



Yurok Today

The Voice of the Yurok People

Yurok Tribe signs historic agreement

Accord aims to advance effort to remove four Klamath River dams

See story on page 3





NOVEMBER 2020 PUBLIC NOTICES



ELECTION BOARD UNOFFICIAL RESULTS 2020 YUROK RUN-OFF ELECTION November 18, 2020

NORTH DISTRICT

Edward “Horse” Aubrey	<u>126</u>	43.00%
Phillip L. Williams	<u>167</u>	57.00%

WEITCHPEC DISTRICT

Lucinda “Inday” Myers	<u>30</u>	43.48%
Toby Vanlandingham	<u>39</u>	56.52%

The Election Board will meet on November 24, 2020, to certify the Election results. For more information, please contact the Election Department at (707) 482-1350 or email: krystel@yuroktribe.nsn.us

Court Notice

The Yurok Office of the Tribal Attorney (OTA) has filed a complaint against the unknown owner(s) of three gill nets that were seized by the Yurok Tribal Police Department (YTPD) from Hector Hole and Wahkell Flat on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 6, 2020. The first gill net is about 100 ft in length, has a blue, green, and red cork line and 1 anchor attached, and is unmarked. The second gill net is about 100 ft in length, has a dark blue and green cork line and is unmarked. The third gill net is about 100 ft in length, has a blue, green, and red cork lines and corks with “YTFP” carved into them. The net was not being used by tribal staff when it was confiscated. OTA has requested that a hearing be set in Yurok Tribal Court for Thursday, January 7, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. If you believe this net is yours and wish to claim ownership and participate in the hearing: you can receive a copy of the complaint and further information about remote attendance at the hearing by reaching out to the Office of Tribal of Attorney for the Yurok Tribe at (707) 954-2831. Please be advised that the owner(s) of this net may be subject to sanctions by the Yurok Tribal Court for violations of Yurok law.

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On The Cover

The Yurok and Karuk Tribes, the governors of Oregon and California as well as PacifiCorp and Berkshire Hathaway signed an historic agreement to advance the effort to remove the Klamath dams.

New agreement advances dam removal

Governors Newsom, Brown and Berkshire Hathaway Energy "All in" for Dam Removal

Klamath River Basin, California and Oregon ---The states of California and Oregon and Berkshire Hathaway-owned PacifiCorp have agreed to provide additional resources and support to advance the most ambitious salmon restoration effort in history. The project, when completed, will address declines in fish populations, improve river health and renew Tribal communities and cultures.

The Memorandum of Agreement signed by the states of California and Oregon, the Yurok Tribe, the Karuk Tribe, PacifiCorp and the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) describes how the parties will implement the amended Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSA) as negotiated and signed in 2016. The KHSA sets the terms for the removal of four Klamath River dams.

With the Memorandum of Agreement, the parties:

- Will jointly ask FERC to remove PacifiCorp from the license for the project and add California, Oregon and KRRC as co-licensees for carrying out dam removal. Adding the states as co-licensees provides assurances that the project will have sufficient financial backing while honoring settlement terms that stipulate PacifiCorp would not be a co-licensee for removal.
- Demonstrate their firm commitment to dam removal.
- Agree to nearly double available contingency funds held by KRRC and contractors and, in the unlikely event that additional funds are needed beyond that, Oregon, California and PacifiCorp will share the costs equally to address FERC's requirement to ensure full funding for the project.
- Confirm that the KRRC will remain the dam removal entity for the project.
- Plan to navigate the final regulatory approvals necessary to allow the project to begin in 2022 with dam removal in 2023. Site remediation and restoration will continue beyond 2023.




Yurok Chairman Joseph L. James and Vice Chairman Frankie Myers stand for a photo following the historic press conference with the Karuk Chairman, the governors of California and Oregon and representatives from Berkshire Hathaway and PacifiCorp.

- Retain the liability protections for PacifiCorp's customers established in the KHSA.

Taken together, these provisions are intended to resolve FERC's concerns raised in a July 2020 order and ensure a successful dam removal project.

