

Thompson strip fix clears Senate hurdle

By Dean Rhodes

Publications coordinator

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Grand Ronde Tribe's continuing effort to fix an error made in a 1994 piece of legislation that adversely affected the Grand Ronde Reservation Act cleared a hurdle on Thursday, July 20, when the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs passed Senate Bill 910 out of committee.

The legislation, introduced by Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley in the Senate and new Oregon Rep. Andrea Salinas in the House of Representatives in March, would allow the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to address any future survey errors discovered on its original Reservation with the federal government.

The Bureau of Land Management discovered a surveying error on the Grand Ronde Reservation that dates back to 1871. The error was discovered after passage of the Grand Ronde Reservation Act in 1988 that returned 9,811 acres to the Tribe.

Surveyor David Thompson incorrectly surveyed the eastern boundary of the Reservation, missing 84 acres that should have been included. The land also was excluded from a 1904 sale of unallotted lands within the Reservation and Grand Ronde was not compensated for it.

Until the error was discovered, BLM treated the land as Oregon and California Railroad Grant Lands and permitted private companies to harvest timber on the acreage.

After being informed of the survey error, the Grand Ronde Tribe determined the parcel, called the

Thompson Strip, was unmanageable because of narrow boundaries and divided ownership interests. The Tribe agreed to accept a 240-acre parcel of grant lands adjacent to the Grand Ronde Reservation in exchange and relinquish its claims to the Thompson Strip.

However, the Department of the Interior in 1994 developed broad language that relinquished any future claims of this type within the state of Oregon by the Grand Ronde Tribe.

In agreeing to this land exchange in 1994, the intent was for Grand Ronde to relinquish its rights only to the Thompson Strip. There was no intention by BLM or BIA officials to extinguish the Tribe's land claim rights for the entire state of Oregon.

Tribal Council Secretary Michael Langley testified before the House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Insular and Indian Affairs on Wednesday, June 7.

Both the House resolution and Senate bill would replace the phrase "state of Oregon" with the phrase "84 acres known as the Thompson Strip" in the Grand Ronde Reservation Act. It also would prohibit any property obtained by the Grand Ronde Tribe as part of a land claim settlement from being used for gaming activities.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs advanced similar legislation in July 2020 and it was approved by the entire Senate. However, it was not passed by the House of Representatives and the bill died at the end of the 117th Congress.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has been lobbying for the fix since at least December 2019. ■

GAMING ORDINANCE OPEN FOR COMMENT

Tribal Council is considering amendments to the Gaming Ordinance. The proposed amendments were given a First Reading at the June 28, 2023, Tribal Council meeting.

The proposed amendments reflect recent amendments to the Tribal/State Gaming Compact and: (1) Amend definitions of High Security and Primary Management Official Gaming Licenses; (2) Revise license application and background investigation requirements to better reflect information currently necessary for safe operation of the Gaming Facility; and (3) Other minor and technical changes.

Tribal Council invites comment on the proposed amendments to the Gaming Ordinance. For a copy of the proposed amendments, contact the Tribal Attorney's Office at 503-879-4664. Please send your comments to the Tribal Attorney's Office, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR, 97347 or by e-mail to legal@grandronde.org.

Comments must be received by Sept. 1, 2023. ■

Linn County hosting Cultural Encampments

Tribal Elder and Linn County Cultural Encampment Director Dietrich Peters is hosting Cultural Encampments again this summer.

Upcoming encampments will be held Aug. 25-27 at Cascadia County Park in Cascadia.

The three-day encampments open with a morning prayer on Friday, a meet and greet, storytelling and flute music, and an evening prayer. On Saturday, craft classes and Native American traditional dancing are taught. Sunday includes more dancing and then a thank you feast in the afternoon.

For more information, contact Peters at petersdeitz@gmail.com or visit the Linn County Parks web page. ■

Tribal nonemergency text line

The Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department has a nonemergency text line at 541-921-2927.

"If you have a nonemergency situation or question, feel free to contact my officer via text through this line," said Grand Ronde Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight. "When one of my officers receives the text, they will call you back when they have time."

McKnight said that emergency situations still require calling 911. For more information, contact McKnight at 503-879-1474. ■

GRHWC Veteran Fishing Trips

a lush lamastin event

Thursday, Aug. 3

5-Hour Fishing Charter
@ Depoe Bay

CTGR TRIBAL MEMBER/DESCENDANT
VETERANS ONLY

Sign-Up: Call Patricia Henry, 503-879-1399

CTGR- Portland Office &

Great Circle Recovery

Resource Fair

Join us on

Wednesday, Aug. 9 — 10 a.m. — 2 p.m.

Grand Ronde Tribal Programs:

477 Employment and Training

Vocational Rehabilitation

Warriors of Hope (Domestic Violence)

TERO (Tribal Employment Rights Office)

Acupuncture

Community Resources:

Siletz

Painted Horse

Bridges to Change

Location: Great Circle Recovery back parking lot:

3580 SE 82nd Ave. Portland, OR 97266



Questions contact us at CTGR-Portland office: 503-879-1881.

