



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

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## **Government-to-Government Relationships 2010 Annual Report**

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs' (ODVA) mission to serve veterans, their dependents and survivors has always included veterans of Oregon's Native American tribes. It is the Department's policy to promote positive and cooperative government-to-government relations with Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes to ensure Native American veterans receive all the benefits they have earned through their military service.

Per Oregon statutes ORS 182.162-182.168, this 2010 annual report is respectfully submitted to Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski and the Commission on Indian Services. The report highlights ODVA's activities that involved or were related to Native Americans. The report closes with projected government-to-government related actions for 2011.

The Department has worked closely with the Northwest Indian Veterans Association (NIVA) since the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians formed NIVA in 1989. ODVA values its relationships with the Native American tribes of Oregon and understands the unique historical role Native American veterans have played in the United States Armed Forces.

### **2010 Government-to-Government Related Activities**

- The Governor's Advisory Committee to the Director of Veterans' Affairs held its fourth quarter 2009 meeting at Grand Ronde in the Tribal Community Center as guests of Advisory Committee Chair and Tribal Elder Gene LaBonte. (Dec 2009)
- The Governor's Advisory Committee to the Director of Veterans' Affairs held its second quarter 2010 meeting at the Wild Horse Casino and Resort as the guests of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indians. (June)
- ODVA Director Jim Willis, Deputy Director Paula Brown, and other administrators and staff attended the 2010 Tribal Information Day at the Oregon State Capitol. The event highlighted the richness of Native American heritage and the need for protecting and enhancing their cultural and natural resources. (May)
- Gene LaBonte, a U.S Navy veteran of the Vietnam-era and member of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, is the first Native American to sit on the Governor's Advisory Committee to the Director.

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- Director Jim Willis attended and spoke at the 18th Annual Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans' Pow-Wow. ODVA Veterans' Service staff also provided direct outreach about veteran benefits and services. (July)
- Director Jim Willis attended and spoke at a dinner honoring veterans at the Seven Feathers hotel in Canyonville. (July)
- The 2010 Oregon Women Veterans Conference was held at the Seven Feathers Hotel in Canyonville. (March)
- Each year, the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) provides County Veterans' Service Officer (CVSO) two training conferences. Veteran representatives of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes are invited to attend.
- ODVA continues to invite the members of tribal governments to attend quarterly meetings of ODVA's Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC). (Quarterly)
- Maintained the contact information of the nine federally recognized Oregon tribes in the Veterans' Service Officers Directory published by ODVA. The tribal information is also accessible through the ODVA website. (Ongoing)
- ODVA maintains an email contact list for the nine federally recognized Oregon tribes and routinely sends the tribes press releases, legislative updates and other veteran-related information.
- ODVA continues to promote and report on tribal veteran issues, news, and events online at [www.oregon.gov/odva](http://www.oregon.gov/odva) and in the bi-monthly *VETS NEWS* publication.

### **Planned Activities and Interactions for 2011**

- ODVA will continue to extend invitations to members of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes to attend quarterly Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee meetings.
- ODVA will continue and encourage participation in the Tribal Information Day at the Oregon State Capitol.
- The Director, Deputy Director, and other staff will continue to attend meetings and events held by tribes or pertaining to tribal veteran affairs.
- ODVA representatives will continue to be involved in the Oregon Government-to-Government Summit.
- ODVA will continue to promote and report on tribal veteran issues and events both online at [www.oregon.gov/odva](http://www.oregon.gov/odva) and in the bi-monthly *VETS NEWS* publication.

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- ODVA will continue to share materials, press releases and other information on a routine basis with Tribal Chairs and tribal veteran representatives on issues relating to veterans.
- ODVA Veterans' Services section will continue to invite the Tribal Veterans' Service Officers to CVSO training conferences.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Willis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Jim Willis  
Director