

In Brief June 2004

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photo by Brent Merrill, with permission of *Smoke Signals*



2003 Pow-Wow at Grand Ronde

DID YOU KNOW ?

- * *Warm Springs* will hold its Pi-Ume-Sha Treaty Days Pow-wow June 25 - 27.
- * The grand opening for *Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw's Three Rivers Casino* will occur in late June.
- * *Burns Paiute* is working with Harney County and the federal government to establish an archives center.

Legislative Commission on Indian Services

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Tribal Information Day Thanks

CIS wishes to extend our appreciation to all who participated in and supported Tribal Information Day on May 20 at the State Capitol. An event of such magnitude requires coordination and voluntary efforts from Tribes, state agencies, and government officials above that which they already contribute. We are grateful for all contributions to this achievement. Here's to next year!



Oregon Department of Forestry Protection from Fire Program



Note: the subsequent article is an excerpt taken from the ODF 2003 Government to Government Agency Report required by ORS 182.162. To view the report or the 25 other State Agency Government to Government Reports for 2002 and 2003, visit the CIS website at: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/cis>

Central Oregon District, Prineville

The Central Oregon District has developed a strong working relationship with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs (CTWS). The district has worked closely on numerous fires in the Sisters and John Day areas and has continued to update mutual aid agreements to ensure a coordinated approach to wild land fire suppression. The CTWS also had leadership responsibilities by sitting on the steering committees for the Central Oregon Interagency Incident Management Team and the Central Oregon Interagency Dispatch Center.

This past fire season, the CTWS participated in the management of the B&B Complex, along with many other wild land fire agencies. The ODF representatives and CTWS representatives worked well together under stressful circumstances. The two agencies shared a lot of the same issues and problems during the incident, which led to increased awareness of others' concerns.

The district also worked closely with the CTWS during the Herman Creek fire close to Cascade Locks. By including the State Historic Preservation Office and CTWS with discussions on suppression and mop-up practices, potential damage to archeological sites on CTWS lands were minimized.

Each year the John Day Unit assists in an Outdoor School. This school is designed to give students opportunities to learn more about the natural environments we live in. This year, the unit collaborated with both the Paiute and Warm Springs tribes in this activity.

Northeast Oregon District (NEO), Pendleton Unit

The Umatilla Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has a fee-based fire protection agreement with the district. The agreement has been in place since 1961. Under the agreement, NEO - Pendleton Unit provides fire protection for approximately 50,000 acres of Indian Trust land that is within both the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) boundary and the NEO forest protection boundary. The agreement has recently been reviewed and rewritten so as to be in compliance with the Master Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement.

Continued, page two

ODF PROTECTION FROM FIRE *continued*

The BIA and the ODF Pendleton Unit are coordinating and consulting on the implementation of the National Fire Plan. Agency personnel have begun evaluating some properties within the Unit and the Reservation for wildfire survivability. These landowners have been offered opportunities for cost share funds to improve the fire survivability of their properties. Efforts will continue to get more people signed up and involved in the program.

Through a National Fire Plan – Fire Prevention Grant, the Unit has been able to fund fire prevention efforts in Umatilla County and within the Umatilla Reservation. The principle thrust of the prevention effort in 2003 was increasing fire prevention awareness with newspaper advertisements. The CTUIR *Confederated Umatilla Journal* newspaper was included in this fire prevention effort.

In summary, Pendleton Unit perceives the working relationship concerning fire protection with the CTUIR and the BIA -Umatilla Agency as successful and productive, and one that enhances all of the agencies' efficiencies and effectiveness. Each agency adds their strengths to the organization. This, in turn, provides the residents of the CTUIR with an effective and responsive fire protection system. Without this high level of cooperation between agencies, the checker-boarded ownership within the reservation boundaries would create a fire protection system that is cumbersome and less efficient and effective.

Northeast Oregon District (NEO), Wallowa Unit

The Northeast Oregon District – Wallowa Unit has a Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement with the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT) which has been in place since 1999. Under this agreement ODF provides fire protection on 14,117 acres of tribal land within the NEO forest protection boundary. This acreage is known as the "Precious Lands Wildlife Management Area" and is located in northeastern Wallowa County. The NPT does not pay taxes on this property and thus they pay a higher fire patrol assessment rate than other private forest landowners to make up the General Fund match. ODF agrees to request Tribal-sponsored 20-man crews when needed to aid in the suppression efforts on the property. The NPT will also provide a Tribal representative to work with the fire managers in the instances that heavy equipment will be used on the property, due to the presence of cultural resources. Tribal employees working on the property during the summer months have also aided ODF in the early detection of fires on Tribal lands as well as adjacent private and public lands.

In 2003, ODF toured the Precious Lands Wildlife Management Area with NPT representatives to discuss proactive fire preparedness measures that could be taken to reduce the risks to personnel and property from wildfires. Recommendations were made to improve access and communications with NPT personnel on the property, and to create defensible space around the many structures located there. The NPT is likely to utilize National Fire Plan funding for some of these recommended fuels reduction and defensible space projects.

West Oregon District, Philomath

The West Oregon District has fee-based fire protection agreements with both the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz. Staff from the Tribes regularly attend and participate in meetings of the West Oregon Forest Protective Association. It is common to have joint fire suppression action from tribal and ODF organizations on fires of mutual concern. Joint fire training is a yearly occurrence. Slash disposal is also a frequent issue requiring communication and coordination. Larger planning efforts including fire mobilization plans from each organization are shared and reviewed between the organizations.

Roy Woo is the Deputy State Forester at ODF.

NATIVE LANGUAGES

While the vast majority of Indians speak English as their main language, some also know their native language. When Europeans arrived in America, there were approximately 350 native languages spoken. The precise number of American Indian languages spoken currently is unknown, but estimated at around 200. Because Native American languages do not belong to a single linguistic family, they are categorized by geographical region.

Navajo and Ojibwe are the two most widely spoken languages, with 80,000 speaking Navajo, and 40,000 Ojibwe.

More than one third of native languages are spoken by elders, with some languages having as little as two or three known speakers. Efforts are being made to ensure native languages survive through the next generation. Tribes have written language books and created teaching tools for Indian schools. Some languages are taught in universities.

Source: 100 Questions and Answers

SENATE BILL 690 (2001)
Oregon's Support for
Native Languages

In the 2001 Legislative Session, SB 690 passed without dissent. The bill acknowledges that the teaching of American Indian languages is essential for the proper education of Oregon's Indian children and provides that Tribal experts can acquire a special teaching license from the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to provide instruction in Indian culture and heritage in Oregon's public schools. SB 690 recognizes Oregon Tribes are best-suited to develop and administer the test that establishes that an individual is qualified to teach a Tribe's language. A number of Oregon Tribes teach their Tribal language in Head Start, early childhood and after-school programs. SB 690 allows for this to continue throughout a child's academic years.