Flight of the Prey-go-neesh

The Yurok Tribe embraces the return of the California condor on the reservation. See story page 3
On The Cover

Ventana Field Technician Sayre Flannigan (back), Yurok tribal member and Wildlife Technician Tiana Williams (middle), and Ventana Wildlife Intern Kristy Markowitz (front). The women are about to let go of a California condor, but are struggling to maintain control until they are ready. Letting go before everyone is positioned and a proper avenue of escape is established for the bird can result in serious injuries for handlers and condors alike.

Condor photos by the Yurok Tribe’s senior wildlife biologist Chris West.
A flock of irony hovers high around the topic of the California condor, the largest flying land bird in North America.

When Europeans first began imperialistic ventures into California they often killed condors at first sight because they believed the bird was a threat to livestock. The “colonists” also believed an adult condor, which has a wing-span of about nine and a half feet, was capable of flying off with small children — a complete myth. Condors feed exclusively off of the carcasses of dead and decaying mammals such as elk, deer and seals.

“Now, the condor is the number one bird vacationers’ travel to see at state and national parks,” said the Yurok Tribe’s senior wildlife biologist Chris West.

West, who is a veteran condor biologist and Tiana Williams, a Yurok tribal member and Harvard graduate, are working under a $200,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to do a feasibility study for the reintroduction of the rare bird in Yurok ancestral territory.

Currently, there are only 327 condors left in the United States, but only half live in the wild. In 1982, condor numbers descended to 22 birds as a result of unwarranted killing and their susceptibility to lead poisoning. This forced the trapping of the remaining birds for captive breeding purposes, and the creation of the California Condor Recovery Team, which the Yurok Tribe is in the process of joining.

West and Williams have been very busy trying to determine if condors can exist here. To start the study, the two began closely examining the health of turkey vulture populations in Yurok ancestral territory with the help of Redwood National Park biologists. These smaller, carrion-consuming distant relatives of condors have similar feeding habits.

“Turkey vultures are a pretty good surrogate for condors because they eat pretty much the same things,” Williams said. “However, they are not perfect because condors are very sensitive to lead and turkey vultures are not.”

Limited preliminary data suggest that turkey vultures in the area are healthy, which indicates that condor reintroduction could be a possibility in ancestral territory, which contains prime habitat for the still critically endangered bird.

Condor feathers are paramount regalia pieces in Yurok ceremonies, such as the White Deerskin Dance and the Jump Dance.

Looking toward the future, Williams and West are taking the necessary actions to become part of a tightly knit, highly effective condor reintroduction team on the West Coast, which so far consists of zoos, state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations.

During the raging wildfires in Big Sur this summer, the world renowned Ventana Wildlife Society reintroduction facility was lost. Williams and West didn’t waste any time making the trip down to offer a much-needed helping hand in rebuilding the facility and to reinforce a critical partnership.

“Bringing back condors isn’t something you do by yourself,” West said. “It’s a time, funding and equipment intensive endeavor.” If it is viable to bring back the condor in Yurok Country the Yurok Tribe plans on building its own reintroduction facility. Rebuilding a world-class facility will no

This parent-reared condor hatched in 1999 in the San Diego Wild Animal Park. West helped care for the animal at the Ventana Wildlife reintroduction site and later studied the bird in his research in Southern California.
doubt be a benefit toward that aim. However, there are some hurdles to pass in order to bring back the ecologically and culturally important winged creature. The lead issue is huge and it is a problem that humans can counteract.

In one recent instance in Baja California, a donkey was shot dead with lead buckshot. The eight reintroduced condors that fed off the burro all would have died without an emergency airlift to the San Diego Wild Animal Park for treatment. Condors are mainly exposed to lead because of deer and elk hunting. Most hunters use lead bullets that break apart inside of the animal upon impact, which is part of what makes them so effective. Unknowingly, after field-dressing, hunters leave the lead-filled entrails out in the forest where condors find the remains. The birds routinely consume two to three pounds of food per feeding.

