

# **Oregon Department of Agriculture Government-to-Government 2013 Annual Report**

**Agency: The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA)**

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**Major Areas of Work with Oregon Tribes in 2013**

Stephanie Page, Special Assistant to the Director, represents the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) in the Natural Resources cluster of the Government-to-Government organization, a committee that includes representatives of natural resource agencies and Oregon's tribes.

The ODA programs serving the needs of and providing assistance to Oregon tribes during 2013 are summarized below by program.

***Weights and Measures Program (WMP)***

The WMP assures consumers that the weight or measure of food and non-food products, services, or commodities purchased in Oregon is accurate. The WMP checks the quantity labeling on packaged products, investigates complaints, and annually inspects 54,000 scales, gas pumps, and meters statewide.

Although the tribes' "measurement" devices are not inspected by the WMP, Oregon tribes and some tribal members have requested that the WMP license and test their gas pumps at specific locations on tribal lands.

These Tribes include:

- The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

- The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians (devices at Seven Feathers, K-Bar Ranch, and Umpqua Indian Foods)
- The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- The Coquille Indian Tribe

### ***Natural Resources Programs***

Natural Resource Programs include Agricultural Water Quality, Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO), Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Shellfish Plat Leasing, Smoke Management, Fertilizer, Pesticide Compliance Monitoring, Pesticide Licensing and Certification, Pesticide Product Registration, and the Pesticide Analytical and Response Center.

The Agricultural Water Quality Program regulates agricultural activities to protect water quality throughout Oregon. The program coordinates its planning process at the basin and sub-basin levels with tribes and with federal land management agencies. Participation from local tribes has been sought in advisory groups to ensure that tribal concerns about water quality and endangered species protection are provided a forum among agricultural producers.

Steve Riley and John Byers were invited to consult with the Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde regarding two topics. John Byers addressed the Agricultural Water Quality Management Program. The primary purpose of the discussion was informational, as the tribe has made great strides in water quality improvement. The tribe is concerned about water coming into their ceded lands that could be affected from agricultural activities upstream. Steve Riley described the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP) Program and ODA/DEQ monitoring efforts throughout the state, especially focusing on the Yamhill area.

ODA Regional Water Quality Specialist, Tom Straughan (based in Pendleton), interacts with tribal members and staff from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS). Mr. Straughan has worked with the tribes on water quality improvement projects throughout the John Day, Umatilla and Walla Walla basins.

Additionally, Mr. Straughan has also been assisting the CTUIR in the development of an Agricultural Management Plan. As a member of the “Umatilla Technical Team”, Tom worked with local natural resource agencies, including the CTUIR, on implementing a long-term Umatilla basin water quality monitoring program.

Chris Anderson worked with the Cow Creek tribal government this year as they have bought a ranch in Jackson county that is a permitted CAFO (Rogue River Ranch). The CAFO program assisted with transferring the permit to the new owners and is providing permit compliance assistance.

Pesticide certification specialist Laurie Gordon periodically answers licensing questions from people living on tribal lands; some are looking to hire a pest control company and some are seeking licensing information.

In 2013, ODA's land use specialist reviewed numerous requests for proposed fee to trust acquisitions. No actions were taken.

Rose Kachadoorian worked during April and May 2013 with Suzi Miller, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, regarding Special Local Need pesticide registrations.

### ***Plant Programs***

ODA Plant Programs are Insect Pest Prevention and Management, Native Plant Conservation, Weed Control, and Nursery and Christmas Trees. These programs protect Oregon's agricultural industries and the natural environment from harmful plant pests, diseases, and noxious weeds, enhance the value and marketability of exported nursery stock, Christmas trees, seeds, and other agricultural products, and conserve threatened and endangered plants.

In 2013, ODA Plant Division personnel, of the Native Plant Conservation Program (NPCP), continued with the ongoing cooperative project to restore fish habitat and recover the state-listed species *Pleuropogon oregonus* (Oregon semaphore grass) on Burns Paiute Tribal land in Grant County. As part of this ongoing wetland restoration, approximately 10,000 *P. oregonus* plants were planted along side channels of Lake Creek in the Logan Valley; the largest single effort to date. Jason Kesling, director of the Burns Paiute Natural Resources Department, provided input on plot locations and assisted with transplanting, along with the Tribe's wildlife biologist Kyle Heinrick. Cultural monitors employed by the tribe oversaw the planting and provided cultural clearance. Prior to October's planting, all previous plantings were monitored by ODA staff, which once again showed that Oregon semaphore grass has established well in this site. Continued monitoring of the created population was discussed along with the potential for other cooperative projects including vegetation treatment studies and inventories that may inform future management.

In the fall of 2008 a Bureau of Indian Affairs contractor detected an infestation of African Rue, a State "A" listed noxious weed, on Paiute Tribe grazing allotments in the Harney Basin southeast of Burns. The ODA surveyed the area and determined that the infestation was on both tribal lands and adjacent private lands. Since 2008 an African Rue Cooperative Weed Management Plan is being implemented by ODA, Harney County, the Paiute Tribes and private landowners in the area. During 2013 the infestation was reduced within the treatment area and has been successfully prevented from spreading to other areas.

The ODA Noxious Weed Control Program continues to assist CTUIR in the control of the invasive Garlic Mustard, a "B" listed noxious weed in Umatilla County. This is an ongoing project and is located on or adjacent to tribal lands. ODA is continuing to work with the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe in eradicating Paterson's Curse, an "A" listed noxious weed on tribal lands in Douglas County. The Paterson's curse control project is a cooperative effort between ODA Noxious Weed Control Program, Douglas SWCD and the Umpqua Tribe.

### ***Market Access and Certification Programs***

Market Access and Certification programs address development and marketing needs of Oregon's agricultural industry and provide a variety of fee-for-service inspection services to facilitate market access, including weed-free forage and hay, organic, and Good Agricultural

Practices/Good Handling Practices. Marketing programs actively partner with other agencies and organizations to extend the reach of services provided to agriculture.

In 2013, trade managers Patrick Mayer and Amanda Welker met with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. CTUIR is exploring new cropping options on their lands. The discussion included possible cropping options and potential field trials of alternative grains that are becoming popular but are difficult for wholesalers and retailers to source locally.