

# GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS 2013 SUMMARY REPORT

## OREGON HOUSING and COMMUNITY SERVICES



**December 15, 2013**

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## OREGON HOUSING and COMMUNITY SERVICES



### **Executive Summary:**

I am pleased to present the Oregon Housing & Community Services' 2013 Government-to-Government report detailing our partnerships over the past year with Oregon's tribes as well as identifying opportunities to further develop these critical relationships.

In accordance with Senate Bill 770 and Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 182.162 to 182.168, Oregon Housing & Community Services (OHCS) is submitting the following report to the Governor and the Legislative Commission on Indian Services.

This report was developed with direct input from my dedicated team of agency program staff, policy analysts, and program administrators to identify and describe department programs and services that affect tribal nations. The following material describes the department's activities over the past year with our partnering tribal nations and communities through such efforts as providing funding, training, technical assistance and capacity building through programs such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, SB 770 Clusters, home weatherization, energy bill payment assistance, food distribution, and home ownership programs.

It is important to note that while the following materials attempt to comprehensively reflect those services OHCS provided, they are at the same time non-exhaustive of our mutual efforts. OHCS is committed to working with Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes to provide culturally appropriate services that meet the needs of their communities. We are deeply honored to work with our tribal partners to achieve shared visions of improving outcomes in our communities today and for those generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margaret S. Van Vliet'.

Margaret S. Van Vliet, Director

## **Adopted Department Policy Under ORS 182.164:**

Please see appendices for attached policy titled: *Government-to-Government Relations Policy Regarding federally-recognized Oregon Indian Tribes* (Policy # 10.100.01) as adopted by the department on January 24, 2008 in response to ORS 182.164. This policy seeks to cultivate, improve and maintain partnerships that identify and address mutual goals and concerns between Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) and federally-recognized Oregon tribes.

## **Department Activities:**

Programs administered by Oregon Housing and Community Services (“the department”) are available to all Oregonians who meet income and other eligibility requirements including those who live in tribal communities and Native Americans who live on non-tribal lands in Oregon.

During 2013, the department conducted the following activities impacting Oregon’s nine federally recognized tribal nations:

### **Training & Technical Assistance/Capacity Building for Affordable Housing Development:**

The Regional Advisors to the Department (RADs) are responsible for providing strategic outreach to Oregon communities and for identifying and addressing critical community development activities. RADs help communities to build capacity, finance affordable housing developments, and advocate and provide information to local communities, governments, and decision-makers in order to gain acceptance to the siting of affordable and special needs housing.