Williams, a hunter herself, said that copper bullets, with the help of new technology, are reported to have just as much stopping power as lead ammunition. Modern copper bullets fly at a higher velocity and open up on impact, leaving bigger holes in targets while producing as much shock force with greater penetration.

Condors also face other toxic challenges. While the pesticide DDT was banned in the United States decades ago, it is still legal in southern nations where some widely ranging species of seals forage on food laced with the toxin. At other times of the year these same animals are found off our very own coastline. DDT breaks down into DDE, which can linger for decades in the environment. Both forms of the toxin are organochlorines and affect egg shell structure, resulting in increased water loss and egg mortality. West and Williams will be scouting for stranded seals, also referred to as pinnipeds, this spring to take fat samples and determine if the dead animals contain high levels of organochlorines.

Williams and West are pursuing further funding and are committed to seeing condors fly across Yurok Ancestral Territory as they had for millennia before contact.

“Right now, preliminary evidence indicates that this may be feasible. If it is determined that Yurok country is safe for condors, reestablishing the condor population here would be a huge step towards returning the landscape to what it was meant to be, which is something I think we all want,” concluded Williams.

Soon after I began serving as Executive Director, I wrote in this newsletter that one of my priorities was to improve the infrastructure of the Yurok Tribe’s reservation. Of course, that is not my priority alone, as Yurok Tribal leaders and government staff have worked for years on the same goal. Progress has been made, and is being made, toward that goal. In the last year, we finished construction of the Wildland Fire Station at Tulley Creek to better protect the reservation from destructive fires, started construction of the middle segment of an electric line extension down river from Weitchpec with the objective of bringing power to the majority of residences along the river who have done without for so long, completed improvements to the tribe’s Requa Resort and made it into a first class camp ground and boat launch facility, started construction of the Child Care/Head Start facility that will place the young children into modern facilities, and made improvements to the Klamath Lodge to preserve and enhance a historic facility that someday soon will be transferred to the tribe from the U.S. Forest Service.

We now have the opportunity to take a giant step in improving the infrastructure of the tribe as a result of a $787 billion Economic Stimulus Plan signed into law by President Obama in mid February. Approximately $2.5 Billion of the Plan’s funds are intended to go to tribal projects and programs. This Plan will infuse our national economy with hundreds
of billions of dollars, much of it to be disbursed by the various federal agencies. Over one-half of the amount ($1.8 Billion) designated for tribes is aimed at building or renovating health clinics and schools. The remaining funds can be used for projects such as those included in the Yurok tribal plan that are critical to the tribe’s future well being and growth. The tribal leadership and staff have been working feverishly the last several weeks putting together a tribal package that meets the intent of the President’s Plan and meets the tribe’s highest priorities. The total estimated cost of these tribal projects is approximately $60 million. This does not mean we are guaranteed to receive this amount, it only means that we have requested funding in that amount for specific projects.

One of the highest priority shovel ready projects in the tribe’s economic stimulus package is the “last” segment of the electric power line extension in the middle of the reservation ending at Wautec, at a cost of $6.8 million. Other projects include expanding telecommunication services on the reservation with the addition of three cell towers along the river and emergency communication equipment at a cost of $1.4 million, various road improvements and transit services at a cost of $18.1 million, installing renewable energy equipment at our tribal facilities and many low income homes on the reservation at a cost of $1.8 million, wastewater and water projects in the Klamath area at $1.4 million, a commercial fish processing plant near the mouth of the Klamath River that would cost $3 million, watershed restoration work totaling $2.5 million, and several facilities to house our tribal operations staff and equipment, a community center, a cultural center and school modernization at a cost of $23.5 million. These projects will help improve the lives of our community members, restore habitat for fish, and create employment on the reservation. Imagine the impact of $60,000,000 flowing into our local economy! While each of these is a priority project for the tribe in improving the reservation infrastructure, we realize that competition will be fierce for these funds and some projects are not likely to be funded this year. Yet, we remain optimistic that all of these worthy projects will be funded at some point in time.

