

'All the other people are visitors'

HARVEST continued
from page 9

impact or any measurable effect on recreational salmon and steelhead fisheries in the Willamette basin."

For example, an estimated 42,000 hatchery spring Chinook salmon passed Willamette Falls in 2015 and typically more than 20,000 summer steelhead also pass upstream of the Falls each year.

"The harvest of 15 of these fish would have not have a measurable effect on fisheries upstream of this location," the summary stated. "The effect on naturally produced salmon and steelhead populations should also be negligible since the harvest is limited to hatchery origin fish only."

Tribal members issued a ceremonial harvest tag will be allowed to fish in an area immediately downstream of Willamette Falls that is currently closed to recreational angling and access by boats. Fishing will not be allowed within 75 feet of any of the three fish ladder entrances.

Fishing will be allowed during daylight hours from the shore or from a platform the Tribe will construct, and only traditional fishing methods, such as dip nets, will be allowed. The resulting catch can be used for Tribal ceremonial and cultural purposes, but fish or fish parts cannot be bartered or sold.

The Tribe also will be required to notify Oregon State Police and the Department of Fish & Wildlife two days in advance of fishing or accessing the platform. In addition, the Tribe will be required to report to the state within 30 days following the end date of the fishing season the number of unmarked wild salmon and steelhead captured and released.

"These proposed rules will provide an opportunity for Oregonians to see traditional salmon fishing methods in use at this historic site, and will provide the Tribe an important cultural link to its past," stated the summary.

Leno, Giffen and Kennedy were accompanied by Tribal Council members Ed Pearsall, Tonya Gleason-Shepek and Jon A. George, as well as staff members Greene, Fish and Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen, Senior Staff Attorney Jenny Biesack, Natural Resources Department Manager Michael Wilson, Aquatic Biologist Bryan Fendall and Cultural Outreach Coordinator Bobby Mercier.

Commissioner Jason Atkinson of Jacksonville said that it was "very important for his son to see Grand Ronde on this platform." He added that it was one of the most important votes he has cast as a commission member.

Commissioner Gregory Wolley of Portland commended the Grand

Ronde Tribe for its spirit of cooperation, humility and forgiveness during the process.

The Chinookan-speaking Clackamas and Clo-We-Walla are the people of Willamette Falls who signed the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855. Along with their headmen, they were removed to the Grand Ronde Reservation. Tribal ancestral villages, burial sites and fishing grounds are at and around the Falls.

During the hearing, Kennedy acknowledged that descendants of the keepers of the Falls that included Chief Wachino were testifying before the commission.

The Tribe will begin fishing from the shore at Willamette Falls and construction of a platform within the coming months.

"This just solidified the fact that we are the people of the Willamette Falls," said Leno. "All the other people are visitors."

Sovereignty pursued

Ever since signing the consent decree in January 1987 with the state of Oregon that sacrificed Tribal fishing and hunting rights in return for support of its Reservation Plan, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde has slowly and persistently worked toward recovering those lost rights.

"Since 1988 and the return of part of the Tribe's original Reservation,

the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde has worked tirelessly to restore its traditions and ways of life in places within its ceded lands that were significant for our ancestors," Leno said before the Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission.

"The Tribe has a proven record as a responsible steward of natural resources and to us that was always self-evident that the Tribe would be a good steward," Greene said. "But for other people, perhaps, it wasn't self-evident."

"With the Tribe's record and the way that it has managed its Reservation, both in terms of timberlands and also in terms of wildlife and fish resources – take the fish weir for example and the studies we have done at Willamette Falls for lamprey – we are one of the best stewards of natural resources in western Oregon and people see that. Because of that, they respect what we are trying to achieve and then they cooperate with us."

The effort to restore Tribal hunting and fishing rights received its first big victory in August 2007 when then-Tribal Council Chairman Chris Mercier signed the first state-Tribal proclamation with then-Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski, which was the initial step toward obtaining Grand Ronde Tribal

See HARVEST
continued on page 19



Grand Ronde Tribal members are invited to attend
the fourth annual
First Salmon Ceremony

Friday, May 6, 2016

1 p.m. Ceremonial Arrival and Blessing of the Salmon
on the banks of the Willamette River in West Linn

3 p.m. Community Salmon Dinner Potluck Style at
McLean House
5350 River Street
West Linn, Oregon 97068

Please bring a dish to share
Dress for the outdoors, wear good walking shoes
Please bring your own chair.
We recommend using 99 E instead of I-205

We need an accurate head count to manage
parking and food. Please RSVP to
PublicAffairs@grandronde.org
Or call 503-879-1418

Hayu Masi