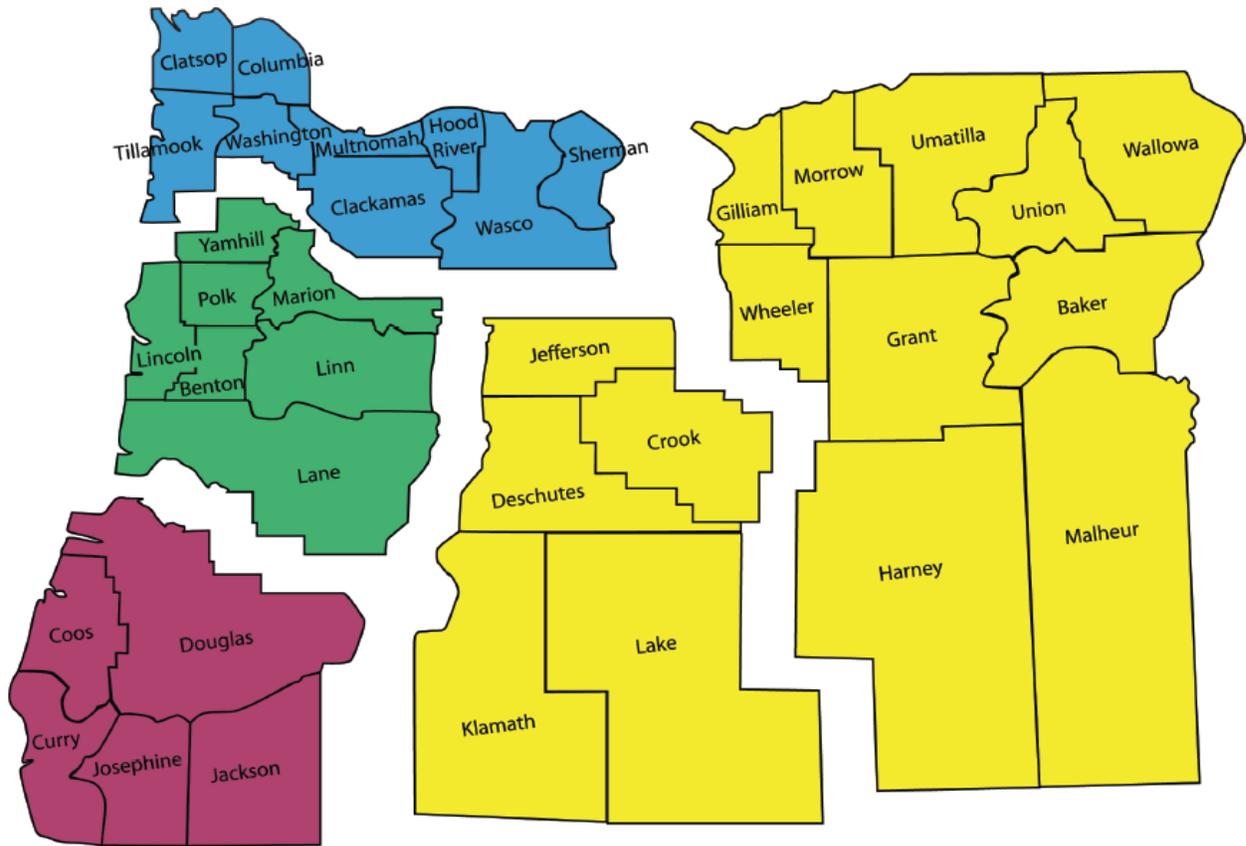
In 2013, the following RADs worked with tribal nations on behalf of the department:

The Central RAD worked with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Spring Indians in the development of an affordable housing project application for submission for the 2013 Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and Notices of Fund Availability (NOFA) process.

The Mid-Willamette Valley RAD worked with the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians in the development of an affordable housing project application for submission to the 2013 LIHTC NOFA.

Below are the specific regions and contact information for each of the department’s Regional Advisors:

# Oregon Housing and Community Services Regional Advisors to the Department



## Central Region

Counties Served:

Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and Wheeler.

### Kim Travis

(503) 428-3843

[Kim.Travis@hcs.state.or.us](mailto:Kim.Travis@hcs.state.or.us)

## Mid-Willamette Valley

Counties Served:

Benton, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk and Yamhill.

### Karen Clearwater

(541) 346-8618

[Karen.Clearwater@hcs.state.or.us](mailto:Karen.Clearwater@hcs.state.or.us)

## Metro and Northwest Region

Counties Served:

Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Hood River, Multnomah, Sherman, Tillamook, Wasco, and Washington.

### Vince Chiotti

(503) 725-2184

[Vince.Chiotti@hcs.state.or.us](mailto:Vince.Chiotti@hcs.state.or.us)

## Southwest Region

Counties Served:

Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, and Lake.

### Karen Chase

(503) 400-2787

[Karen.Chase@hcs.state.or.us](mailto:Karen.Chase@hcs.state.or.us)

### **Participation in SB770 Clusters:**

The department assigned the lead Operations and Policy Analyst from the Policy, Strategy and Community Engagement Division to serve as its Tribal Liaison and provide direct support to our tribal communities and the Director. During 2013, this position has actively participated in both the Health & Human Services and Economic Development & Community Services clusters. Educational materials and other information regarding our programs and transition work have been distributed and feedback is encouraged.