While the federal government is distributing hundreds of billions of dollars into local economies, President Obama has also pledged to cut the $1.5 Trillion deficit in half. The President plans to reduce this deficit by cutting back on Iraq war spending, raising taxes on the wealthiest and streamlining the federal government. Part of his plan is to impose a “Pay-As-You-Go” rule that requires spending reductions to match any spending increases. Hopefully this rule will not unduly hinder the tribe in obtaining necessary funds to carry out its vital services and programs. We will prepare our budget in the coming fiscal year to adapt to different funding scenarios in the event there are any cut backs.

In order to enhance our ability to improve the infrastructure, the tribe has been researching lands for sale on the Reservation that have cultural, commercial or strategic value to the tribe. In the last year, we have commenced negotiations to purchase a few large acreage tracts, such as Green Diamond Resources land on the north side of the river, and several strategically located parcels that will enhance the tribe’s ability to effectively govern activity on the Reservation and protect the natural resources. We will use the funding and authority made available to the tribe pursuant to the Hoopa-Yurok Settlement Act to acquire lands, and then develop them as is appropriate and consistent with Yurok values.

As to tribal staffing news, I am pleased to announce the selection of 2008 Employee of the Year and 2008 Director of the Year - Bob Ray, Fisheries Dept., and Roland Raymond, Forestry Dept., respectively. (see pictures on page 14.) Both employees are Yurok tribal members. Bob was selected by vote of the tribal employees at the annual staff meeting and Roland was selected by me after I rated the Directors on ten attributes of being a valuable manager. Congratulations to both of these deserving employees.

We are pleased with our success in bringing tribal members back to the reservation to work for the tribe, such as Javier Kinney, Transportation and Roads Manager, Paul Riecke, Grant Writer, and Kathryn Smith, Assistant Director of Education.

These employees are key additions to our staff and we look forward to adding other highly qualified tribal members to our professional staff. And last, the tribe reached a milestone recently when Cindee McKernan, Executive Assistant became the first tribal employee to celebrate 20 years with the tribe. Congratulations Cindee!!
Everyday when Yurok Tribal member Robert R. Kinney wakes up he says, “I can’t wait to learn something new in the Yurok language.”

Robert has been feverishly pursuing fluency in the Yurok language for two and half years using every tool available to accomplish his goal.

“The idea I have is that I am able to speak like a 2 ½ year old in Yurok today. Forty years from now I plan on speaking as well as a 42 ½ year old.” “Another way to put it is that I plan on learning Yurok for some time.” Robert said.

Robert is one of nearly 60 intermediate Yurok language learners who participated in the yearly Yurok Language Community Forum and participated in the Yurok Language Institute, both were co-sponsored by the Yurok Tribe’s Education Department.

“This ever growing crew might have a long road ahead of them but it’s actions like these that are putting them in the fast lane to fluency,” said Yurok Education Director Jim McQuillen.

Yurok tribal member Leo Canez also participated in the annual Language Institute and helped create the yearly Yurok Community Language Forum, which occurred for the fourth time this winter.

“One of the most significant accomplishments of the 2008 YLCF is that the participants developed a beginner’s “survival” guide for new language speakers which consists of 60 basic words/ phrases that every new speaker should know,” said Canez, who also teaches Yurok language at Humboldt State University.

Robert, a University of California Davis Native American Studies graduate and guidance counselor for the Tribe’s Education Department, didn't really start picking up the Yurok language in earnest until after he moved back into the Humboldt County area two and half years ago.

“I was taught that in order to succeed in the public school system I would have to be competent in the English language,” Robert said.

