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# SMOKE SIGNALS

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## Status of federal grants remains uncertain

By Nicole Montesano & Katherine Warren

Smoke Signals staff writers

Clarity over which of the Tribe's federal grants may be affected by the Trump administration's funding freeze remains hard to come by, as so much remains in flux at the federal level.

Numerous lawsuits have been filed and may not be resolved for weeks or months. It is also unclear whether the Trump administration will abide by court orders.



Cheryle A. Kennedy

Tribal Department heads and council members are keeping an eye on the news, and planning for how to proceed if funds are not forthcoming.

Two judges have ordered that the freeze be paused while lawsuits are ongoing. One of them, U.S. District Court Judge John McConnell, ordered the administration to comply with his earlier temporary restraining order, according to CBS News. Agencies were ordered to restore any funds that had been paused or withheld.

On Thursday, Feb. 6, the Tribe received a letter from Department of Health and Human Services Acting General Counsel Sean Keveney, stating that in late January, the Indian Health Service had asked whether the executive order imposing the funding freeze applied

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Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Peer Support Specialist Ferrell DeGarmo tours the Main Street Recovery House during an open house in Sheridan Monday, Feb. 24. Main Street Recovery House is Great Circle Recovery's new residential drug and alcohol addiction treatment center.

## Tribe celebrates opening of new residential treatment center

By Nicole Montesano  
Smoke Signals staff writer

A longtime goal of the Tribe was accomplished on Monday, Feb. 24, when Great Circle Recovery held an open house to celebrate the opening of its new residential drug and alcohol addiction treatment center, Main Street Recovery House, in Sheridan.

"I know that this has been a long time coming," Tribal General Manager Angie Blackwell said. "I'm just really happy we can have a place close to home, and not have our people waiting



for a bed."

Located in a former bed-and-breakfast, the house features 18 bedrooms for intensive in-patient treatment. A small hotel located behind the main house holds another 13 beds intended for transitional housing once residents are recovered enough to live more independently, while still undergoing outpatient treatment and receiving mental health services.

Best of all, Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe said, treatment at the center will not be limited by insurance restrictions. Instead, people will be able to stay as long as needed. Although insurance services will be billed for service, Tribal members will not be required to leave if they are not sufficiently recovered when the insurance payments stop.

"Until you're well," Rowe said. "The stay is as long as it takes. ...

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## Tribal firefighters assist with Los Angeles blazes

By Nicole Montesano  
Smoke Signals staff writer

LOS ANGELES — The fires began on Tuesday, Jan. 7. Hot and dry Santa Ana winds blowing with hurricane force drove the flames across the drought-stricken landscape and into Los Angeles neighborhoods. Over the following three and a half weeks, eight fires killed 29 people and destroyed thousands of homes. Calls for aid went out almost immediately. By the second day of the fires, the Grand Ronde Natural Resources Fire Protection and Management Program was pulling together a crew to send.

Wildland firefighters Steve Ashby, Max Lynn,

Josh Royse and Tribal member Nick Larsen drove for two days to reach San Diego County in southern California. They downplayed their response to the call.

"We typically do respond nationwide, so this type of assignment isn't out of the ordinary for us," Ashby said.

Although winter is not usually their busy season, answering calls for help from across the country is business as usual.

Lynn noted that California "was basically calling for all help that was willing to come down there, as well as having a lot of firefighters on standby in case of another fire were to pop up. ... And you know, there were fires that were

happening, new, while we were down there and because there were so many personnel down in the area, they were able to stop a lot of those fires and keep them small."

Larsen said being on standby involved a constant state of readiness.

"We always had a plan," he said. "We were kind of on the sidelines, which was fine."

Ashby said the out-of-state firefighters were there to support the local crews so that they would have enough resources available.

Fire Management and Protection Program Man-

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This is a copy, not the original.