

Tribe begins South Yamhill Restoration project

GRAND RONDE — The Grand Ronde Tribe and Spirit Mountain Casino have announced the start of the South Yamhill River Restoration project by the Spirit Mountain Community Fund in conjunction with the Governor's Task Force on the Willamette River Basin, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), and the Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism (SOLV) programs. The goal of this project is to restore a stretch of the South Yamhill River owned by the Tribe to its native state.

"Our goal is to restore this portion of the river and adjacent land to what it was like two hundred years ago," said Adam Henny, Public Relations Specialist for the Casino.

Tribes that make up the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde inhabited the Willamette River drainage as their ancestral home for centuries.

The Tribe has worked closely with Governor Kitzhaber's Task Force on the Willamette River Basin and hopes to have this project serve as a demonstration of what can be done throughout the Willamette River drainage.

The project included a ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 29, and participation from school children who



Casino and Tribal employees, along with Salmon Camp teens help plant a tree on the Yamhill Restoration area.

Photo by Dale Peterson Photography

attend OMSI's "Salmon Camp." The kids and project committee members helped clear away blackberry patches, spread barkdust, and plant trees in the restoration area.

Recent Tribal Council Actions

AUGUST 5, 1998

Ed Larsen, Vice-Chair, conducted the meeting. Kathryn Harrison, Mark Mercier, and Margaret Provost were excused.

- The Government, Management, and Budget Subcommittee recommended Council adopt a resolution approving a land lease between the Tribe and the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority for the development of Elder Housing. Ed Pearsall moved, Bob Mercier seconded a motion to approve Resolution Number 065-98 approving a land lease between CTGR and GRTHA as presented. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0-0.

- The Culture and Heritage Board (by unanimous vote) and the Subcommittee recommended the appointment of tribal member Christine Contreras to the Board. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0-0.

- The Council by full consensus approved the recommended changes to the Amended Agreement of the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments of which the Tribe is a voting member. The agreement is being amended by: adding additional voting members of the Council; clarifying that the voting membership in the Council of Governments belongs to "member" cities, and that voting population is determined by member cities with Salem retaining its voting

position as the largest populated city in the tri-county region; and that amendments to the agreement be approved by three-fourths of the total member governments rather than unanimous approval.

Greg Archuleta, Acting Executive Officer asked Council to adopt a resolution approving the proposed Annual Funding Agreement and Tentative Allocations for the calendar year 1999. Bob Mercier moved, Ed Pearsall seconded a motion to adopt Resolution Number 066-98 approving the agreement and allocations as presented. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0-0.

- The Resource Subcommittee recommended that Council adopt a resolution approving the use of construction funding for updating transportation plans in the Portland area. According to the BIA-Portland office, having plans updated will increase future funding potential. Ed Pearsall moved, Chip Tom seconded a motion to adopt Resolution Number 067-98. The motion carried, 5-0-0.

AUGUST 26, 1998

Kathryn Harrison called the meeting to order. Margaret Provost and Reyn Leno were excused.

- Council approved a \$500 donation from tribal funds to support the annual Human Services Division Christmas Food Baskets and Tree of Giving fundraiser.

Tribes seek new plan, *continued from page 1*

for indirect administrative costs such as accounting, construction and human resources.

Grand Ronde is one of the few tribes who are lucky enough to have additional resources such as timber and Casino revenues to make up the difference. But for other smaller Indian nations, it means services are reduced or cut altogether, Haller said.

In addition to the Workgroup's uphill struggle for sufficient federal funding, pending legislation on Capital Hill has brought a heightened sense of urgency to the task at hand.

"It's important to get tribal input in coming up with an assessment and formula that is workable," said Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Director, Stan Speaks. "If we as a workgroup don't come up with some kind of formula then Central BIA is going to do it for us."

The rush comes on the heels of the current Senate debate over the Fiscal Year 1999 Interior Appropriations Bill. The bill currently contains a clause that would use Means Testing to force tribes to open their books to the U.S. government and allocate funds set aside for Indian Country by taking \$12.5 million from the top 10 percent of the "wealthiest" tribes and redistribute it among the poorest 20 percent.

Negotiations between Assistant

Secretary for Indian Affairs, Kevin Gover, and the bill's author, Sen. Slade Gorton (R-WA), have softened the bill somewhat.

The new changes include not counting resources held in trust by the U.S. government in the Means Testing process; allowing tribes to maintain their rights to funds if they chose to forfeit them for a year; and letting the Secretary of Interior consult with tribes to develop an alternate plan by April.

But critiques of the bill say it will still arbitrarily redistribute funds and ignore the distinction between need-based allocations and U.S. treaty obligations to provide services in exchange for Native land and resources.

"They are unnecessarily targeting tribes in a callous way — they are not talking about their legal obligation," said TPA Workgroup Chair, Ron Allen. "If the Senate Committee voted on it today, we think we'd lose."

By March, Allen and other Workgroup members aim to provide lawmakers with a detailed account of the U.S. liability for, and a historical context of, TPAs — which they say Congress has lost sight of; the needs and unmet needs in Indian Country compared to national standards; and a budget comparison showing disparities between Indian Country and its non-Indian counterpart.