The first words that Robert taught himself were “TO’ KEE KEM NEY WU CHEK” (I will see you again later.) After learning this phrase Robert decided to break up his learning of the language into sections (for example: Birds, Counting, Foods, Peoples, More Counting, Weather and everyday phrases.) “I didn’t start learning the birds just because I like birds. I memorized the Yurok word for each bird because many of them play an important role in our ceremonies,” Kinney said.

In addition to clocking countless hours in Yurok language classrooms and learning the vernacular from a number of Yurok elders, Robert also uses modern technology, such as CD’s / computer recording, digital photographs etc.

“I have well over four hours of Yurok language on my Ipod,” Robert said. “That's a lot.”

In addition to Ipods not being available when Robert was in high school, Yurok language classes didn’t exist either. Now, at some of the schools where Robert works to keep Yurok students on the right track, Yurok language classes are offered because of the work of the Tribe’s Education Department, along with community members committed to the language of not only Yurok but Hoopa, Karuk, and Tolowa.

“I see first-hand most days how much potential there is and how much enthusiasm students have to learn Yurok,” said Kinney, who carries a similar excitement about continuing to participate in the Yurok Language Institute and Yurok Language Community Forum in the coming years.

The Yurok Language Institute is part of the Yurok Tribe’s

(Front) Robert R. Kinney, Tammy Cairns and James Gensaw participate in Yurok Language Institute.
Council increases honorarium

Council members placed on the agenda an action item on Jan. 20 that would increase the annual amount to each Council member's honorarium.

According to the Yurok Constitution the Tribal Council shall prescribe salaries and allowances, if any, for all elected officials of the tribe. No setting or adjustment of salaries shall be done without at least 30 days notice that it will be on the Tribal Council Agenda.

Option 1 would increase the amount $8,000 annually ($666 per month)

Option 2 would increase the amount $3,000 over a two-year period ($250 per month)

After much debate each Council Member cast their vote. Option 1 was approved on Feb. 19 by a vote of 6 in favor with 3 opposing. Council members Sid Nix, Dale Ann Frye Sherman, David Gensaw Sr., Larry Hendrix and Lyle McKinnon voted for the honorarium. Council members Bonnie Green, Marjorie Buckskin and Richard Myers opposed it. As the Constitution prescribes, this increase will not go into effect until one year from the date approved.

Spring fishery meetings

Meetings to discuss the structure of the 2009 spring fishery will be held with Tribal Fishers on March 21st and 22nd at the locations and times listed below. As you may recall, regulations have been adopted during recent years to protect green sturgeon and spring Chinook populations. Last year regulations included a three-day per week closure, a daily limit of two green sturgeon per Fisher, and a prohibition on selling and bartering green sturgeon. Input will be received from Tribal Fishers regarding last year's regulations, as well as recommendations for the coming spring fishery.

Council travel budget

COUNCIL TRAVEL AND GSA VEHICLE BUDGET VS ACTUAL EXPENDITURES
FROM OCTOBER 1, 2008 THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2009

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
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<th>Vehicle Expense</th>
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*Requa District elected a new Council member in October and was seated in November. The travel expense in column two reflects both Council members costs for travel.

Each year the Tribal Council establishes a Travel/Transportation budget based upon the Tribal activities that will require travel in the coming year.
Envision yourself standing at the edge of a 100-yard long Klamath stickgame field. The sand is soft and smooth. Not one foot has trod upon it. Now imagine it 50 foot high box of trash sitting on top of it.

That is how much household trash a Yurok Tribe Environmental Program orchestrated clean-up removed from an illegal dumpsite near Tulley Creek this fall. The 168 tons does not include hundreds of pounds of hazardous waste, tires, appliances and a stolen truck also hauled away during the clean-up.

The five acre illegal dumpsite was located at the end of Tulley Creek Road, which is on the west side of the Klamath River near Tulley Creek and the community of Tulley Creek. In addition to the household trash, the dump was filled with hundreds of pounds of toxic and flammable chemicals, two dozen unfixable vehicles, 145 tires, two industrial 100-pound batteries, numerous travel trailers, old paint cans, various fuel products and the brand new stolen full-size Dodge Ram Hemi.

