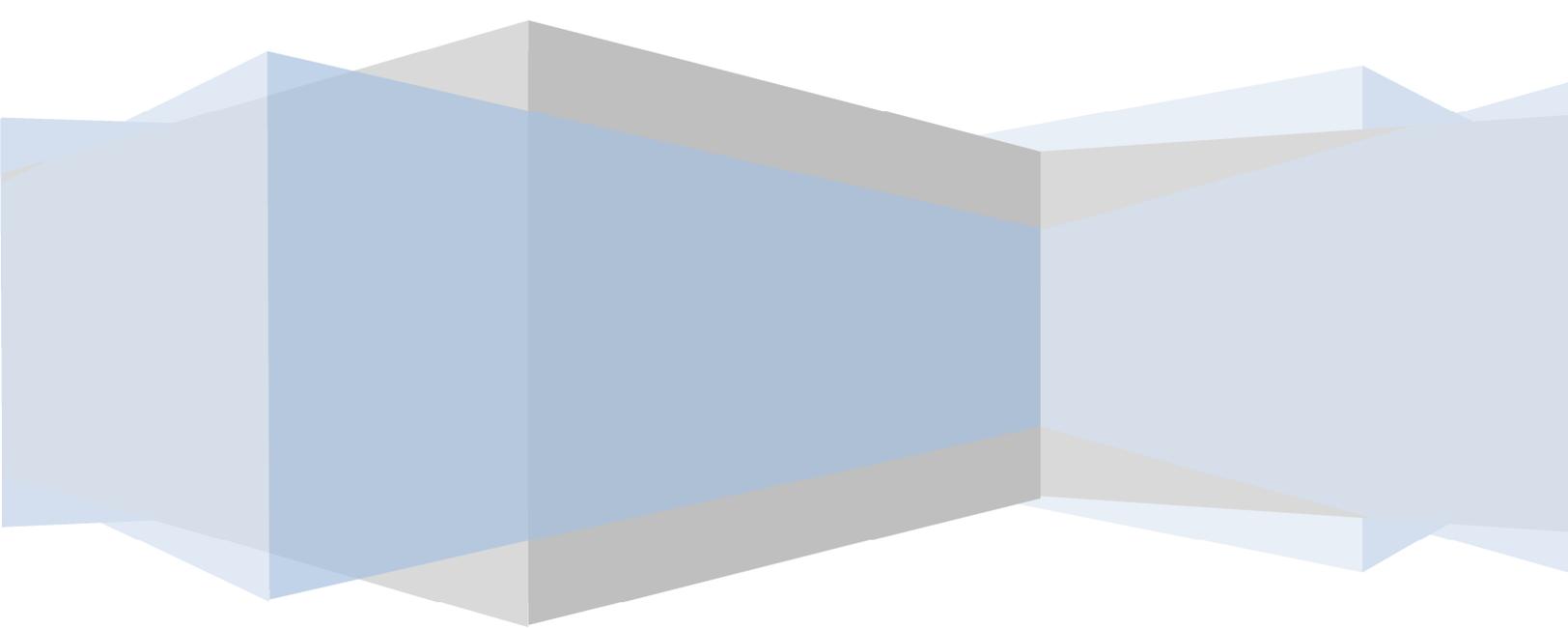


Oregon Department of Corrections



2014 Annual Government-to-Government Report on Tribal Relations

Gary Sims, Administrator/Diversity and Inclusion



2014 Annual Government-to-Government Report on Tribal Relations

Executive Summary

The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) continues to work with Oregon's nine federally-recognized tribes and tribal members toward identifying opportunities for partnership. Gary Sims, DOC Diversity and Inclusion Administrator, has recently been selected to serve as the new DOC tribal contact, as well as chairman of the Public Safety Cluster Meetings.

All of the department's institutions maintained contact with tribal representatives and tribal volunteers to develop and present special cultural ceremonies, promote inmate participation in cultural events and affiliations, and recruit volunteers. This report highlights the activities, ceremonies, and events that took place in 2014 in DOC prisons throughout the state. These activities are broken down by institution to give a clear and comprehensive understanding of all that is currently offered to the Native American inmate population.

In addition, information is included that shows newly-added Native American religious programming as the DOC moves forward in expanding services and exploring new ways to serve this population, such as a growing emphasis on outside family involvement and participation in Native American events.

