



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Portland District

Celilo Village Redevelopment Newsletter

February
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.



Occupancy permit hearing

The Wy-Am Board's Jan. 31 meeting was a hearing on the proposed Occupancy Permit Agreement for the 15 permanent Celilo Village homes. The permit defines the responsibilities and rights of the residents and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Due to construction in the village, the hearing was held in The Dalles at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center. The BIA had chartered a bus to bring residents to the hearing.

Paul Young, BIA superintendent at Warm Springs, led the hearing and went over each clause in the permit. He invited residents to ask questions or make comments as he went through the permit. "The houses will be done in May," Young said. "This permit is a way to get people into the permanent houses. We're not trying to develop this document in a vacuum; we want your input. The board called this meeting to get resident input."

That opinion was seconded by Wy-Am Board chair Antone Minthorn. "The villagers need to come together and really look at this document, as it will partly determine governance. Now is the opportunity to shape this document. A lot of work must be done to determine how this is going to fit Celilo Village. The next step may be to have a workshop once the residents have had time to review the document, so everyone is comfortable with it and understands it."

The permit will be effective 30 days after the comment period ends. Residents asked to have more time to go through the draft. "Thirty days, as far as the BIA and Corps are concerned, is not the issue," said BIA Regional Director Stanley Speaks. "Take the time you need to get it as you need it for the village."

The BIA presented a first draft of the permit during the board's February 2007 meeting and provided copies to the tribes and residents for suggestions. They provided the draft, along with submitted comments, to a working group to develop. This January they sent the revamped document to the board, residents and interested parties prior to the hearing.

Occupancy permit

Summary: In brief, the occupancy permit states that BIA Warm Springs Agency will be the landlord and the residents will be permittees who must be members of the Yakama, Umatilla, or Warm Springs tribes or a Columbia River Indian. The governing body is to be the Wy-Am Board. The home sites must be kept in decent, safe and sanitary condition as defined in the permit. A BIA representative will inspect the house prior to move-in and annually thereafter. The permittees must arrange and pay for all utilities and home repairs. If the home becomes uninhabitable, the permittee will be required to vacate the home site. The BIA will maintain the water lines, the homes' roofs and exterior sidings. Permittees must receive BIA's permission before allowing anyone except family members to live in the home, or before making any additions to the structure.

Working group: A working group took the draft permit and developed it for the hearing. The group consisted of: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation planner Jim Beard and attorney J.D. Williams; BIA superintendent at Warm Springs Paul Young; BIA realty specialist at Warm Springs Lyle Fox; BIA Regional Office realty specialist Alida Gulley; BIA solicitor Stephanie Lynch; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project manager George Miller; and Corps attorney Doug Cramer.

Construction Images



Next Wy-Am Board meeting

Feb. 28, 2008 , 10 a.m., Gorge Discovery Center

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 Heemsah
CTUIR: Antone Minthorn, Leo Stuart
CTWS: Ron Suppah, Reuben Henry
YIN: Ray James, Sam Jim, Sr.

The Celilo Village Redevelopment Newsletter is published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, to keep residents and other interested members of the public informed of the Celilo Village redevelopment.

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