“The combination of hazardous household waste and other toxic materials in an illegal dumpsite so close to a residential area is very disturbing. The fact that many piles of illegally dumped trash were also set on fire only compounds the environmental and public health problems this type of activity creates,” said Kate Sloan, Director of the Yurok Tribe’s Environmental Program.

“Burning hazardous materials often produces more toxins that become airborne and pose additional public health problems beyond the dumpsite. Residue and leaking materials contaminate soils and groundwater, even our river and our fish.”

The Yurok Tribe has a suspect who it believes is responsible for the illegal disposal site, but the non-tribal member has evaded law enforcement to date.

The crew also removed an approximately 2,000 square foot home, which nature had more than instigated a colossal effort to reclaim.

The clean-up was completed by YTEP staff, California.
Integrated Waste Management Board staff and seven Yurok tribal members specially trained to remove hazardous waste.

Using Indian Health Services funds the Tribe paid 20 Yurok tribal members to complete the 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response training before the clean-up. The YTEP crew and seven of the 20 trained Yurok tribal members dressed in protective suits cleared the roughly 168 tons or 1,684 cubic yards of illegally dumped material in eight days, using everything from excavators to common rakes. Some of the temporary employees who were not required to complete the Tulley Creek clean-up will be participating in a clean-up this Spring, which is a much larger site.

After the clean-up, locking gates were installed to prevent further illegal dumping.

During the same week the crew also removed 32 tons of illegally dumped debris from another site near Roach's Creek on the eastern side of the Klamath River. The team used an excavator and various hand tools to uncover the buried dumpsite, which was only partially exposed. Erosion had masked most of the trash.

A helicopter was used to ferry the hand-loaded 5 cubic yard bins from the site to Young's Bar where it was hauled away by truck.

The Tribe is making every effort to stop illegal dumping on the Reservation. The Reservation’s isolated location makes it difficult to police and an ideal destination for those looking to abandon trash. The Tribe’s Environmental Program’s philosophy about pollution prevention encompasses increasing access to legal disposal stations, developing recycling centers and providing education on hazards of illegal dumping & household waste as well as healthy and sustainable alternatives to illegal dumping.

“Our goal is to intercept and redirect the trash before it ends up in an illegal dump on the reservation,” Sloan said.

The combined removal effort was funded by an $800,000 California Integrated Waste Management Board grant. The California Integrated Waste Management Board is the State agency whose job is to oversee, manage, and track California’s 92 million tons of waste generated each year.

What are the needs of our elders?

Results from the Yurok Social Services Elder Survey of 268 respondents tell us that many of our elders are interested in having traditional foods and want to go places (need transportation).

Approximately 37% of the responses came from Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Elders identified their needs and needed services.

They desire a transportation system, home repair and modification services, food (meals on wheels and gathering/distribution of traditional food). They also requested good health care services to maintain good health, which includes: walking groups, caregiver support, home health care, and increased home visits for medical support.

The Grant: Indian Health Services provided an Elder Care Initiative Long Term Care Planning Grant to tribal communities to identify the needs of elders in their communities, prioritize top needs and develop a plan to meet the community’s needs.

IHS offers a second grant, which is an Implementation grant for Elder Care. Yurok Social Services will be eligible to apply for the Implementation grant for the next funding cycle expected 2010.

Process and timeline: The Elder Care Planning Team has representatives from the Yurok Social Services Advisory Committee, UIHS Senior Nutrition, YIHA, Bear River and Area 1 on Aging.

The Survey. The Elder Care Planning committee decided to use the survey developed by the National Resource Center on Native American Aging along with a supplemental survey developed by the committee.