Next Steps

Implementation of the amended KHSA requires two approvals by FERC. First, FERC must approve the transfer of the license for the



dams from PacifiCorp to the KRRRC and the states. Second, FERC must approve the dam removal plan.

Settlement party statements

“As Yurok tribal people, it is our sacred duty to bring balance to the Klamath River. At its heart, dam removal is about healing and restoration for the river, for the salmon, and for our people. We have never wavered from this obligation and we are pleased to see dam removal come closer to reality through this agreement. Reaching this important milestone would not be possible without the many tribal people who have dedicated their lives to restoring the river. We want to thank Berkshire Hathaway, PacifiCorp, California, Oregon, and the Karuk Tribe. Although we are excited to be moving forward again, we want to emphasize that the Yurok Tribe will never rest until the dams are out and the river is healed. From the families on the Klamath we want to thank the Buffett family for their support and leadership.”

Joseph James, Chairman of the Yurok Tribe

“The Klamath River is a centerpiece of tribal community, culture and sustenance and a national ecological treasure. With this agreement, we are closer than ever to restoring access to 400 miles of salmon habitat which will be a boon to the local economy. I am grateful for the partnership between California and Oregon, the Yurok and Karuk Tribes and Berkshire Hathaway that proves that when we work together, we can build a better, more inclusive future for all.”

California Governor Gavin Newsom

“This is an incredibly important step forward on the path towards restorative justice for the people of the Klamath Basin, and towards restoring health to the river as well as everyone and everything that depends on it. From time immemorial, the stewardship of the Klamath Basin tribes has nurtured the lands, waters, fish and wildlife of this region. In Oregon, the Klamath Basin tribes remember a time when their livelihoods were supported by abundant salmon runs from a clean, healthy, and

vibrant river. It is that vision, that promise, that we are working towards restoring for the generations to come.”

Oregon Governor Kate Brown

“I want to thank Governor Newsom and Governor Brown for their leadership in bringing everyone together to collaborate and solve a very complex challenge. I recognize the importance of Klamath dam removal and river restoration for tribal people in the Klamath Basin. We appreciate and respect our tribal partners for their collaboration in forging an agreement that delivers an exceptional outcome for the river, as well as future generations. Working together from this historic moment, we can complete the project and remove these dams.”

Warren Buffett, Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway

“We deeply appreciate the efforts of Governors Newsom and Brown, the Yurok Tribe and the leadership of Berkshire Hathaway to forge a path forward on dam removal. We are more confident than ever that future generations of Karuk will enjoy the benefits of a healthy Klamath River just as their ancestors did dating back to the beginning of time. Most importantly, this moment is a testament to years of devotion and hard work by the community of activists representing all Tribes on the river who have never tired of demanding justice for their communities.”

Russell ‘Buster’ Attebery, Chairman, Karuk Tribe

“We are deeply grateful to the parties who negotiated a path forward for this epic project to restore the Klamath River. As has been the case numerous times in the past, the signatories to the KHSA have tackled obstacles head on and found creative solutions to daunting problems. But we particularly recognize the personal involvement of Governor Newsom, Governor Brown and Berkshire Hathaway leadership who stepped in to ensure that dam removal proceeds. Once all the necessary approvals are obtained it will be full speed ahead in removing the Klamath dams and allowing salmon to access habitat that has been cut off for a century.”

Mark Bransom, Chief Executive Officer KRRRC

“I RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF KLAMATH DAM REMOVAL AND RIVER RESTORATION FOR TRIBAL PEOPLE IN THE KLAMATH BASIN. WE APPRECIATE AND RESPECT OUR TRIBAL PARTNERS FOR THEIR COLLABORATION IN FORGING AN AGREEMENT THAT DELIVERS AN EXCEPTIONAL OUTCOME FOR THE RIVER, AS WELL AS FUTURE GENERATIONS.”

- WARREN BUFFETT, CHAIRMAN OF BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY

Tribe dedicates building to beloved leader

The North District building will be named after Aawok Marjorie “Margie” Buckskin

The Yurok Tribe dedicated its new North District building to the much-revered tribal leader, Aawok Marjorie “Margie” Buckskin.