Overview

DOC has been a long-standing member of the Government-to-Government Public Safety Cluster. In 2014, the agency actively participated in the cluster meetings with Dennis Holmes, DOC Religious Services Administrator, chairing the quarterly meetings.

DOC's participation provides the agency with current information on public safety activities and concerns among the various tribes, as well as those of other state agencies. Its participation also provides an avenue for building ongoing relationships with tribal and state representatives. These relationships have been critical as DOC implements strategies and develops statewide procedures that may affect tribal members. The agency also believes that its participation has helped tribes and other state agencies better understand DOC's mission and operations, and that its participation in the cluster has been helpful and beneficial to Oregon's tribes.

Native American Events and Religious Services

A wide range of Native American services and events were provided during the year at all 14 of Oregon's prisons. DOC's Religious Services Unit continued to develop and deliver Native American spirituality and healing programs. Hundreds of male and female inmates attended Native American ceremonies and services.

Spiritual events and ceremonies that were provided include sweat lodges, drumming circles, Pow Wows, talking circles, spirit runs, smudging, pipe ceremonies, language development, counseling, and other

cultural and spiritual development. An extensive series of educational videos and seminars are available to help people understand and heal from historical trauma and to further develop healthy self and tribal identities.

Religious Services has developed healing ceremonies at multiple facilities and plans to expand the offering during the coming year. Religious Services staff works with the Eagle Repository in Colorado to facilitate acquisition of eagle feathers for inmates. Each prison provides regular care and maintenance of its Native American sweat lodge and outdoor worship areas.

DOC is moving toward a goal of enhancing family involvement in inmates' lives. This shift in the DOC's approach to events includes Native American activities as seen in the increase of family attendance at several Native American celebrations this year.

Native American Volunteers

DOC relies on Native American volunteers around the state. Volunteers conduct Native American ceremonies in the prisons and provide spiritual guidance for hundreds of inmates. The agency, as well as the inmates who benefit and participate in these programs, are very grateful to have such dedicated volunteers. Many of the services and programs might not be available without their volunteerism. DOC cannot thank these volunteers enough for giving their time and energy.

Individual Institution Programs and Activities

Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, Wilsonville

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CCCF holds a sweat lodge once a month, and a talking circle is held once a month in the medium facility and two times a month in the minimum facility. A Spring Ceremony was held again this year for both the medium and minimum facilities. The medium facility also has a weekly class called "Healing the Sacred Hoop," led by volunteers who provide culturally appropriate skills and education.

This facility grows sacred medicines, sage lavender, and sweet grass. The medicines are harvested by the Native American inmates under the supervision of Native American volunteers in the minimum; the medicines are used by Native American volunteers and inmates for sacred ceremonies in both the medium and minimum facilities. The inmates who participate in Native Services had the opportunity to make hand-crafted items for giveaway at the Spring Celebration. CCCF plans to continue with this program in 2015.

In addition, Red Lodge Transition Services provided clothing, luggage, and hygiene kits to women who were releasing. They also sponsored several seminars called "Re-Entry and the Law" through the Legal Service Program for participants in the Talking Circle.

Columbia River Correctional Institution/South Fork Forest Camp, Portland/Tillamook

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The Native American program under the supervision of Religious Services at CRCI includes monthly sweat lodges led by Native American spiritual elder Mr. William Ward (a DOC volunteer). CRCI also has a weekly talking circle, led by volunteer Cheryl Deland, and a weekly crafting class that is supervised by the Chaplain or available Native American volunteers. In addition, CRCI holds an annual Pow Wow in early September. SFFC inmates are transported from SFFC to CRCI for this event. Inmates are allowed to invite family members who are on their privileged visiting list to attend; the Pow Wow is an all-day event.

The SFFC Native American program, under the supervision of Religious Services, includes monthly sweat lodges, which are also led by Mr. William Ward. SFFC also has a weekly smudge ceremony that is supervised by the Chaplain.

Deer Ridge Correctional Institution, Madras

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DRCI holds a sweat lodge once a month that includes a pipe ceremony. A drum circle is held once per month with a smudge preceding drumming. Talking circle with a smudge is held on a monthly basis. These ceremonies are conducted by a volunteer from the Warm Springs Confederated Tribes. In addition, a smudge ceremony is accommodated for any inmate who requests one after losing a family member. Native American videos, music CDs, and books are available in the Chapel Library.

