

Ceded lands presentation dominates Jan. 6 General Council meeting

Karnosh briefs Tribe on efforts to protect lands of interest

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Mike Karnosh, the Tribe's Ceded Lands coordinator, briefed about 100 Tribal members on efforts to protect Tribal ceded lands during the Jan. 6 General Council meeting held in the Community Center in Grand Ronde.

Karnosh, who received a law degree in 2005 from Lewis & Clark University in environmental and natural resources law, said his two-person department's directions derive from Tribal Council Resolution 34-03.

He strives to protect Tribal cultural resources for future generations, identify at-risk Tribal cultural resources on Cultural Interest Lands from being damaged, destroyed, looted or desecrated, protect Tribal natural resources from outside activities and monitor development and planning activities of other governments and private parties that might affect Tribal resources.

Karnosh said he concentrates on two types of lands: Ceded Homelands are those specifically described in treaties signed by the Tribe that were given to the U.S. government in exchange for payments and rights, and Non-Treaty Homelands, which are areas historically inhabited by the Tribe's numerous bands that include territory in Tillamook, Clatsop and Lincoln counties in Oregon and portions of Clark, Lewis, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and Pacific counties in Washington.

Karnosh said he must track issues on millions of acres, some of which are the most productive and most developed or developing land in Oregon and Washington. In addition, he must track thousands of miles of aquatic systems, including parts of the Columbia, Willamette, Umpqua and Rogue rivers, as well as the Pacific Ocean.

"Some are among the most polluted waters in the country," he said.



Photo by Dean Rhodes

Tribal Elder Louise Coulson, right, receives a hug from Tribal Elder Val Grout during the Jan. 6 General Council meeting in the Tribal Community Center. Grout and Pearl Mekemson gave the blanket to Coulson in appreciation for her years of chairing the Elders' Committee.

Karnosh said the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde work to protect Tribal resources and interests by involvement in enforcement actions and litigation against polluters, participation as intervenors in settlement negotiations, memberships in resource protection organizations and partnering with federal and state agencies.

Karnosh said the Ceded Lands staff maintains a database of more than 180 activities, about half of which are currently active, that might affect Tribal natural resources.

Karnosh said he and Environmental Resource specialist Brandy Humpherys work in conjunction

with the Tribe's Cultural Resources Department, Legal Department, Natural Resources staff, Public Information Department, Global Information Systems coordinator, external consultants and Tribal Council members to meet its goal.

In other action during the Jan. 6 General Council meeting:

- ◆ Tribal Elder Louise Coulson received a Pendleton blanket in appreciation for her years of service to the Elders' Committee.
- ◆ Tribal Council member Reyn Leno said that Tribal members met with representatives of the Multhomah Anglers and Hunters Club on Jan. 2 and have been

notified the club will send a letter in support of the Tribe's attempt to obtain hunting tags for cultural and ceremonial meat. Leno said the proposal will go to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission in April and the Tribe needs to compile a list of hunters who would be awarded the tags to hunt 15 deer, nine elk and three bear. A meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Jan. 30 in the Grand Ronde Community Center for Tribal members interested in participating in the ceremonial hunts. Hunters must be 18 or older. A light meal will be served.

- ◆ Tribal Council member Val Sheker said the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Siletz are looking for professional, licensed landscaping businesses that are either Tribally owned or employ Tribal members to apply to maintain the Chemawa Station project in Keizer. Chemawa Station is a joint venture of both Tribes. For more information, contact Eric Scott at 503-879-2404 or eric.scott@grandronde.org.
- ◆ Cheri Butler, Margaret Provost, Linda Branson and Louise Medeiros were elected to four open seats on the Elders' Committee.
- ◆ Tribal member Brent Merrill proposed creating a Thomas Bean Community Spirit Award in honor of his recently deceased uncle, who was well-known for helping Grand Ronde Tribal members by fixing appliances and cars and providing transportation. Merrill said he would donate \$500 toward the effort and sought Tribal Council support in creating an award that would be given every December to those who work to selflessly help family, friends and community members.
- ◆ Kevin Campbell won the \$100 door prize and John Lillard, LeVeta Sell and Bernadine Shriver won the three \$50 door prizes. ■

Hillman cashes out



Spirit Mountain Gaming Commission Executive Director Lynn Hillman retired Jan. 4 after 13 years of service to the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde. Left, Hillman received a Pendleton blanket from Tribal Council members Chris Mercier, left, and Jack Giffen Jr. Right, Gaming Commissioner and Tribal member Andy Jenness spoke during Hillman's retirement open house. Gaming Commissioner Joe Vricella has been named acting interim executive director until a permanent replacement is hired.



Photos by Dean Rhodes