

SMOKE SIGNALS



PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

9615 Grand Ronde Road
Grand Ronde, Or 97347

FAX: (503) 879-2173
1-800-422-0232

EDITOR: **TRACY DUGAN**
(503) 879-2254
tracy.dugan@grandronde.org

STAFF WRITER: **BRENT MERRILL**
(503) 879-2321
brent.merrill@grandronde.org

GRAPHICS: **KIM MUELLER**
(503) 879-2264
kim.mueller@grandronde.org

PROGRAM SUPPORT
JUSTIN PHILLIPS
(503) 879-2190
justin.phillips@grandronde.org

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SMOKE SIGNALS, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, is published twice a month.

We have established an Editorial Policy to encourage input from readers about stories printed in **SMOKE SIGNALS**, and other tribal issues. However, all letters must be received at the newspaper office with author's signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication.

SMOKE SIGNALS reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain libelous statements or personal attacks.

Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission.

Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of **SMOKE SIGNALS**, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

DEADLINE	ISSUE DATE
Dec. 6	December 15
Dec. 20	January 1

Submissions must reach the **SMOKE SIGNALS** office by the dates listed.

Printed on recycled paper.

Letters

Dear Editor:

I would like to, very respectfully, reply to the letter submitted by tribal member Judith Pettibone, that was published in the November 1, 1999 edition of *Smoke Signals*.

I am pleased to see our tribal members taking the time to express their concerns regarding the development of our Ten Year Management Plan. Judith raises three concerns that are particularly important to her — the replanting and restoration of forest lands, forest certification, and the protection of the Pacific yew tree (*Taxus brevifolia*).

Her concerns relating to replanting and restoring forest lands are right on target. There is no question as to whether harvested acres should be replanted — failure to do so would result in deforestation. Timber is a renewable resource, so long as the landowner ensures effective replanting. The Tribe makes standard practice of maintaining a sustainable harvest, and a renewable resource by replanting harvested units — usually within the first year following contract closure. In fact, the Tribe plants four trees for every one tree harvested.

Rehabilitation of harvested acres must also be performed to help maintain the integrity of the biological processes occurring within the unit. The Tribe makes sure that any area within the harvested unit that has been impacted, is rehabilitated prior to the scheduled replanting activities. For example, if the Tribe were to harvest a 35 acre unit, there would be some level of impact. Given the topography on the reservation, most of the logging would be accomplished using a cable yarding system — a system where the leading end of the logs are elevated off the ground while being pulled to the landing. This method ensures minimal disturbance to resources within the unit. However, in almost all cases, there are a varying number of acres within the unit that can be logged with ground-based equipment such as a "Cat" or a "shovel." In these areas disturbance and compaction are much greater. Therefore, the Tribe carries out rehabilitation activities such as sub-soiling (to alleviate compaction) and installing waterbars (low mounds of soil placed perpendicular to yarding trails, that redirect the flow of water to reduce erosion) before replanting the area with a mixture of conifer seedlings.

One quick take on the issue of certification. We have to realize that certification is a process through which a landowner adopts as prudent, someone else's standards.

There is not only a cost associated with certification, but it also takes control out of the landowner's hands — in this case our Tribe. I think it would be unwise to relinquish even an "nth" degree of sovereignty, which is what I believe we would do, should we adopt a certification program. We would effectively hand approval of our operations over to non-tribal organizations — and keep in mind, as tribal people we provide for and protect our people. The organizations self-appointed to certify a landowner's operations hold other values as more important.

Her concerns regarding the Pacific yew are valid as well. From a tribal perspective, the yew tree holds cultural value. Here, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that the yew tree is treated as a valuable resource, if it is found within a unit scheduled for harvest. This is done even though the yew tree is not specifically addressed under the current Management Plan. Now that concerns have been voiced, we can address the yew tree in our upcoming Ten Year Management Plan. The bad news is that there simply aren't many yew trees on the reservation. Over the last five years of laying out and administering sales for our tribe, I've only encountered one yew tree — and it's still standing today, undisturbed.

I greatly enjoy the success of our casino. The folks over there work very hard and do a great job. It serves as a valuable economic contributor to the community and the state. I'm incredibly grateful for the economic benefits we receive today, but even more grateful for the security that it provides to our children. Their distributions from the casino, managed properly over time, will allow them to retire at a much earlier age than you or I. That's great news! But, I also realize that we may not always have this tremendous benefit. I think it may be a mistake to ignore the management of our timberlands while holding fast to the future benefits of the casino.

I hope I've provided some useful information, and perhaps even helped to ease concerns regarding our tribe's forest land management. We try to do a good job. I understand that a number of folks may have concerns relating to management of the reservation. Call the Natural Resources office anytime.

Peter M. Wakeland
Forester
Roll # 2715

Dear Editor:

This letter is to thank everyone who voted for me in the last election and for the support I received during my suspension. I am proud to be a member of a tribe that could see past all the negative publicity, personal issues, and vote what they felt was best for the entire membership. I wanted to let the tribal members know, regardless of what has been happening, I was elected to, and am happy to, serve in the best interests of the Tribe. I intend to do that and not just deal with my personal issues. I do not agree with Tribal Council's findings or my 60-day suspension without pay, but I am dealing with those issues in Tribal Court, and will accept the outcome of that.

I also wanted people to know that I was proud and enjoyed serving as Vice-Chairman for the past year. However, I was not allowed to participate in the election of this office this time. This was decided on during my suspension, even though according to my interpretation of Tribal Law, it could have been done when my suspension was over, or prior to. It appears that two other Council agreed with me because they raised concerns about this at the Council meeting electing the Vice-Chair. I believe the election of officers is a very important decision for our tribe and all nine Council should be involved. This would mean a change in the Ordinance. I would like to have the opportunity to serve as an officer again, when one of the positions becomes available.

All in all, I am proud to be back on Council representing the people. I know I will be able to contribute greatly, as I continue to serve you.

If you have questions regarding tribal issues, please call me at home or in the office. (Home: 503-876-7402.)

Sincerely,
Reynold Leno

Editor's note:

In the last issue of *Smoke Signals*, an article on the memorial service for tribal ancestors mentioned the names of many folks who helped out during the week of the ceremony. The Tribe and the Cultural Resource Protection program would also like to thank Larry Brandon for making the cedar boxes for the ceremony. There are others who also contributed to this event, and everyone's help was greatly appreciated.

OFFICE CLOSURES

The Clinic and All Tribal Offices will be closed the following days:

CHRISTMAS

Closed at noon on Dec. 23
Closed Fri., Dec. 24

NEW YEARS

Closed at noon on Dec. 30
Closed Fri., Dec. 31

DECEMBER GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

Sunday, December 5
11:30 a.m.

In Loving Memory of Alan Joe LaBonte

Alan J. LaBonte went to be with his lord and savior on Nov. 4, 1999. He was born to Bonnie Lou Cross and Floyd Harold LaBonte on July 25, 1959.

He will always be Forever In Our Hearts.

Thank you for your kind words and support ~

Sarah, Kim and Mark

Alan was a wonderful companion, friend, brother, and son. He will be missed by all.