enrolled with any tribe.

He also never accepted money from the dam settlement. Sapsikaan spoke of him as being a great man who only wanted to take care of his family and protect what sustained his people.

Community notes...

The Warm Springs Housing Authority reminds those on the **Housing waiting list** that updates have been sent in the mail. The ‘Statement of continued interest’ must be filled out and returned to Housing no later than **Friday, January 30**. This is important: If you do not return that form, you will be dropped from the Housing list. If you do not

get the ‘Statement of continued interest’ letter by this Friday, January 9, please contact contact Housing, 541-553-3250; or stop by the Housing office.

The Warm Springs Oregon State University **Extension Service** is having a ‘Food Preservation’ class, teaching how to make and preserve homemade barbecue and marinara sauces. This will be at 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 22 at the Campus Cafeteria. Space is

limited, and you need to reserve a spot by calling 541-553-3238. Or send an email: sara.olson@oregonstate.edu

The 21st Century **After School program** at the Warm Springs Academy is looking for a SMART Reading volunteer who will spend one hour a week reading with children in the community. You will read with kinder and first grade students. Training and support provided. Apply online at SMARTreading.org/volunteer

Around Indian Country

Indigenous Land Trust buys 10,000 acres, as salmon return

The Klamath Land Trust purchase is one of the largest private land purchases by an Indigenous-led land trust in U.S. history

As salmon return to the headwaters of the Klamath River for the first time in more than a century, the newly formed Klamath Indigenous Land Trust and PacifiCorp announced the purchase of 10,000 acres in and around the river's former reservoir reach.

“Dam removal allowed the salmon to return home. Returning these lands to Indigenous care ensures that home will be a place where they can flourish and recover,” said Molli Myers (Karuk), president of the Klamath Indigenous Land

Trust board of directors.

“Our communities spent generations fighting for this moment and we honor our ancestors who carried this vision forward. The healing that's underway is real, and this acquisition reflects the future we're building together as People of the Klamath Basin.”

PacifiCorp, the former landowner, partnered with the land trust to complete the sale following a decadeslong, Indigenous-led effort to remove four dams on the Klamath River, a project completed last year.

The purchase includes lands upstream of and adjacent to the former hydropower project that are considered critical to the river's long-term health and its fisheries. The transfer places steward-



Klamath Indigenous Land Trust

Jenny Creek of the Klamath basin.

ship of the land under Indigenous values and ecological restoration goals for the first time in more than a century.

“PacifiCorp is gratified to see these lands transition to a stewardship model that honors their cultural and ecological significance,” said

Ryan Flynn, president of Pacific Power, the PacifiCorp division serving customers in California, Oregon and Washington. “We recognize the leadership of the Klamath Basin Tribes and the Klamath Indigenous Land Trust in shaping a restoration vision that will benefit the entire re-

gion.”

The land trust was formed by leaders from four Klamath Basin Tribes who began working together after the 2002 fish kill. They spent the next two decades advancing a grassroots movement to remove the dams and restore salmon runs.

“We are from different tribes and we each have our own cultural traditions, but it was through working together and by bringing tribal People from all over the Basin together that created this moment,” said Wendy Ferris-George (Hupa/Karuk), vice president of the trust board.

With the acquisition complete, the land trust plans to develop comprehensive land management plans with input from area tribes. The plans will focus on habitat recov-

ery, protection of cultural resources, fire management and public access.

“This is the next chapter in the Klamath River's renewal,” said board member Jeff Mitchell (Klamath/Modoc).

“It's proof that Indigenous leadership and community partnerships can achieve transformational change at a landscape scale.”

Funding for the purchase was provided by the Catena Foundation, the Community Foundation of New Jersey and an anonymous donor.

Editor's note: These lands are distinct from the ones held by the Klamath River Renewal Corporation for the purpose of dam removal and restoration, often referred to as the ‘Parcel B’ lands.

Summaries of Tribal Council

(from page 2)

Motion by Alvis approving the Chairman to sign the letter. Second by Jonathan. Question: Rosie/yes, Captain/yes, Jay/yes, Alvis/yes, Jefferson/yes, Jonathan/yes, 6/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• Special Per Capita payment to tribal members:

Motion by Alvis adopting Resolution No. 13,280, that a special per capita distribution is hereby authorized for each eligible member who appears on the roll as of December 5, 2025, and that such special per capita be made from available funds in Revenue Reserve, and that the current

budget is hereby amended in the amount of \$33,224,400.00; That this special per capita be distributed on December 12, 2025 and be paid directly to all members, with the following conditions: As listed on A and B; That any future special dividend payments are expected to be reduced in order to protect financial status of the Tribe and relieve unreasonable expectations and dependencies created by special dividend payments. Second by Jonathan; Question: Rosie/yes, Captain/yes, Jay/yes, Alvis/yes, Jefferson/no, Jonathan/yes, 5/0/1, Chairman not voting; Motion carried. (Dennis

supports the approval of this resolution).

• Early Childhood Education compliance update with Reona Trimble and Cheryl Tom.

Motion by Jay to adjourn at 2:05 p.m., Second by Rosie.

November 18

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Carlos Calica. Roll call: Lincoln Jay Suppah, Chief Jefferson Greene, Raymond Captain Moody, Vice Chairman Carlos Calica, Lonnie Rosie Tom, Alvis Smith III. Minnie Yahtin, Recorder.

Invocation given by Chief Greene.

• Secretary-Treasurer update with Pamela Douglas, acting.

• December agenda and travel delegations:

Motion by Jonathan approving the December agenda and travel delegations. Second by Alvis. Question: Rosie/yes, Captain/yes, Jay/yes, Alvis/yes, Jefferson/yes, Jonathan/yes, 6/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• Draft resolutions:

Forest Management deduction discussion with Austin Smith Jr.:

Motion by Captain adopting Resolution No. 13,281, that 2026 FMD Budget is approved, including, without limitation, the imposition of a seven percent FMD for the 2026 calendar year; That such funds shall be reimbursed from

timber sales no later than quarterly to the Confederated Tribes from Forest Management Deduction account; That 2026 FMD Budget shall: 1.) Be consistent with the Tribes Intensive Forest Management Fund Policy; 2.) Be in compliance with the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act, 25 U.S.C. § 3101 *et seq.* Second by Alvis Question: Rosie/yes, Captain/yes, Jay/yes, Alvis/yes, Jefferson/yes, 5/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• Prepaid Technologies Company, Inc. dba Dash Solutions discussion with Sarah Monkton:

Motion by Alvis adopting Resolution No. 13,282, that it hereby: 1.) Confirms that each statement above is true

in all material respects; 2.) Authorizes the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer/CEO to work with legal counsel to finalize and execute an agreement with Dash for Dash Services; 3.) Authorizes the Authorized Representatives to take such further and additional action as they reasonably determine to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the foregoing resolution in a manner that is consistent with WSTC Chapter 3. Second by Rosie. Question: Rosie/yes, Captain/yes, Jay/yes, Alvis/yes, Jefferson/yes, 5/0/0, Chairman not voting. Motion carried.

• 2026 Juror list with Chief Judge Gayleen Adams:

Summaries continue in the next Spillyay