

General Council briefed on Tribal land holdings

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Grand Ronde Tribal land holdings grew at a 5 percent clip in 2019, according to statistics shared by Tribal Lands Department Manager Jan Michael Looking Wolf Reibach during the Sunday, Jan. 5, General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center.

In 2019, the Tribe added 755.42 acres to its portfolio that included two conservation properties and the former Blue Heron Paper Mill site in Oregon City, bringing the total to 15,864 acres.

The largest addition to the Tribe's land holdings is also the closest – the 670-acre Noble Oaks property located between Sheridan and Grand Ronde. The property was donated to the Grand Ronde Tribe by The Nature Conservancy, which also gave the Tribe about \$1 million in stewardship funding.

The Tribe also received another conservation property, the 64.85-acre Ahsney property near Rickreall worth more than \$500,000. Its acquisition was funded by the Bonneville Power Administration's Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program, which also provides approximately \$100,000 in stewardship funding.

Perhaps the most important acquisition in 2019 was the Blue Heron Paper Mill site adjacent to Willamette Falls in Oregon City. The Tribe purchased the 23-acre site for \$15.25 million in August.

"Without our land, we don't really have our identity as a people," Reibach said. "Our land gives us that opportunity, that Mother Earth connection. It ties us to our history and brings us into the present."

Tribal land holdings in Oregon now stretch from the former Multnomah Greyhound Park in Wood Village to Kilchis Point on Tillamook Bay to Rattlesnake Butte northwest of Junction City to Chankawan southeast of Stayton.

"What is represented on this map is a wide variety of lands," Reibach said. "Conservation lands, timber lands, forest lands and some development and commercial real estate."

Since the return of 9,811 acres with the passage of the Grand



Photo by Dean Rhodes

Lands Department Manager Jan Michael Looking Wolf Reibach briefed the membership on Tribal land holdings during the Sunday, Jan. 5, General Council meeting held in the Community Center.

Ronde Reservation Act in 1988, the Tribe has added 6,053 acres to its land holdings. It now possesses about 25 percent of the land total granted as the original Reservation in 1857.

Reibach also gave an overview of his department, which only includes four people including himself.

After his approximately 18-minute presentation, Reibach fielded three questions from the audience.

In other action, it was announced that the 11 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 2, General Council meeting will be held at the Monarch Hotel, 12566 S.E. 93rd Ave., Clackamas, off of Interstate 205.

Door prize winners were Tracie Meyer, Raymond Petite, Kathie Levine, Robert Parazoo and Cherie Butler, \$50 each; and Mae Townsend, Bob Duncan and Corina Limon, \$100 each. In addition, Youth Council member Benjamin Powley won a fishing pole donated by Tribal Elder Victor Lomboy.

It also was announced that Julie Duncan, Cherie Butler, Virginia Kimsey-Roof and Serena Layman were elected to the four open seats on the Elders Committee.

Reibach also opened the meeting with cultural drumming and singing.

The entire General Council meeting can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and clicking on the Government tab and then Videos. ■

Tribal Council approves program agreements for conservation properties

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council approved 10-year agreements with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners Program that will help the Tribe manage four of its conservation properties along the banks of the North Santiam River during its Wednesday, Jan. 8, meeting.

The agreements affect the Chahpam 1, 2 and 3 properties, which are a combined 462 acres, and the 425-acre Chankawan property.

Fish and Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen said during the Tuesday, Jan. 7, Legislative Action Committee meeting that the Partners Program provides mostly technical assistance and requires that the Tribe keep properties in their current habitat state after receiving federal assistance for 10 years or run the risk having to repay the federal government for its work.

"Since we are managing these properties in perpetuity, that shouldn't be a problem," Dirksen said.

Dirksen added the Tribe's conservation property in Lane County – the 289.5-acre Rattlesnake Butte site – has benefitted from being in the Partners Program.

