

Natural Resources Division 10-year plan

By Michael Wilson

Natural Resources Division Manager

The Tribe's Natural Resources Division manages the Reservation under a 10-year management plan approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tribal Council.

The current planning period will run through 2012. Natural Resources Division staff will be working on the next 10-year plan over the next year. An important part of the planning process is Tribal member input.

The following is a summary of some major accomplishments seen on the Reservation. While it does not include everything we ask of the Reservation, it is intended to give the Tribal membership a clear enough picture of what has been happening on the Reservation so they can be informed and provide input for the next 10 years.



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We ask a lot of the Grand Ronde Reservation, and it has provided well. A large part of this success is due to the work put into planning. The Natural Resources Division houses many professionals who take pride in how the Reservation is managed. To do their jobs and meet the needs of the Tribe, they need to know

what the membership sees in their Reservation.

I would like to thank the Natural Resources staff for the contributions to this article. I would also like to thank the Fish & Wildlife and Timber Committee members for their input on Reservation management. Your time and participation are greatly appreciated and valued.

Please use naturalresourceplan@grandronde.org to submit your comments.

Fire Program



The Tribe maintains a nationally active Wildfire Program. Firefighters respond to forest fires on engine crews or a 20-person hand crew.

The Tribe has one Type 4 and four Type 6 engines. Engines are under rental agreement, which creates a revenue stream that funds the program.

The program also supports a 20-person Type 2 initial-attack hand crew, which can be dispatched to anywhere in the continental United States. This type of crew operates at a higher level than normal Type 2 crews; they have more experience and receive more hazardous fire assignments.

Annual reimbursement over the last 10 years averaged \$560,000 (total \$5.6 million) with \$94,000 (total \$940,000) of this being engine revenue.

The Wildfire Program provides good-paying summer jobs that work out well, especially for college students. Grand Ronde crews have worked on wildfires from Florida to Alaska and many states in-between. They have also helped to protect many reservations throughout Indian Country.

"We have grown the fire program to a point where the Grand Ronde name is recognized in the fire community as a very hard-working group with great fire knowledge" said Jeff Nepstad, Silviculture and Protection Program manager.

Despite the hazards of firefighting, the Tribe's Wildfire Program has operated for more than 20 years with an outstanding safety record.

The Natural Resources Division also has a Master Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement with the Oregon Department of Forestry. Through this agreement, the state agrees to respond to and manage wildfire control efforts on the Reservation. This agreement will not only provide additional resources to the Tribe, but links us into the state organizational structure. This assistance will be invaluable if we ever have a large fire situation on the Reservation.



Fire Program

Photo by Karl Ekstrom



Firefighters

Courtesy photo

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