“Aawok Marjorie Buckskin was one of the most influential leaders in the Tribe’s modern history. During her long tenure on the Tribal Council, she moved the Tribe forward on several different fronts. Her devotion to improving the Yurok community was evident in her every decision,” said Joseph L. James, the Chairman of the Yurok Tribe. “Naming this building after her will permanently honor Aawok Marjorie Buckskin’s exceptional leadership as well as her dedication to serving the Yurok people.”

“Aawok Marjorie Buckskin embodied all of the attributes of an extraordinary tribal leader. She was humble, yet confident and she always put the Yurok people first. She also treated everyone with dignity, respect and compassion. To this day, I am constantly inspired by all that she accomplished while serving as the North District Representative and as the Vice Chairwoman,” added Edward “Horse” Aubrey, the North District Representative on the Yurok Tribal Council.

The grand opening celebration was initially scheduled to occur in March of 2020, but it was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The celebratory event happened virtually on November 12 and was livestreamed on the primary Yurok Facebook page, which can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/TheYurokTribe/>

In 1999, Aawok Marjorie Buckskin was elected to serve the first of three consecutive terms as the Yurok Tribal Council’s North District Representative. In 2009, Yurok voters supported her run for Vice Chairperson. As the North District Representative, she was a constant supporter of the Tribe’s education, early childhood development and scholarship programs. In addition to being a champion for youth, she fought for the protection and restoration of the Klamath River. As Vice Chair, she participated in the signing of the first Klamath River dam removal agreement. She also helped the Tribe regain more than 20,000 acres of forest land within Yurok ancestral territory. These are just a few examples of her many achievements while serving on the Tribal Council. In addition to her leadership role in tribal government, Aawok Marjorie served on the advisory boards of several large Native American-run organizations until she passed away in February of 2017.



Aawok Marjorie Buckskin’s daughter Mandie spoke on behalf of the Buckskin family at the dedication ceremony.



Yurok Tribal Council Rep. Edward “Horse” Aubrey spoke about how much Aawok Marjorie Buckskin inspired him at the building dedication event.

The 3,105 square-foot satellite site provides several benefits for Tribal youth, elders and families in the North District. Nearly 800 Yurok citizens, including the highest concentration of Yurok students, reside in the North District. The new office has already

made it much easier for Yuroks of all ages to obtain tribal services and participate in programs even though the office is closed due to COVID-19. For example, in October, the Yurok Education Department facilitated a drive-through event at the new office, where hundreds of Yurok parents picked up digital learning devices for their children. Post pandemic, the facility will also afford young Tribal members more convenient access to educational resources, including tutoring and college counselling and Yurok language learning opportunities, which are temporarily offered online only. Once it is safe to do so, cultural skills such as traditional basket weaving classes and ceremonial regalia-making lessons, will be taught at the new office.

The facility will make important services, such as TANF, more easily available to Yurok families too. Previously, tribal parents living in the Crescent City area had to make a one-hour-minimum roundtrip to Klamath to obtain social services and participate in tribal programs.

The North District building will also serve as a temporary headquarters should the deteriorating Last Chance Grade fail before it is replaced. In the past five years, mudslides have shut down the stretch of highway connecting the North District and Klamath for extended periods of time. If this happens again, the Crescent City building will be used as a base of operations until repairs can be completed.

South Ops Center dedicated to dynamic leader

Aawok Bonnie Green devoted her entire life to serving the Yurok people

The Yurok Tribal Council voted to dedicate the South Operations Site to longtime tribal leader Aawok Bonnie Green, who is one of the most prominent figures in the Tribe's modern history.

"Aawok Bonnie Green played a profound role in the development of our government. She was a fierce advocate for the Yurok people and relentless protector of the Klamath River. Dedicating this building to her will forever honor her many contributions to the Tribe," said Lana McCovey, the current South District Representative on the Yurok Tribal Council. "Our community will always remember her as an individual with immense integrity and character."

