

# Proposed federal budget a step forward for Tribes

By Ron Karten

*Smoke Signals staff writer*

"Overall," says Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy, "President Obama is moving forward in fulfilling his statements to Tribes during his campaign and at the recent Tribal Nations Gathering in Washington, D.C., last November."

At the Northwest Tribes Budget Priority meeting held at the U.S. Department of Interior building in Portland on Feb. 2, some 50 Tribal representatives from the Northwest hashed out ways to divvy up some \$2.566 billion allocated to federally recognized Tribes.

This represents a \$3.6 million decrease of from last year's funding of \$2.619 billion, but last year's num-

ber included a one-time earmark targeting Tribal colleges, making up for eight years of Tribal neglect under the Bush administration, Kennedy said.

The way initiatives are structured, however, "This will be an increase for us," Kennedy said.

The budget provides more than \$70 million to strengthen Tribal management capabilities for federally funded programs targeting energy, education and public safety, all bringing jobs to Indian Country, Kennedy said.

"The budget increases (in these areas) are reflective of (Obama's) commitment," she said.

Specifically, according to a report from the Falmouth Institute's

American Indian Report, the proposed budget includes \$115.7 million for construction with \$52.9 million earmarked for Education construction, \$11.4 million for Public Safety and Justice construction, \$42.2 million for Resource Management construction, \$3.8 million for the Safety of Dams program, and \$9.3 million for Other Program construction.

The budget includes increases of \$21.5 million for contract support and the Indian Self-Determination fund.

Tribal Priority allocations increase by \$28 million, or 3.4 percent.

Under the President's proposal, the Interior Department's New Energy Frontier initiative will receive \$2.5 million to help Tribes explore and develop lands with active and potential energy resources, according to the American Indian Report.

A drawback to current Tribal budgets at the federal level, Kennedy said, is that the base figures do not consider any needs for terminated Tribes. The base budget, for example, allows the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, among others, "a big, fat zero" in considering the Tribe's needs, Kennedy said.

Training dollars will be available, in the President's draft, for law enforcement efforts. Currently, the Tribe and Spirit Mountain Casino pay for law enforcement, whether by their own security forces or

through the Polk County Sheriff's Office, which provide law enforcement paid for by the Tribe.

It helps that Oregon is one of a handful of so-called Public Law 280 states, named for a law passed in 1953, transferring federal jurisdiction over Tribes to states. It has principally been applied to criminal and civil law enforcement issues.

Funding is dependent on need, say federal officials, defined by population, service area and crime rate.

"There is a possibility" of acquiring historical and traditional lands that have cultural tie to the Tribe, Kennedy said.

"This is something very hopeful," Kennedy said, though she also noted that no funding has been allocated in the proposed budget directly for culture or language.

At the most recent of five budget work groups held last year, Kennedy questioned the transparency that Obama promised in coming budgets, noting that the spreadsheet provided came without background information or explanation.

She sought to clarify the formula by which the federal government tries to redress funding inequities faced by "small and needy" Tribes. And she supported the change this year that separated Indian budgets for law enforcement from education services within the Bureau of Indian Affairs. ■

## ATTENTION TRIBAL MEMBERS

### COMMITTEE AND SPECIAL EVENT BOARD VACANCIES

The following Committees and Special Event Boards have vacant positions.

<b>Culture Committee</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>
<b>Ceremonial Hunt Board</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>
<b>Education Committee</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>
<b>Veterans' Special Event Board</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>
<b>Cultural Trust Board</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>
<b>Powwow Special Event Board</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>
<b>Rodeo Special Event Board</b>	<b>1 Vacancy</b>

Please send completed applications to Dakota Whitecloud, Tribal Council Relations Coordinator, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

# 2010 Community Meetings Schedule

**3/7 Grand Ronde - at the Gym**  
**10:00 General Council followed by the Community Meeting after lunch**  
**9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347**

**3/28 Tacoma - at the LaQuinta Inn & Suites (same ballroom as last time)**  
**12:30 Lunch and then the Community Meeting**  
**1425 E. 27th Street, Tacoma, Washington 98421**

**4/11 Eugene - at the Holiday Inn (same ballroom as last year)**  
**10:00 General Council followed by the Community Meeting after lunch**  
**919 Kruse Way, Springfield, Oregon 97477**

**4/25 Yakima - at the Red Lion (same ballroom as last year)**  
**12:00 Lunch and then the Community Meeting**  
**607 East Yakima Ave., Yakima, Washington 98901**

**5/23 Bend - at the Riverhouse Inn (same ballroom as last year)**  
**12:00 Lunch and then the Community Meeting**  
**3075 N. Highway 97, Bend, Oregon 97701**