Among other things, this survey helps to identify general health status, health care access, the level of activity in daily living, and social support/housing. The survey was distributed by mail and at community gatherings during April through June 2008. An entry into a drawing for a Pendleton lap blanket was offered to elders completing the survey.

We want to be around our elders. Elders are an important part of our community and as Yurok people, we know it is important to keep our connections strong. There are many opportunities to strengthen these connections. For examples families could adopt an elder to visit with and help out.

It’s our responsibility to figure out how to best meet these needs. The community is invited to come to the meetings held at each of the districts where the survey results will be shared and planning for meeting our Elders’ needs will be discussed. These meetings are being planned for late January, February and March.

If you have questions, contact Tene Kremling at (707) 496-3841 or Michelle Rainer at (707) 834-5568. Look for an announcement on your district meeting notice.
Council member keeping pledge

Newly-elected Yurok Tribal Council Requa District Representative David Gensaw Sr. is keeping his promise.

During his campaign Gensaw Sr. told his constituents he would ensure Yurok sovereign rights remain protected. “This should be protected because our decisions effect our children and our children's children,” Gensaw Sr. said.

The direction the Tribal Council takes regarding these issues will no doubt affect every member of the tribe.

In the months since his election, Gensaw Sr. as a liason has been attending federal and state hearings on the removal of the four dams. He participated on behalf of the tribal council in meetings to gather information on the federal stimulus package. Gensaw Sr. said he is going to work on the Tribal Council’s continuous effort to repair the reservation’s roads.

“I want people to know that I am out there working for them. I want to make a better future for the Tribe,” Gensaw Sr. said. “My door is open to all. If people need assistance in some way, I am willing to work to find a solution. Come to the district meetings, you’re invited to come hear what the council is accomplishing. Come make suggestions and be a part of finding solutions to move us forward,” Gensaw concluded.

To find out when Gensaw’s district meetings are held call (707) 482-1350.

Marjorie Buckskin was elected to serve her fourth term as the North District Representative.

“I would like to thank all of the voters who showed their faith in me,” Buckskin said.

During her campaign she told voters that her primary focus as a council member would be to continue pushing for better opportunities for Yurok youth and for increased services for elders.

Buckskin also said she would keep pursuing creative measures to make the Tribe self-sufficient. Growing the Tribe's land base and protecting the Klamath River are also issues of importance for the fourth term representative.

The Yurok Tribe is working with the Animal Welfare Coalition of Del Norte (AWC) to provide a low-cost spay-neuter clinic for cats on Saturday, March 14 at the Requa Resort. Residents can sign up to have cats spayed or neutered for just $10 per cat. The surgeries will be performed by Community Veterinary Services, a Humboldt County company. Cats will also be vaccinated for major feline diseases.

“The Coalition was founded to help address the most urgent needs of animals in our county,” said AWC President Lana Amana. “That makes low-cost spay-neuter services for cats the group’s highest priority.” This project was initiated by the AWC, with funding and assistance from the Humane Society of Del Norte, the Yurok Tribe, and For All Time Cat Haven. Donations are welcomed, and will help the AWC continue to provide low-cost spay-neuter clinics throughout the county. If you have a cat (or cats) that needs to be spayed or neutered, call 464-2500 to register. Registration forms can be picked up at the Yurok Tribal Headquarters. Space is limited, so be sure to get your registration in early.
Klamath b-ball court gets fresh new look.

No one can soberly say putting a 9.5 inch diameter leather ball through an eighteen-inch wide circle hovering ten feet in the air is easier to accomplish under the influence of illegal drugs.

“Activity is prevention,” said Cole Cross, an Indian Child Welfare Advocate for the Yurok Tribe. “That’s why we decided to completely rehabilitate the basketball court in the Klamath town site.”

Several of the Tribe’s departments worked together to facilitate the much-needed renovations to the very well-received basketball court.

The Yurok Social Services Department is responsible for the new plexi-glass backboards and rims and the fresh boundary lines. Social Services also installed a new fence around the court to make sure kids don’t have to run onto Klamath Blvd. to chase a loose ball.

