TRIBAL FISHCO AND THE WHITE SALMON FISH PROCESSING CENTER

Jon Matthews, CRITFC Finance Director

CRITFC’s four member tribes founded Tribal FishCo, LLC in 2010 to operate and maintain the fish processing center located in White Salmon, Washington. The Corps of Engineers built the facility as a treaty fishing access site. With a federally compliant food processing facility, the tribes can take greater control of their natural resources by processing and marketing fish and accessing new markets. The tribes also want to ensure the business is self-sustaining and capable of meeting its cash flow needs and the needs of the markets.

Each of the tribes appointed two representatives to the Board of Advisors, which provides policy oversight to Tribal FishCo:

- Virgil Lewis, President, YAKAMA
- Ryan Smith, Vice-President, WARM SPRINGS
- N. Kathryn Brigham, Secretary, UMATILLA
- Roger Dick Jr., Member, YAKAMA
- Cecil Jose, Member, NEZ PERCE
- Marcus Luke Jr., Member, UMATILLA
- Olney Patt Jr., Member, WARM SPRINGS
- Allen Slickpoo Jr, Member, NEZ PERCE

FishCo hired Harris Teo (YAKAMA) as the Plant Manager to coordinate pilot tests in 2011 and 2012. FishCo contracted with experienced seafood processors for both years to assist with cash flow and equipment needs. For this fall’s operations, FishCo hired 15 employees to process fish and one to provide bookkeeping functions. Ice was also provided by FishCo through a contract with CRITFC for the last two years. About one million pounds of ice was provided to the fishers, which also provided revenue to FishCo. CRITFC provided staff support and secured funding to complete a business plan and an engineering report, which will be used in the negotiation process for the user agreement with the City of Bingen to authorize discharges into their wastewater treatment system.

A limited fish processing operation was conducted in the fall 2012 to work through logistics of operating the processing plant. Information was also gathered for the Bingen wastewater agreement.

There are a number of activities for 2013 operations including finalizing the wastewater treatment system user agreement with the City of Bingen; reviewing capitalization needs for FishCo’s 2013 operations (e.g., cash, labor, equipment), and how to fund them; and securing support from each tribes’ respective tribal economic development personnel to help with business planning and the capitalization of the business. With proper planning, there is an opportunity for the four tribes to exert their sovereignty on their natural resources and at the same time increase the economic value of the treaty fisheries.
**Fishing Site Clean-up Closures**  
**Michael Broncheau, CRITFC fishing site maint. manager**

Last winter, six treaty fishing access sites were closed for extensive clean-up and repairs. The 2012-2013 clean-up will begin this month.

During each closure, the maintenance crew will remove trash, abandoned property, and temporary structures; repair facilities, plumbing, and electrical systems; maintain the landscaping; and other repairs as necessary. **Any personal and titled property left on a site during its designated clean-up period will be disposed of.**

The closure schedule:
- **Three-mile Canyon** (Nov 5-9, 2012)
- **Rufus** (Nov 12-16, 2012)
- **Roosevelt** (Nov 19-30, 2012)
- **Maryhill** (Dec 3-21, 2012)
- **White Salmon** (Jan 7-18, 2013)
- **Lyle** (Jan 21-Feb 1, 2013)

If you use any of these sites, please remove your personal and titled property to help speed the work and prevent any unexpected losses.

While a site is closed for the maintenance, all other access sites, including the five in-lieu sites, will remain open for use and will be maintained on a normal weekly schedule.

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**Fall Season Update**  
**Stuart Ellis, CRITFC fish mgmt. biologist**

There were seven weekly commercial gillnet fishing periods with 22.5 days of gillnet fishing. This compares with a recent five-year average of 27.2 days of gillnet fishing. Tribal fishers caught about 85,600 adult fall chinook, almost 15,000 steelhead, and 6,800 coho. The fall chinook run sizes were near recent year averages, but the catch rates for chinook were much lower than normal. There was good effort with the peak net count reaching 749 nets which is just under the record for the last 12 years. The tribes had some B steelhead concerns, but given the harvest effort this year, it wouldn’t have been possible to catch all of the allowed upriver Bright chinook even without the steelhead limits. It is unknown why catch rates were off this year. Water conditions weren’t far from normal. There was often an east wind, especially in the Gorge, which may have impacted catch rates. Prices were good for much of the fall season and there were good numbers of buyers available to purchase fish. People have still been contacting CRITFC asking for information on buying fish direct from fishers, which is a little unusual for mid-October.