### **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program:**

In 2013, the department significantly reviewed and amended its Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process for its Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) based on a competitive eligibility and award process that included evaluations of key factors such as need and impact on those communities served.

LIHTC is a tax credit incentive program designed to encourage construction and rehabilitation of rental housing for lower-income households through the use of federal tax credits and allocated by the state (certain requirements apply).

Under the 2013 LIHTC NOFA process, the department awarded \$867,712 of OHCS funding to the Warm Springs Housing Authority for the Greeley Heights project. This is the first LIHTC project on the Warm Springs Reservation and leveraged approximately \$2,000,000 in Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) funds to provide 35 new units. Out of these 35 units, 30 units will be designated at or below 50% of the area median income, and 5 units specifically reserved for at or below 30% of area median income.

### **Low-Income Home Weatherization:**

Funds from the U.S. Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program are used in conjunction with other funds from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, utility companies, Bonneville Power Administration, and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds to perform cost effective weatherization measures on houses occupied by low-income families.

Weatherization services include energy saving modifications to heating systems; anti-infiltration measures; water heating efficiency improvements; insulation for attics, heating ducts, floors, exterior walls; and/or addition of storm windows to eligible low-income families. This program is available to both home owners and renters. Through weatherization, fuel consumption is reduced and health and safety repairs are made resulting in lower heating bills and long term preservation of affordable housing stock.

OHCS currently contracts with the Klamath Tribes and Confederated Tribes of Siletz to provide weatherization activities on tribal lands. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Burns Paiute Tribe, and Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation conduct weatherization activities in conjunction with their local Community Action Agency partners.

## **Weatherization Training & Technical Assistance:**

The department currently offers weatherization training in cooperation with Oregon Energy Coordinators Association (OECA) for all local weatherization service providers including tribal staff members. The Residential Energy Analyst Program (REAP) is sponsored and endorsed by the department and staff members of the Klamath Tribes, Confederated Tribes of Siletz, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have received certification through this program. The department has also provided ongoing training in the use of REM/Design energy audit software, OPUS database reporting tools, and general program operations to our tribal partners.

## **Low-Income Energy Bill Payment Assistance:**

The department uses the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide energy assistance payments to vendors (i.e.: utilities and heating oil companies) to help low-income households pay winter energy bills. These funds also provide energy education, energy conservation activities, and outreach support designed to assure that eligible households are made aware of the assistance available.

The Klamath Tribes, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes of Siletz, and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians have administered LIHEAP programs for several years now. Each tribe applies for direct funding through HHS to administer the LIHEAP funds for tribal members.

The department has provided program management and tribal liaison staff time providing general and technical assistance to tribal staff. Tribal staff has been invited to trainings offered to partners as learning opportunities even though the department's relationship with the tribes with this program is non-contractual.

Examples:

- The Klamath Tribes directly contract with the federal government to administer the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The program assists with home energy assistance payments. In support of the Klamath Tribes administering their own LIHEAP, OHCS provides free access to proprietary service delivery as well as tracking and reporting software designed to support the LIHEAP program. The Information Services Division of the department has maintained this relationship and continues to create and support updated software modules that are tailored annually to the specific needs identified by the tribe.
- General OPUS support is provided on an on-going basis for tribal LIHEAP staff that may need or want technical guidance on program delivery and tracking components.
- In addition to general support, tribal program staff members have frequently attended department energy assistance training, networking opportunities, and business meetings with other statewide energy assistance providers.

## **Emergency Food Distribution:**

The department is responsible for administering several emergency food distribution programs throughout the state and facilitates numerous efforts to alleviate hunger.

The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) provides commodity foods to low-income households, including the elderly living on the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, and to Native American families residing in Umatilla and Morrow counties in order to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well-being of Oregon's Indian population by raising their levels of nutrition and nutrition education. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, through its subsidiary agency, Food and Nutrition Services.