The Maintenance Department set up the backboards, new rims and put the picnic tables and garbage cans in appropriate places. The Tribe’s Public Safety Department posted drug and alcohol prevention signs around the court and the Yurok Indian Housing Authority picked up the tab for the tables.

Since the improvements were made to the court, kids and adults have been balling it up every sunny day. Previously, the court had only one functional hoop, no lines and no fence. Now, it is a park like setting where community members can get down on the court or relax, eat some snacks from Pem-Mey and watch some pretty intense pick-up games. The court also compliments the Klamath River Early College’s need for a more diverse selection of physical education opportunities. The Early College is currently located in the Klamath town site.

“Our kids use the sharp new court every chance they get,” said the school’s Founding Director Geneva Wiki.

Cole Cross said this is the first of many new recreational opportunities that the Social Services Department plans to spearhead.

“I’d like to think this is the beginning of more projects aimed at getting kids active through recreation,” Cross said. “I think there needs to be more activities and recreational opportunities within our community.”
Bringing power to the Rez

The Yurok Tribe recently completed construction of more than seven miles of power and phone lines, starting from Upper Ke’pel Road to the Ke’pel Bluffs.

To date, the Tribe’s Planning Department has overseen the installation of approximately 20 miles of power and phone lines, beginning from Weitchpec to McKinnon Hill in the Pecwan District. The Tribe has spent approximately $4.5 million of federal and state funding on this project so far.

The Tribe contracted with International Line Builders, Inc. to complete this portion of the project.

The power line company sub-contracted a significant portion of the project including, brushing and tree removal work to Northern California Indian Development Council.

NCIDC hired a crew consisting of more than 20 local laborers, fallers, equipment operators, flaggers, and climbers. The majority of the crew are local tribal members, all of which are being paid at prevailing wage rates.

International Line Builders Inc. will begin installation of the underground section of the project during late February or early March.

The underground section will be constructed through the Ke’pel Bluffs and will connect power line from Upper Ke’pel Road to McKinnon Hill. Power and phone lines were installed in the McKinnon Hill community area in 2007.

The Planning Department is in the process of obtaining final right-of-way agreements for the portion of the project leading to the Notchko Village area and beyond. In 2007, the Yurok Tribe was awarded $605,000 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development Indian Community Development Grant Program to construct the Notchko Village portion of the power line project. The Department is working closely with the Yurok Tribal Council and current funding agencies to obtain additional funding to complete the project to Wautec Village. It is the goal of the department to obtain additional resources to complete the backbone of the project along with tap lines to individual homes.

“This is a shovel ready project with design and environmental work already completed. With additional funding this project could be completed by 2009 and continue to create jobs in the local community.”

said Peggy O’Neill, Planning Director.

Project Manager Mandy Mager is working on the engineering and cost estimates for supplying electrical and phone lines to the Weitchpec Water System on Lake Prairie Road.

The Planning Department is also setting up additional field visits with Pacific Gas and Electric and Verizon Communications to continue work on completing the project. To date, funding for this project comes from a grant from the USDA Rural Utilities Service, the California Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Housing and Urban Development ICDBG Program and the Yurok Energy Trust Fund.

“The end goal is to bring power to the entire upper Reservation,” Mager said. “This has been a challenging process, but I believe the end is in sight.”
Update on the removal of Klamath Dams

The Yurok Tribe is working vigorously to complete two inseparable agreements whose purpose and goals are to bring back robust salmon runs on the Klamath River.

The Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA), put together by a number of Klamath River stakeholders and community members, is meant to be a more basin-wide approach to restore the Klamath River.

In November of 2008, the dams’ owner, PacifiCorp, the federal government and the States of California and Oregon released an Agreement in Principle (AIP) that will eventually turn into a comprehensive Hydropower Agreement. The Tribe’s goal is that both agreements are finalized by summer though we realize this worthy goal will require a lot of hard work.