DRCI also held its fourth Pow Wow this year that included salmon donated from Warm Springs. Beading and craft work is accommodated four days per week beginning five months prior to the Pow Wow. Pow Wow participants are allowed to invite family and friends to this wonderful event.

Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, Pendleton

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During 2014, EOCI held regular sweat lodges on alternate months with volunteers coming from the Willamette Valley and California, and the facility established a spiritual seminar that had been requested by inmates. In addition, the facility Enrichment Committee established a Native American cultural seminar.

EOCI held another very successful Pow Wow this year. For two months prior to the Pow Wow, the institution allowed Native American inmates to use the craft center to make giveaways and they also held weekly drum practice. Through a donation received, the inmates were able to wear ribbon shirts during the event.

Mill Creek Correctional Facility, Salem

At MCCF, the Native American Circle meets once a week for smudging and drumming on Fridays, and there is a sweat on the third Friday of each month. This year, MCCF joined with SCI for their yearly Pow Wow.

Oregon State Correctional Institution, Salem

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Native American events and activities that operate through OSCI's Recreation Unit as inmate club events include an annual social, an annual Spirit Run (3-5 day event), and a bi-monthly Club Night. Those events that operate through Religious Services include an annual Pow Wow, a monthly sweat ceremony, a weekly drumming, and a Cultural Video Lending Library.

Oregon State Penitentiary, Salem

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Through OSP's Activities Section, the Native community has a club called Lakota Oyate-Ki. The club meets every fourth Thursday of the month. All Club activities are coordinated by the Activities Section staff. These include monthly meetings, banquets, and the annual Pow Wow. The Pow Wow is coordinated and run by the club members and Activities staff advisors. Club members do most of the fundraising for their annual Pow Wow. Currently the institution is considering the possibility of allowing family members to attend the Pow Wow. These events require intensive staff and security support to make them happen in this environment for which Activities carries a great load. There are also two cultural television channels in the institution that rotate between Native American, Hispanic, and Asian programming.

Religious Services, such as weekly sweat lodge, sweat lodge maintenance, pipe ceremonies, and learning/talking circles are coordinated and facilitated by chaplains and volunteers from the community who are recognized as spiritual advisors. Religious Services are provided for men in the general population of the prison as well as in special housing units. In November 2014, the OSP chapel will host a nine-month training of Wellbriety, a Native American faith-based recovery program. The training will be a train-the-trainer process so that a self-sustaining indigenous recovery program can become a continuous part of OSP programming for Native American inmates through Religious Services.

Powder River Correctional Facility, Baker City

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PRCF holds a Native American sweat the first Saturday of each month; on the remaining Saturdays, the institution holds Native American drumming. Friday nights are dedicated to Pow Wow Beading, and every Sunday PRCF has a Native American movie viewing (there are approximately 50 different Native

American movies/documentaries from which to choose). In addition, the Native Circle is allowed to print their own newsletter, which is distributed to all PRCF Native Americans; the newsletter is written by one of the inmate elders and reviewed and edited by the Chaplain.

In 2014, 49 inmates participated in the PRCF Spirit Run. Eight of these individuals are not part of the Native Circle but ran in support of the Circle. The inmates ran a total of 4,415 laps, which equates to over 679 miles – 104 miles more than last year. The Spirit Run occurred between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. every night, June 3-6, with an Inipi Ceremony on June 7.

The 2014 PRCF Pow Wow turned out well, even though the attendance this year was down to 67 from last year's high of 88. This year there were 32 inmates, 21 guests from the inmates' visiting lists, 10 staff, one Native American volunteer, and three assisting inmate workers. All of the Pow Wow dancers cancelled their performances at the last minute (most likely due to the three-day weekend, so the institution will adjust the schedule next year). Because attendance was not as high as expected, there was a large amount of food and guests were able to take home leftovers. The Umatilla Tribe donated five large salmon, the PRCF Native Circle donated money for the purchase of 40 pounds of buffalo, and a nurse at PRCF donated approximately 20 pounds of beef. In addition, there was cake, fry bread, fruit, and many other food items that were donated by guests or provided by PRCF Food Services.

During 2013-14, the Native American inmates made around 200 gifts for the 2014 Pow Wow, which were given to guests by means of a drawing for gift selection order. This year's Pow Wow occurred in August.

Santiam Correctional Institution, Salem

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In addition to the weekly song and drum and the monthly sweat lodge, SCI also held its annual Pow Wow on June 7 (including the beading/crafts program leading up to it) and the Spirit Run June 16-18. Additionally, Native American inmates sponsored a series of fundraising events for the entire institution from January through May to raise money for the Native American religious activities fund at SCI. The institution also welcomed Jim Cupples as its new lead Native American volunteer.

