

Tribe confers with three national forests

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Former land managers of much of western Oregon met with current land managers of much of western Oregon when the Tribe held its annual Tri-Forest memorandum of understanding meeting with representatives from the Willamette, Siuslaw and Mount Hood national forests on Monday, June 8, in the Community Center.

The three national forests encompass more than 3 million acres, much of which was ceded to the federal government by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in seven treaties during the 1850s.

Tribal Ceded Lands Manager Mike Karnosh acted as master of ceremonies.

Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary and Tribal Council member Chris Mercier attended the morning session with McClary providing the opening remarks after Land and Culture Manager Jan Looking Wolf Reibach gave the invocation.

"These relationships and these MOUs are very important to us," McClary said. "It really means a lot to the Tribe to have these partnerships. I know that these are always productive meetings."

McClary's opening remarks were followed by opening remarks from the respective forest supervisors – Tracy Beck of the Willamette, Jerry Ingersoll of the Siuslaw and Lisa Northrop of the Mount Hood. In addition, Tribal Relations Adviser Waldo Walker of the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest regional office in Portland attended.

"We look forward to keeping the positive relationship and improv-



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

David Harrelson, Tribal Cultural Protection Program manager and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, gives a history of the Tribe during the Tri-Forest memorandum of understanding meeting held at the Tribal Community Center on Monday, June 8. Representatives from the Willamette, Siuslaw and Mount Hood national forests were in attendance.

ing on it in the future," Beck said.

"I am honored and humbled to be here and to share in the management of these lands," Ingersoll said. "Our working relationship with the Tribe's amazing staff is also deeply appreciated."

"It is really important to us to create relationships at the local level because that is what matters most," Northrop said. "I look forward to hearing more about what is important to you."

Walker said the Forest Service and Tribe are bound together by the land.

"The land is bound together not by organizations, but by people," Walker said. "We all understand that as we grow together, we move better. We learn more. We grasp

more knowledge as we move forward. ... The land is sustaining us whether you're a Tribal member or not. We just have to remember that we're in it together and we have to keep moving forward by sitting down at a meeting like this and dealing with the issues."

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer David Harrelson gave attendees a 20-minute crash course in Tribal history from time immemorial through current-day Tribal status. He also explained the different terminology applied to Tribal lands – Reservation, fee, ceded and usual and accustomed areas.

"All of you manage lands that are our original homelands," Harrelson said. "They are still a part of our identity as people."

N.J. Erickson, acting deputy forest supervisor on the Willamette, briefed the approximately 25 attendees about possible land acquisition of the Cascadia Caves, an important archaeological site east of Sweet Home currently in private land ownership that is just a half-mile outside of the national forest's boundaries. It features 9,000-year-old rock art and petroglyphs.

Harrelson said the site is well-known and starting to experience more vandalism and natural degradation from encroaching vegetation.

"We recognize this is a really important property," Erickson said, adding that Forest Service employees are analyzing whether their federal agency would be the best owner or if the National Parks Service or another federal or private agency might be a better fit.

The other consideration, Erickson

said, is whether the land can be obtained through a land exchange, donation or purchase.

"We're on the hook to give it a really good look locally. We need the regional office to weigh in on the quality of the property," she said.

Even if all of the behind-the-scenes approvals are acquired, the Forest Service would still need to receive approval from the Office of Management and Budget to purchase or trade for the property, she added.

"The ideal home run would be either a donation or a purchase," Erickson said, adding that the Nature Conservancy might be an option.

She added that under federal ownership, antiquities laws kick in regarding potential vandalism. "It's a little bit extra protection," she said. "In theory, there's a little bit extra punch in protecting the site."

During the afternoon session, which Tribal Council Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr. attended, representatives from the Mount Hood and Siuslaw national forests discussed huckleberry gathering and management on their respective forests and Karnosh gave a presentation on the Ceded Lands Program.

"We spent much of the afternoon discussing opportunities for the Tribe and the three forests to work in cooperation to accomplish common goals, such as Tribal member huckleberry harvests," Karnosh said.

At the end of day, the forest representatives and Walker presented Tribal Council with a wooden plaque commemorating the Tri-Forest MOU and the meeting, which was the first to be held under the memorandum of understanding. Giffen accepted the plaque for Tribal Council.

Karnosh said the meeting was intended to be the highest-level meeting between the Tribe and national forests.

"This is intended to be a leadership-level MOU partners meeting," Karnosh said, "with topics relevant to the overall government-to-government relationship and associated leadership decisions. Technical-level issues or updates identified in this meeting may be scheduled for later, separate meetings or phone conferences."

Also attending the meeting was Natural Resources Department Manager Michael Wilson and lunch was catered by the Tribe's Nutrition Program. ■

Reibach performing at World Beat Festival

Multiple Native American Music Award recipient Jan Looking Wolf Reibach will perform at 7:45 p.m. Saturday, June 27, at the Riverfront Park Amphitheatre in Salem as part of this year's World Beat Festival.

The festival's focus this year is "The Drum: Rhythm of the World" and it will include performances on Saturday and Sunday, June 27-28, as well as workshops, demonstrations, drum jams, opportunities to learn about the drum, discuss the drum and its cultural legacy, and try out many different types of the instrument.

The festival operates 15 performance areas and educational centers across the 23-acre park. The Native American Cross Cultural Association will host its third annual Social Powwow beginning at 10 a.m. Sunday.

The festival runs from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. Admission is free, but volunteers will ask for a donation at the gate. Free parking is available around the downtown Salem area.

For more information, call 503-581-2004 or visit www.WorldBeat-Festival.org on the Internet, or visit the festival's Facebook page. ■

Looking for scholarships?

There are numerous scholarship opportunities offered for students to apply to each year. The majority of scholarships for fall term/semester are due between January and April of each year.

The Tribal Higher Education programs are here to assist you in your application process. If you use a scholarship search site, be sure to read the privacy policy to ensure you are using a site that will not sell your contact information. A recommended search site to use is www.kaarme.com. ■

Vendors to visit casino

There will be Tribal vendors at Spirit Mountain Casino during the Veterans Summit, Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow and Elder Honor Day, which occur from Wednesday, July 8, through Monday, July 13.

There are 30 tables available at two tables per vendor maximum.

For more information, contact Tribal Elder Gladys Hobbs at 971-241-8486 if interested.

This is open to all vendors on a first-come, first-served basis. ■