

## ***Blue Heron FAQ's***

### ***Is the Tribe buying the Blue Heron Property?***

- Recently, the Grand Ronde Tribe was blessed with the opportunity to place the Blue Heron property at Willamette Falls under a signed purchase and sale agreement.
- Tribal staff is currently conducting considerable due diligence work on the property and negotiating a Prospective Purchaser Agreement with Oregon DEQ.

### ***What is involved in the due diligence work?***

- The due-diligence includes actively consulting with partners and stakeholders, a review of the site's master plan, conducting environmental reviews, title and boundary reviews, looking at the historic and cultural resources at the site, and looking at over 140 different documents associated with every aspect of the property.
- A significant number of environmental reviews have already been completed for this site and are included in the Tribe's due diligence work. These include multiple Phase 1 Environmental Assessments, a Phase I Environmental Assessment by Wood Plc, a 2011 preliminary soil investigation by the Bridgewater Group, and a 2019 Phase II Environmental.

### ***Will the Tribe be responsible for the environmental cleanup?***

- The Tribe is currently negotiating a Prospective Purchaser Agreement with Oregon DEQ. A Prospective Purchaser Agreement is a legally binding agreement between DEQ and the Tribe that limits the Tribe's liability to DEQ for environmental cleanup if the Tribe becomes the landowner. The agreement would release the Tribe from liability for claims by the State of Oregon while outlining the scope of a cleanup plan that the Tribe would adhere to.
- There are funding opportunities that could help cover the costs associated with the cleanup. Those opportunities include grants, the EPA Brownfield Program, and contributions from partners associated with the Riverwalk project.

### ***What are the Tribe's plans for the site?***

- An initial highest and best use analysis identified a mixed-use development but the Tribe is in the process of doing a full highest and best use study for the site.
- A phase I project has been proposed through the Willamette Falls Riverwalk project.

### ***Why is the Tribe interested in this property?***

The Tribe is interested in purchasing the property for a number of reasons:

- **Overall Cultural Context:** The potential acquisition of this property insures the Grand Ronde Tribe has the opportunity to provide the cultural context of the Falls' importance to all its neighbors and partners.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Willamette Falls is part of the Tribe's ancestral homelands and this purchase allows us to reclaim a culturally important part of that homelands.

- **Cultural Awareness:** By acquiring the site, the Grand Ronde Tribe can tell the Tribe's history and connection to the falls accurately. Without this acquisition, the Tribe's story would be told by a third party.
- **Secures Access:** The acquisition of this property assures that tribal members will always be able to access Willamette Falls for cultural purposes.
- **Rehabilitation:** The Clackamas and Clowwewalla people were the year-round residents at the falls and responsible for its management. Ownership of this property allows the Tribe to return to our role as stewards of these lands and ensures a caretaker role as it works on rehabilitating the site and rebuilding this special piece of the Tribe's homelands in the Tribe's vision.
- **Development:** Parts of this property will be redeveloped but a lot of work and rehabilitation needs to occur before development can be implemented.

### ***What does this mean for the Riverwalk?***

- Should the Tribe purchase the property, the Tribe is committed to working with Metro, as well as local, state and federal partners in a collaborative manner to define a future for this property.

### ***Is this about a Casino?***

- If the Grand Ronde Tribe was interested in a Casino in the Portland Metro area, it would have pursued something on the Wood Village property. That property is located along I-84 and is ready for development. Instead, the Tribe has been reinvesting in Spirit Mountain Casino in the community of Grand Ronde.
- Since 2015 the Grand Ronde Tribe has invested over 42 million dollars into Spirit Mountain Casino and the Lodge. That investment speaks to the Tribe's commitment to Spirit Mountain Casino and its current location.

### ***What is the Tribe's Presence at Willamette Falls Today?***

Over the years, the Tribe has worked to reconnect a people to their ancestral homelands and be present within the Tribe's ancestral lands - specifically at Willamette Falls. The purchase of this property would be another component that would strengthen that presence. Other components of that work include:

#### **Ceremonial Fishery at Willamette Falls:**

- The current ceremonial fishery at Willamette Falls restores and revitalizes our historic fishing traditions while laying the foundation for these cultural activities to continue for future generations.
- Since 2016, the Grand Ronde Tribe has been conducting a ceremonial fishery at Willamette Falls. The fishery allows tribal fishers to harvest 15 salmon by the Tribe for tribal ceremony.
- This fishery is a state authorized fishery and consistent with the Grand Ronde Restoration Act including any and all agreements that exist between the Grand

Ronde Tribe, the Federal Government, and the State of Oregon. (See Or. Admin. R. 635-041-0610)

### **Fishing Scaffold at Willamette Falls**

- The scaffold allows the Grand Ronde Tribe to safely harvest ceremonial fish at Willamette Falls at the time of year when our ancestors historically took the first fish from the Falls. The Tribe has taken ceremonial fish at the falls for the past three years.
- However, this harvest has been done later in the season when water levels are lower and rocks for fishing are exposed. The scaffold allows us to take fish at the culturally appropriate time of year.
- The fishing scaffold at Willamette Falls is located on state lands and is properly permitted by the Oregon Department of State Lands.

### **A reinvestment into the area is a reinvestment in the Tribe's homelands:**

- Since 2000, the Grand Ronde Tribe has been working with its neighbors to reinvest into its ancestral homelands throughout the area.
- To date, the Tribe has invested over 4.3 million dollars into the area through the Spirit Mountain Community Fund.
  - Clackamas County: 125 grants for a total of \$2,772,093
  - West Linn: 4 grants for a total of \$68,950
  - Oregon City: 50 grants for a total of \$1,163,580
  - Willamette River: 15 grants for a total of \$296,970
- These dollars have been used to protect the natural environment, support arts and culture, and support education programs.
- The reinvestment of the Grand Ronde Tribe includes a cultural investment. Grand Ronde Tribe has been working with its neighbors at the End of the Oregon Trail Museum and the Museum of the Oregon Territory to create exhibits and educational displays that accurately depict the history of the region and it's first inhabitants.
- The reinvestment of the Grand Ronde Tribe is a reinvestment into the environment. It's a reinvestment into improving water quality, rebuilding lamprey populations, and restoring habitat.

### ***What is the Tribe's Historical Connection to Willamette Falls?***

- The Clowewalla band were year-round residents at the falls and were known as the gatekeepers of the falls. They were responsible for the management of the fishery and visiting tribal members would share with them a percentage of their catch as a type of tribute at the fishery.

William A. Slacum in 1837 noted that:

*"Keowewallahs, alias Tummewatas [Tumwater] or Willhametts.*

*This tribe, now nearly extinct, was formerly very numerous, and live*

*at the falls of the river, 32 miles from its mouth, on the right bank. They claim the right of fishing at the falls, and exact a tribute from other tribes who come hither in the salmon season (from May till October)."*

- Willamette Falls was an important location for many tribes. A type of economic hub, tribal members came from all over to fish, trade, and interact at the falls. Even in the late 1800's this practice was exercised. Notably this was documented by the Indian agent at Grand Ronde when he notes that Oregon City John and others travel to Willamette Falls for fish camp, leaving Joe Apperson (John's son) to run the fishery at Willamette Falls while Oregon City John advances to Cascade Rapids on the Columbia River to run the fishery there.
- These lands were ceded to the United States Government under the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 (signed January 22, 1855 and ratified on March 3 of the same year).
- Tribal members were then removed from these ancestral lands to the 60,000-acre reservation at the headwaters of the Yamhill River at the base of the coast range.
- Following this removal, tribal members would return to the Falls to fish for subsistence purposes.