

'I raise my hands to all of our amazing staff'

MOA TAGS
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Western Oregon.

Tribal Elder Gary LaChance, 55, was the first person to be issued the tags when he walked through the doors of the Natural Resources building just after 7:30 a.m.

"It was an awesome moment to witness the first tags go out the door," Natural Resources Director Colby Drake said in an email. "Staff was hugging and cheering as he left (to begin hunting). This will be the first of many firsts for the Tribe and NRD staff related to the new MOA with ODFW. We are so excited to see this come to fruition. Thank you to everyone who has put in many hours to make this a reality for the membership."

The MOA signed between the Tribe and ODFW on Aug. 4 expanded the cultural hunting, fishing and gathering area from the 1,300-square-mile Trask Unit to more than 11,000 square miles. The number of tags issued on Monday under the new agreement is equivalent to all first and second season consent decree tags in the Trask Unit, according to Natural Resources staff.

"For NRD staff, today was a big day," Drake said. "It started off with Gary LaChance picking up the first buck and elk MOA tags. There were hugs and tears amongst staff, some who have worked toward this day their whole career to see a Tribally issued tag leave the building. Overall, it was a great day getting to see Tribal members come in and be so



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Jack Giffen Jr. looks at his new Grand Ronde Tribal harvest license after Tribal Natural Resources Department Administrative Assistant Tina Helfrich gave it to him on Monday, Oct. 2.

excited to see just what is available to them in the lines of tags. There is some education that is happening as we roll this system out, but overall the enthusiasm throughout the day couldn't be ignored by the membership and NRD staff."

Tribal Council member Kathleen George described the day as "amazing."

"I raise my hands to all of our amazing staff," she said during a Tuesday, Oct. 3, Legislative Action Committee meeting. "It was an amazing day and wonderful to see us blessed with staff who are as passionate as we are about this. It's so exciting to see our Tribal members have the opportunity to hunt and fish in our ceded lands."

The new agreement with the state allows Tribal members to har-

vest finfish, lamprey, shellfish and crustaceans, mammals and birds in the Wilson, Trask, Willamette, Stott Mountain and Santiam wildlife management units in Western Oregon. In addition, Tribal members can fish on the Columbia River from Kelly Point to the Bonneville Dam in Oregon waters.

In reaction, Tribal Natural Resources staff members – the Fast Track Team – have been working

to create the regulations and structure of hunting and fishing in the new territory open to the Tribal membership for a fall 2023 season.

Natural Resources has expanded office hours on Tuesday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. until Tuesday, Nov. 7, to accommodate demand for new licenses. Office hours will remain 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and Friday.

Tribal Fish & Wildlife Program Manager Kelly Dirksen is asking Tribal hunters and fishers to take pictures of their experiences in the new territories and submit them to Natural Resources to help the Tribe take the next steps in expanding hunting and fishing rights. Those who do will be entered into a drawing for a Cabela's gift card, he added.

"It's a much larger land base," Dirksen said. "We have to get this right, so I hope you'll be patient with us as we put the last pieces together to implement this in '23 and in '24."

For more detailed information about the hunting and fishing licenses, see the Oct. 1 edition of *Smoke Signals* or download the digital version, available at smokesignals.org. ■

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. ■

Help us look for chronic wasting disease in our herds!

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a highly infectious, fatal disease that can infect both deer and elk. **CWD has not been found in Oregon**, but has been detected in 31 states. In 2021, Idaho had two detections in their free ranging population within 30 miles of the Oregon border.

NRD will be cooperating with ODFW to collect lymph nodes of harvested deer and elk for CWD testing. Staff will be available to collect samples from animals brought to NRD during business hours and there will be an after hours drop off station at the ceremonial cooler at the lower shop at NRD. Hunters are asked to fill out a brief information card to include with the head of the animal, which requires first vertebrae below the skull. Heads will be returned upon request.

RAFFLE for a \$50 Cabela's gift card for participation!

Natural Resources Department CWD sampling after hours drop off:
47010 S.W. Hebo Road

Contact Wildlife Biologist Marie Vicksta at 503-879-1458 or marie.vicksta@grandronde.org if you want more information.





Natural Resources Guide

Did you know?....

NRD Managed Lands Access Policy Publication

- Natural Resources Department Managed Lands Access Policy publication for Tribal membership.
- Identifies Tribal lands managed by NRD and maps.
- Identifies access information such as levels, categories, management, requests/permits and activities.
- Available upon request at 503-879-2424 or by email at nrd@grandronde.org.