Many households participate in the FDPIR as an alternative to the Food Stamp Program because they do not have easy access to the food stamp offices or authorized food stores. Each month, participants may select from over 70 products including frozen meats (including bison), canned fruits and vegetables, soups, spaghetti sauce, pastas, cheese, cereals, rice, egg mix, nonfat dry or evaporated milk, flour, cornmeal, crackers, beans, and dehydrated potatoes to help maintain a nutritionally balanced diet.

The FDPIR program is available to all tribes in Oregon. Four tribes: the Burns Paiute Tribe, Klamath Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz, and Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs administer their own FDPIR program directly with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The department continues to administer the FDPIR program for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation (CTUIR) through a contract with the Community Action Program of East Central Oregon (CAPECO). The program provides benefits to all eligible persons living in the tribal boundaries of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and all eligible tribal members living within a region that extends outside the boundary of the reservation. The designated service area includes Umatilla and Morrow Counties in Eastern Oregon.

## **Home Ownership Program:**

Using the department's home ownership programs for dwellings on sovereign lands presents many challenges and regulatory restrictions. The department continues to work with tribes, financial partners, and contracted service providers to overcome barriers to home ownership lending on tribal lands as well as in other locations.

Much of the department's technical assistance for homebuyers is provided through local Community Housing Resource Center partners (Centers). Centers conduct targeted education and outreach to tribal members throughout the state.

The department also took part in the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Native American Housing to Homeownership Fair held at the Native American Youth Family Center (NAYA). Other partners such as City of Portland, Home Forward, Wells Fargo, Portland Housing Bureau, Eagle Eye Inspections and Home Street Bank were able to attend and provided resources for renters, homebuyers, and homeowners.

## **Partnerships with Community-based Organizations:**

Oregon Housing and Community Services relies on a large and diverse network of partners to provide critical program services throughout Oregon and tribal nations. This includes tribal, federal, regional, and local governments, housing authorities, food banks, affiliated Community Action Agencies, and many more.

Many of our partners have developed long-standing relationships and experience working with and providing culturally specific services to tribal communities. In particular, Oregon's Community Action Agency network currently contracts or has working agreements with seven of the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon to provide numerous services such as educational outreach, food distribution, low-income & energy assistance, transportation, and technical training.

## **OHCS Government-to-Government Relations Goals for 2014:**

- Implement government-to-government training for OHCS Regional Advisors, key Policy Analysts, and Policy, Strategy & Community Engagement Division. Several options for culturally appropriate training materials have already been identified.
- Tribal liaison participation in upcoming 2014 Oregon Department of Administrative Services/ Commission on Indian Services training.
- Visit program staff of each of the nine (9) federally recognized tribes to develop stronger relationships and better understanding of the specific needs and interests of Oregon's first nations.
- Increased educational outreach and training opportunities on fair housing, energy assistance, and the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process with our tribal nations.
- Continued active participation in SB770 Health and Human Services as well as Economic Development and Community Services clusters.

## **Conclusion:**

Oregon Housing and Community Services' ability to meet with the Tribes and participate in opportunities for productive Government-to-Government relations has increased with the new assignment of a Tribal Liaison. Training of staff and expanded outreach remain important activities that have been identified as goals for 2014. The department looks forward to developing stronger relations with the tribes and working with the Commission on Indian Services this coming year.

## **Additional Resources:**

Additional information about government-to-government relations in Oregon is available:

Oregon Housing and Community Services:

<http://www.oregon.gov/OHCS>

Key Contact Directory:

[https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/cis/Documents/contacts/agencies\\_and\\_clusters.pdf](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/cis/Documents/contacts/agencies_and_clusters.pdf)

Oregon Legislative Commission on Indian Services:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/cis/>

List of Oregon's Federally Recognized Tribes:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/cis/>

## **Appendices:**

Attached Department Policy # 10.100.01: Government-to-Government Relations Policy Regarding federally-recognized Oregon Indian Tribes