



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**®  
Portland District

# Celilo Village

## Redevelopment Newsletter

August  
2008

*A newsletter keeping you informed about upcoming meetings and providing updates as the Corps continues Celilo Village redevelopment.*

**Celilo Falls** long served as a trade center, sacred fishing ground and gathering place for the Northwest Indian tribes. When The Dalles Dam was constructed, the falls were flooded. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided a new location near the original falls, where about 50 people live in Celilo Village. Inadequate maintenance, as well as sanitary and water systems, caused public health and safety concerns to village residents.

To resolve these problems, the Tribes requested the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to rebuild the village under the Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access Sites Project. Congress authorized the reconstruction of the village in March 2004, and the Corps expects construction to be completed by 2009.

### Operations and maintenance funds lacking



**George Miller**

There is no funding proposed in the Fiscal Year 2009 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for the operations and maintenance of Celilo Village, Corps project manager George Miller told the Wy-Am Board at its July 24 meeting. The bill is currently under consideration by the U.S. House and Senate. Original planning included \$2.9 million for the final site work and operations and maintenance of the village infrastructure.

Response to this news came from Jim Beard, Umatilla Tribal planner, who provides administrative assistance to the board. "Right now no money has been budgeted by the federal government to take care of \$20 million of taxpayer-funded improvements at Celilo Village," Beard said. "It is unconscionable that the Corps would not budget or request the money and expect the impoverished village residents and the inadequately funded BIA to be able to protect these properties.

"This scenario is exactly the situation that occurred in the 1950's when the Corps built the village and turned it over to the BIA to take care of with no operations and maintenance funding. That resulted in the deteriorated conditions that preceded the redevelopment project."

Beard later stated the Corps appears to have backed away from its commitment to see the project through to completion.

Board chairman Antone Minthorn said he has asked the Umatilla Tribe's legislative coordinator to work with their Washington D.C. policy analyst on this issue.



**Jim Beard**



### Construction starts on BIA office — classroom building

This month contractors started work on the final building planned for the village. One half of this building will house a Bureau of Indian Affairs office, the other half a community classroom and computer lab.

Once the modular units were moved contractors demolished their concrete slabs and began grading the site and excavating for the building's foundation. Following that, water, sewer and electrical lines will be run in.

The building will be at the east end of the village with a small parking lot next to it.

## Removal of temporary homes

A year ago Colville Tribal Services Corporation, the prime contractor, purchased 16 modular homes for Celilo Village residents to live in while their new homes were being built.

This June the new homes were ready and all the residents moved in. The utilities that served the temporary homes were discontinued and CTSC sold the units—half went to the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs and half to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. All of the units should be removed from Celilo Village by the end of September.

“At present we’ve moved three of them out of the way for the building,” said CTSC project manager Art Harding. Work is scheduled to start on the BIA and classroom building this month and three of the temporary units occupied its planned location.



*Modular homes ready to move out of the village.*

## Wy-Am Board meeting

**Aug. 22, 2008, 10 a.m., Celilo Longhouse, Elders Room**

*The Wy-Am Board invites Celilo Village residents to attend meetings, participate in the process and provide comments.*

## Wy-Am Board Members

*Celilo Village:* Bobby Begay, Delilah Begay

*CTUIR:* Antone Minthorn, Leo Stuart

*CTWS:* Ron Suppah, Reuben Henry

*YIN:* Ruth Jim, Lavina Washines

Celilo Village Redevelopment Newsletter is published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, to keep residents and interested members of the public informed of Celilo Village redevelopment. Project Manager: George Miller  
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## Village begins focus on governance

The Wy-Am board has accepted a proposal from the Rural Development Initiative to begin a project aimed at supporting self-governance at Celilo Village. RDI is a nonprofit organization based in Eugene, Ore., working to increase the viability of rural communities throughout Oregon.

The first phase will be a five month program to train at least three to six people as facilitators, identify a larger group of people from the village and other Columbia River Indians who are interested in building leadership skills, and establish a group of external supporters and advisors. The \$24,000 cost of this phase is funded with a \$14,000 grant from the BIA and \$10,000 that RDI is bringing to the project from other funders.

RDI’s executive director Kathi Jaworski said the focus of the yet unfunded second phase governance work will be based on objectives determined with input from community residents during phase one.



*Kathi Jaworski, left, and Az Carmen will head the RDI’s work at Celilo Village.*

## Grass fire near village

A fire of undetermined origin started near Interstate 84 on Aug. 3 and quickly spread into the brush and up the hillside. Fire teams put it out before it reached the village.

Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue quickly brought a fire engine to the west end of the village nearest the blaze to monitor the fire and kept it there overnight until the danger passed.

“We’re grateful for the new water system and hydrants in the village,” said MCF&R Division Chief Jay Wood. “The village’s system has the capacity to handle almost any fire out there.”



*Fire came within in a few miles of the village early August.*