"Aawok Bonnie Green was a dynamic leader, who never compromised when it came to doing what is right for the Yurok people. We dedicated this building to her because we want our future generations to appreciate her legacy and emulate her passion for service. Her numerous contributions to the Tribe will never be forgotten," added Joseph L. James, the Chairman of the Yurok Tribe.

The South Operations Site was previously occupied by the Worthington School in Eureka. The tribally owned campus houses staff from the Yurok Education and Health and Human Services Departments. Before her untimely passing in 2014, Aawok Bonnie Green served as the Tribe's Vice Chairperson from 2006-2009 and held the Tribal Council's South District Representative seat from 1995 to 2006. The highly accomplished tribal politician passed away Saturday, January 18, 2014 at the age of 66.



(front) The new South Operations Center was dedicated to tireless tribal leader, Aawok Bonnie Green.

Green is responsible for moving the Yurok Tribe forward in several different arenas. As a participant in the Jesse Short case, her advocacy for the Yurok people began before the Tribe became formally organized in 1993. During this time period, she was also intimately involved in securing medical care for local Native Americans and preserving tribal fishing rights.

Throughout Green's tenure on the Tribal Council, her primary goal was to elevate Yurok citizens quality of life. To accomplish this objective, she improved access to healthcare, supported

environmentally conscious economic development initiatives and endeavored to increase the Tribe's capacity to restore the Klamath River watershed. She was also an ardent proponent for removing the Klamath dams.

Green was especially tough and tenacious when it came to fighting for Yurok interests. She was also always very direct in her approach to championing important tribal initiatives. Her undeviating demeanor was on full display when she served as a negotiator in the 2012 Nez Perce Settlement discussions, which concluded with the Tribe receiving \$27.5 million for the federal government's mismanagement of tribal forest lands.

In addition to supporting dam removal, she maintained a leadership role on the management side of the Tribe's fishery. Every year, she engaged in the crafting of the Harvest Management Plan. The legally binding document is used to regulate subsistence and commercial salmon harvest as well as conserve fish stocks for future generations.

The inveterate public servant's advocacy for the Tribe's fishing rights spanned her entire adult life. She was an active participant in the "Fish Wars" on the Klamath River. In the late 1970s, the federal government sent National Guard soldiers, armed with assault rifles, riot gear and steel jet boats, to stop the Tribe from

fishing for subsistence. The soldiers used violence against and terrorized Yurok fishers. However, through a sustained campaign of civil disobedience, which Green took part in, the Tribe prevailed in protecting a practice that has taken place on the Klamath since time immemorial.

Naming this building after Aawok Bonnie Green will honor an individual who dedicated countless hours of her life to serving the Yurok people. It will recognize the many sacrifices she made to ensure the Tribe has a strong foundation from which to continue moving in a positive direction.

"From this day forward, the building will serve as permanent monument to one of our most dedicated and forceful leaders," concluded Councilperson McCovey.

In addition to serving on the Yurok Tribal Council, Bonnie Green also participated in many outside agencies and committees. The long list includes but is not limited to: NAGPRA Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act liaison, California Association of Tribal Governments, National Indian Gaming Association, California Rural Indian Health Board, United Indian Health Services, Inter Tribal Monitoring Association, Northern California Indian Development Council, Tribal Government Consultation Council and National Indian Education Association.

Halloween Celebration



Allyson McCovey is a constant volunteer at the Annual Halloween event in the South District.

There was a great turnout at the Yurok Tribe's drive-through Halloween event on Saturday, October 31. Organized by Yurok Tribal Council Member Lana McCovey, the COVID-safe celebration drew 200 smiling, costume-clad Yurok children.

"We wanted our youth to be able to celebrate Halloween in safe manner. Our hope was to offer some semblance of normalcy during this challenging time and I think we accomplished our goal. I would like to thank all of the staff who helped make this such a successful event," said South District Representative Lana McCovey, who has organized the event for the past five years.

Travelling in one of the many cars, an adorable toddler wearing a ninja outfit summed up the general atmosphere of the sunny afternoon event when he told the Yurok team, "Happy Halloween! I happy!"