Shutter Creek Correctional Institution, North Bend

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The Native American volunteers offer sweat lodge ceremonies on a monthly basis. On weeks without a sweat, SCCI has a drum line when there is a volunteer available and crafting/beading supplies available. The volunteers have been available periodically for Talking Circle and Pipe Ceremony. In addition, SCCI holds a Change of Seasons Ceremony on the day of the Fall Equinox; rebuilds and dedicates the sweat lodge annually in the spring; and offers a four-day Spirit Run and Sundance Sweat. Volunteers have also met releasing inmates in the community for prayer and smudge (one Home for Good-trained volunteer has a sweat lodge in Coos County to support individuals with sweat lodge ceremonies upon release).

Snake River Correctional Institution, Ontario

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This spring, SRCI built a new sweat lodge. The institution provides four sweat lodge ceremonies per month, with one sweat for each of its four housing units (which includes the minimum facility). In addition to the regular sweats, SRCI also holds a summer Sundance Sweat and a winter New Year's Sweat for all its units. The yearly Pow Wow was held the last Sunday in June with a total of about 300 people in attendance. SRCI has a weekly beading class, a weekly art class, a weekly drumming class, and pipe ceremonies for inmates who have lost a loved one. In March, the institution held a special event solely for the Native Americans. One of the volunteers for the Birds of Prey program out of Boise brought his live Golden Eagle (that he has had for 25 years) and presented a very interesting program on the raptors of our region.

This fall, several of SRCI's good singers are putting together a CD of Native American songs for sweats, Pow Wows, Sundance, death, and other special occasions. This CD will be used in-house for training so inmates can learn their songs. Several different tribal traditions will be included in the CD. SRCI also has hundreds of Native American-related books, DVDs, and CDs that are available to inmates, as well as an in-house television channel on which many Native American movies, cultural events, and documentaries are shown. Last, Chaplain Brabb was the tribal liaison to the Burns Paiute. This is a public safety cluster meeting held quarterly by a number of tribes in Oregon.

Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Umatilla

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TRCI provides a variety of programming for its Native American residents. These include Change of Seasons weekend sweat ceremonies (March, June, September, and December), a week-long Spirit Run (held in August), drum circles (third Sunday monthly), seasonal bead work (June through August), and monthly sweat ceremonies. In addition, TRCI provides drumming, pipe, smudge, and sweat ceremonies (a recent addition) on a monthly basis for men who are in administrative housing. TRCI continues to provide a bereavement pipe ceremony for those inmates who are notified that a loved one has passed away.

TRCI is planning to host its first Pow Wow, projected for September 2015. The facility continues to seek volunteers to facilitate sweat ceremonies, talking circles, pipe and drum ceremonies, as well as instructional/teaching programs about the First Nation (Indigenous) people. The Chaplains have been given support and approval by TRCI Executive Management to provide supervision for sweat ceremonies in the event a volunteer becomes sick or the roads become too hazardous for travel. This way the sweat ceremony is not cancelled; they will be held monthly regardless of a volunteer being present or not.

Warner Creek Correctional Facility, Lakeview

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Each Friday WCCF holds a Talking Circle, which includes prayer, singing, hand drumming, discussion, announcement of upcoming events, and smudging for purification of each member. Volunteer Lloyd Powell led a sweat lodge on the fourth Friday of each month. The institution maintained the outdoor worship area on a weekly basis by means of a small crew of Native American inmate volunteers. WCCF also held a weekly beading class on Tuesdays, a weekly planning meeting for all upcoming events on Thursdays, and a weekly drum circle on Fridays. Occasionally, WCCF holds pipe ceremonies to honor lost relatives.

WCCF's annual Pow Wow was held on September 6 – a day filled with warm weather. The event was attended by 104 participants and was highlighted by two outside drum groups and dancers, enthusiastic co-emcees, great food, good family visits, and more participation in the dance arena than ever before.

Conclusion

The department has continued to work with tribal representatives throughout the state to maintain cooperative relationships. DOC will work to maintain and enhance those relationships in 2015. We look forward to more opportunities to involve the Native American community in our rehabilitative programs and the transition of inmates to communities. We also appreciate our Native American volunteers and look forward to working with them again in the coming year.

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