The Tribe is working intensely on both agreements, but it must be made clear that we have not officially endorsed either because they are not final documents. There is still much to do on both, especially the Hydropower Agreement.

“We are in the middle of the most difficult part of the process,” said Yurok tribal member and Policy Analyst, Troy Fletcher. “We are lining out the details, which will dramatically alter the entire Klamath Basin in a way that is far better for fish than what we have now or could expect from any litigation or other regulatory process.”

With help from the Fisheries, Environmental and Legal Departments, the Tribe is completely focused on making sure the Hydropower Agreement paves the path to dam removal by 2020. We also want to make sure that the provisions in the KBRA provide adequate water for fish and a process for habitat restoration. In addition to both agreements, there are a number of other steps that must be taken before dam removal can be realized. A first critical step is to identify where the money will come from to remove the dams.

Recently, a bill passed through the Oregon State Senate that could create a $200 million dollar fund to remove J.C. Boyle, Copco I and II and Iron Gate dams. The bill now has to pass through the Oregon House of Representatives before it becomes law.

PacifiCorp’s 50-year operational license with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ran its term in 2006. The company then submitted an application for a new license with FERC. The Yurok Tribe is working with other regulatory agencies within the FERC process to achieve dam removal. At the same time, the Tribe is negotiating with the company and others to achieve the same goal. If the negotiations are successful it could shorten the time it would take to remove the dams versus the lengthy regulatory process. While the Yurok Tribe believes that the best and most efficient way to restore our fishery and the health of our river is to remove the dams and implement the KBRA, there are other individuals and organizations that do not feel the same way. There are a number of groups who oppose dam removal and this opposition means the Tribe has to navigate carefully through various processes to ensure our opinions are heard and considered.

On January 29, FERC held a meeting in Yreka to hear from the public and the
EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR!

(Right) YUROK TRIBAL MEMBER ROBERT RAY SR. WAS NAMED THE YUROK TRIBE’S “EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR.” RAY SR. IS A FISHERIES TECHNICIAN. BY A VOTE HIS PEERS GAVE HIM THIS GREAT HONOR.

FORESTY DIRECTOR ROLAND RAYMOND WAS NAMED “DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR.”

CINDEE MCKERNAN CELEBRATES HER 20TH YEAR WORKING FOR THE TRIBE.
In an effort to improve upon the Yurok Tribal Fishery, as well as inform the Tribal Council regarding future economic and fishery related activities, we are asking for your input regarding the 2008 Commercial fishery. Given that this is not a scientifically valid survey, it is solely being used to obtain input; not to quantify the proportion of Tribal members that have one opinion vs. another. Please return this survey to the following address: Yurok Tribe, Attn: Commercial Fishery Season Survey, 190 Klamath Blvd, Klamath, CA 95548

Do you participate in Tribal fisheries?
YES    NO

Have you participated in Tribal fisheries in the past?
YES    NO

Did you fish commercially or barter in 2008?
YES    NO

Did you sell fish under your Tribal identification number in 2008?
YES    NO

Are you in favor of commercial fishing by the Tribe? Why?

What do you see as the most significant problems with the 2008 commercial fishery? Use the back of this page or additional paper if necessary.
(1) 
(2) 
(3) 

What solutions would you suggest for the listed problems (use additional paper if necessary)?
(1) 
(2) 
(3) 

Did you see any improvements over previous years in the 2008 commercial fishery?
(1) 
(2) 
(3) 

What recommendations do you have for improving the commercial season?

If you fished commercially during 2008, please indicate with an “X” on the attached map where you fished commercially?

Your name: ________________________

Map by Kevin Pearson/GIS Analyst
This map was created for the use of the Yurok Fisheries Program. It was created using sources from the Yurok Tribe Land Management Department.
It is the season to be eeling. Yurok tribal member Cliff Moorehead twirls an eel up the north spit.