Based on jack counts and returns to the Snake Basin, it looks like fall chinook should be doing well next year. Spring and summer forecasts will come out in December. The fall chinook forecast won’t be done until early February.

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**CRITFC Officers and Commissioners**

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<th>Warm Springs</th>
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<td><strong>Kathryn Brigham</strong>, CRITFC chairwoman</td>
<td><strong>Joel Moffett</strong>, CRITFC vice-chairman</td>
<td><strong>Bruce Jim</strong>, CRITFC secretary</td>
<td><strong>Gerald Lewis</strong>, CRITFC treasurer</td>
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<td>James Marsh · Mitch Pond</td>
<td>Brooklyn Baptiste · Roberta Bisbee</td>
<td>Leslie Bill · Rafael Queahpama</td>
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<td>Ryan Smith · Emerson Squiemphen</td>
<td>Virgil Lewis Sr · Wilbur Slockish Jr</td>
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<td>(541) 276-3165</td>
<td>Allen Slickpoo Jr · Silas Whitman</td>
<td>Donnie Winishut, Sr</td>
<td>(509) 865-5121</td>
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<td>Gary Dorr · Quintin Ellenwood</td>
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**Fundamentals of Canning Class**  
*Les Brown, Salmon Marketing Coordinator*

Mark Whitham, Oregon Sea Grant Product Development Extension Specialist will teach a hands-on class on the fundamentals of canning on **November 7 from 10am to 4pm**. This class will give the fundamental concepts required to safely can products at home and provide additional information for those wanting to have their fish commercially canned.

The free class will be at the Cascade Locks Community Center located in the Port of Cascade Locks complex next to the boat ramp.

You need to register in advance. There is limited space so register early by texting or calling Les Brown at (503) 799-8640.

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**Pacific Marine Fishers Expo**  
*Les Brown, Salmon Marketing Coordinator*

This is the fifth year tribal fishers have had the opportunity to attend the annual Pacific Marine Fishers Expo. This year, the event will be in Seattle’s Qwest Field Exhibit Center (where the Seahawks play). It runs **November 27-29** (Tue-Thurs). The event is free if you pre-register or $50 at the door. Call (800) 454-3005 to pre-register.

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**The Dalles Abandoned Property**  
*Kelly Thomas, US Army Corps of Engineers–The Dalles*

The US Army Corps of Engineers has identified and tagged the property below for potential disposal. If these items are not removed, they will eventually be disposed of by the Corps of Engineers as abandoned property. If you are the owner of any of the properties or know who is, please call The Dalles Lock and Dam Natural Resource Office at (541) 506.7816

- White “Starcraft” pop-up trailer at Seufert Park. Plates: Washington 3794 TW
- Brown “Larson” boat with EZ Loader trailer at The Dalles Dam north shore ramp. Vessel #WN 4886 NK; trailer plates: Washington 4929 UD
- “Float On” boat trailer at The Dalles Dam peninsula parking area. No plates.

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Get fisheries announcements right on your cell phone

If you would like to get fisheries announcements via text message, send a text message to the number **55958** with “**critfc**” in the body of the text. Calling the number will not work. This must be done as a text message from your cell phone.

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Last year’s Pacific Marine Fishers Expo

There are many exhibits that apply to larger boats, but also many booths that apply to our tribal fishery. You’ll find equipment, gear, services, suppliers, new products and ideas—and with hundreds of suppliers you can negotiate face-to-face or brings catalogs home to share with others. Pacific Marine Expo is the largest commercial fishing show in the Northwest.

For more information or pre-registration help, contact Les Brown at (503) 799-8640.
In Remembrance: John Johnson

It was with heavy hearts that we received word that John Johnson, former Chief of CRITFC Enforcement, had passed away on October 12. John had served CRITFC for 26 years and was passionate about the organization's mission and the role the Enforcement Department played in protecting tribal sovereignty.

John started working for the Commission in 1984, two years after CRITFC Enforcement was founded. He advanced through the department, beginning as a patrol officer and eventually leading the department in 1986. John stayed in that position until his retirement as the Chief of Enforcement in 2010.

John's years of service and dedication did not go unnoticed by the tribes and tribal members. He was honored to be given the name Plush Xaalish (White Wolf) by a Yakama elder.

His contributions to our work are immeasurable and he will be missed greatly.

John Johnson · 1952-2012