

State Looking Into Widening Highway 22

■ Environmental and cost issues will be considered for the 2008-09 building season.

By Ron Karten

Tribal engineer Eric Scott and a team of experts from the state dropped by Kissing Rock on Hebo Road (State Highway 22) earlier this month to scope out the details of what it will take to widen some nine turns in the road.

These turns are narrow enough and sharp enough that most log trucks coming out of the area's timber stands drive down Grand Ronde Road rather than negotiate the turns on Hebo Road. In the last five years, this section of the road has seen ten accidents with eight injuries, according to Brian



Photos by Toby McClary

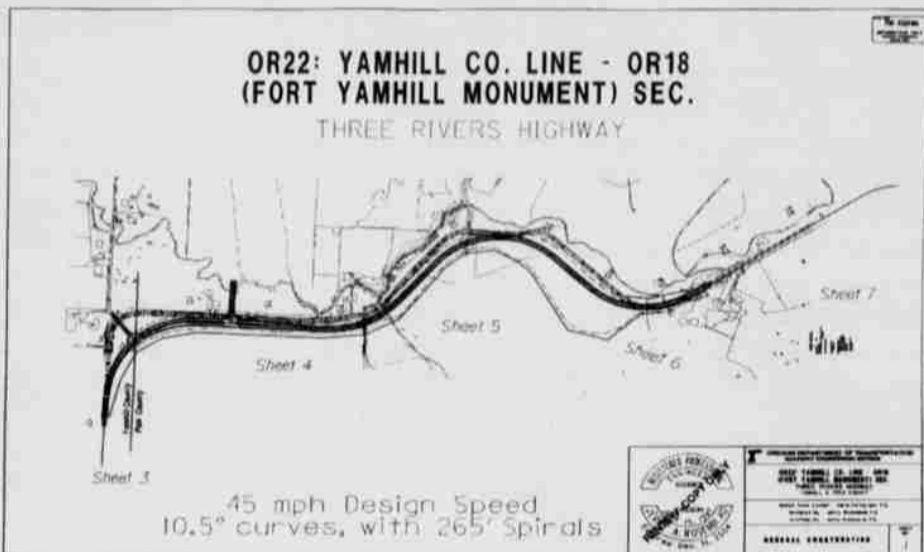
The End Of The Kiss? — Tribal Engineer, Eric Scott (second from right) recently met with officials from the Oregon Department of Transportation to discuss the proposed Highway 22 road widening project at Kissing Rock.

Boedigheimer, Project Leader from the Department of Transportation.

Specialists in environment, parks, Tribal culture, safety and right-of-way issues participated.

"Each gives an expert opinion of what it will cost to do this job," said Boedigheimer. Boedigheimer summarizes these estimates, and submits them to the Mid-Willamette Area Commission on Transportation (MWACT) along with estimates for many other projects in the area. MWACT then decides priorities and makes recommendations for ODOT.

"If everything goes right," said Boedigheimer, "we'll start work here in 2008-09."



Map courtesy of Eric Scott

Map of proposed changes to Highway 22 near Grand Ronde.

His Yard Is An Example Of What Your Yard Can Look Like

■ Tribal member Fred McGee runs his landscaping business out of his home in the Meadows.

By Peta Tinda

Tribal member Fred McGee's house looks pretty much like any other in Grand Meadows, a modest three-bedroom with no fence.

But a second look reveals a well-maintained, extraordinarily landscaped yard, planted with lush Kentucky Bluegrass, three dozen different trees and shrubs, a dozen varieties of roses, ornamental grasses and a three hundred gallon pond surrounded by miniature cattails and water lilies. The grass is thick and green, all of the edges perfectly trimmed. Clearly, McGee must have a secret technique.

"The secret to a nice yard is to stay on top of it," said McGee, holding a steel, triangle-shaped gadget.

"This is called an oriental weeding tool. If I can find a weed, I'll show you how it works," he said.

He couldn't find any.

McGee, who is the son of Fred and Deloris McGee, has been a landscaper for most of his life. He works at Spirit Mountain Casino as a Landscape Technician, maintaining the Casino's 30 manicured acres of grass, trees and green areas.

"The other thing is weed control. I try to use as little synthetic man-made chemicals as possible," he said.

A quick tour around McGee's yard shows an incredible variety of plants and flowers, as well as how hard he works to keep it nice.

There are bonsai trees, strawberry bushes and potted herbs surrounding his deck, Japanese maples, Irish mosses and a Golden Thread cypress tree in the yard.

There is also a bristle cone pine tree,

McGee has a Master Gardener's certificate from Polk County and is certified by Chemeketa Community College for green house practices and turf management.

He said that gardening gives him a

seedling and cuttings.

McGee's interest in gardening extends to his tools.

He bought and restored a 1963 Cooper Klipper reel-type lawn mower, which he uses regularly.

"I can pull the cord and it'll start," he said. "It was made when things were built to last."

He spends about four hours a week working on his yard.

One tip he recommends for novice gardeners is to keep a sharp edge on any metal tools, like hoes or shovels.

"It just makes it a lot easier," he said. "You don't beat yourself up as much."

He also recommends fertilizing lawns and plants at least twice a year, once in spring and once more in the fall.

McGee offered to help any Tribal member or Tribal Elder with consulting about their landscaping, free of charge.

He feels that by keeping his home looking nice, he is doing his bit to keep the Grand Meadows community looking nice.

"We all have a responsibility to each other to keep the community looking as nice as we can," he said. "We should be thankful for the opportunity that being a Tribal member gives to us — without it, I wouldn't have been able to move back here to where my father and his father were raised."

In the end, McGee reminds people not to get frustrated with their yards. "After all, you're just playing in the dirt," he said.

Note: If you would like Fred McGee to help you with consulting on your yard, he is available free of charge.

His phone number is: 503-871-6101 evenings 5 to 8 o'clock. McGee can be reached via e-mail at: dc105@msn.com. ■



Photos by Peta Tinda



Lawn Lord — Tribal member Fred McGee stands in front of his yard in Grand Meadows. McGee, who works as a Landscape Technician at Spirit Mountain Casino, has turned his yard into a botanists' paradise, planting dozens of trees, ornamental grasses, a three hundred gallon pond, complete with goldfish and a Japanese Maple tree (left). McGee also built his own greenhouse in his backyard.

numerous varieties of tulips, daffodils, crocuses and a French Blue lilac bush that smells like what heaven must.

lot of personal satisfaction.

"Plants give me such immediate gratification for taking care of them."

McGee has also built his own greenhouse in his backyard for starting