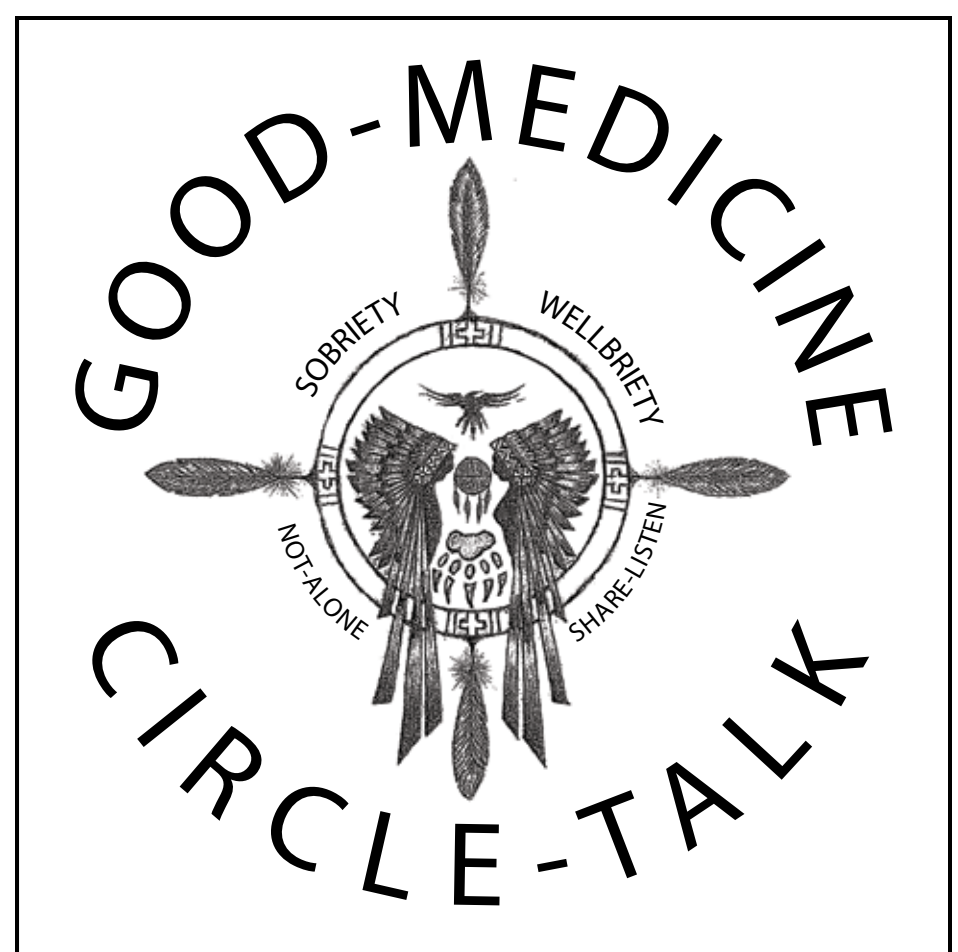
The program works with landowners to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats. In the Willamette Val-

ley, it focuses on restoring oak woodland, savanna, grassland, riparian areas, wetlands and wet prairie habitats. The Tribe's four conservation properties are within the program's Willamette Valley Focus Area.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Appointed Marine Corps veteran Cecil Donahue to the Veterans Special Event Board with a term that will expire in March 2021;
- Appointed Elder Tracie Meyer to serve on the Tribal Employment Rights Commission with a term that will expire in March 2022;
- Re-appointed Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. to serve on the Spirit Mountain Gaming Inc. Board of Directors with a term that will expire in September 2022 or until he is no longer serving on Tribal Council, and amended the recent appointments of Tribal Council members Kathleen George and Jack Giffen Jr. to the board to have their terms expire in September 2021;
- And re-approved the enrollment of five applicants and approved 20 new applicants into the Tribe because they meet the requirements outlined in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

The entire meeting can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and clicking on the Government tab and then Videos. ■



Every Saturday 4 p.m. • Everyone welcome
This is a Sober Event • Encouraging Sobriety
Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, Oregon
Toward Spirit Mountain
At the Big Cross - Lighthouse Church • A-Ho-
503-879-3435

WIC visits Community Center monthly

Pregnant? Breastfeeding? Does your family include a child under the age of 5?

If so, you may qualify for the Women, Infants and Children program. With WIC, people can receive answers to nutritional questions and access fruits and vegetables, whole grains, eggs, milk, cheese, juice, cereal and more.

A WIC representative visits the Tribal Community Center on the third Tuesday of the month, which will be Jan. 21.

Walk-ins are welcome between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 503-879-2034. ■