In addition to Personal Protective Equipment, each child received a wide assortment of treats, a tooth brush, toothpaste and glow sticks. The youth were also offered Polaroid-style pictures. The Yurok Tribal Court as well as the Education, Public Works and Human Resources Departments and Yurok volunteers assisted in this fun event.

YUROK FISHERIES CREW CONSTRUCTS

Here are photos of the Yurok Fisheries Department team building one mile of brand-new fish rearing and spawning habitat on Clear Creek.

The Fisheries Department designed and implemented much of this unique project. It involved the complete reconstruction of a creek segment, which now looks and functions just like a natural stream. In fact, salmon are spawning in the Sacramento River tributary right now. Judging by how salmon are responding to the new habitat, it is abundantly evident that the Fisheries crew did an amazing job on this Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA)-funded endeavor.

During a period of several months, the Yurok team installed riffles, eddies and deep pools, as well as a beaver dam analogue, meandering side channels and several large wood features. They also constructed floodplains, backwaters and a verdant marsh, where great egrets have already moved in. Adjacent to the stream, the team planted a wide variety of native trees and shrubs and the Yurok seed crew is currently adding even more vegetation to the site.

These habitat components will support salmon, steelhead and Pacific lamprey in all of the in-river phases of these fishes' lifecycles and at every flow stage. The newly constructed environment will also benefit a broad diversity of native wildlife, ranging from resident deer to migratory waterfowl and from turtles to an assortment of amphibians.

The partners on this project included: Yurok Tribe, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California Department of Water Resources.

Prior to the restoration work, the majority of the project site, located in Anderson, CA, consisted of a large pond that was far too warm for salmon and filled with invasive species.

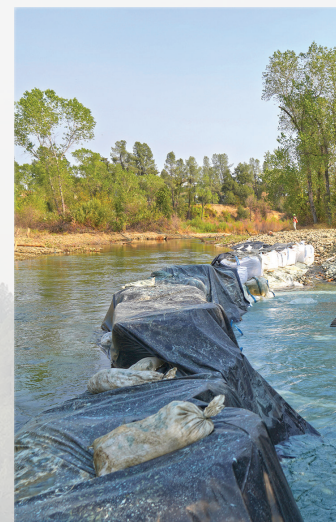
Over the next several decades if not longer, as the recently planted cottonwoods and willows reach maturity and winter flows maximize the function of the wood features, this striking light blue creek will only become more biologically productive. The Yurok Tribe could not be more proud of the Fisheries Department staff who participated in this project. **The Yurok Fisheries Department's Clear Creek crew was comprised of the following individuals: Roger Boulby, Aldaron McCovey, Luis Santana, Richard Bates II, Ronald Jones (RT), Nick Folkins, Josiah Morrufo, Charlie Moon, Delmer Jordan, Keiki Yamasaki, John Stafford, Steve Camara, Cort Pryor, Matthew Marshall, Aaron Martin, Eric Wiseman and David Bandrowski.**



The Yurok Fisheries Department's Richard Bates II helps construct a beaver dam analogue.



The Yurok Fisheries Department's Luis Santana carries a load of willow to be incorporated into the beaver dam analogue.



Lead watershed restorationist R. Bates II works on the dam analogue on Clear Creek.



Veteran heavy equipment operator Cort Pryor works on the dam analogue.

S BRAND NEW CLEAR CREEK SEGMENT



oger Boulby builds new fish habitat on Clear



tor Aldaron McCovey constructs a beaver



The Yurok Fisheries Department's Charlie Moon uses a digital device to guide the construction of new salmon habitat.



The Yurok Fisheries Department's Nick Folkins collects a load of sediment.



Yurok Fisheries Department's Josiah Morrufo was a member of the Clear Creek project team.



The Yurok Fisheries Department's Rodney Vigil transports a load of sediment.



(left) Ronald Jones (RT) and Charlie Moon from Yurok Fisheries Department build a new habitat feature on Clear Creek.

Tribe finishes major project on the Trinity

Restoration work will benefit fish, wildlife for many years to come

The Yurok Fisheries Department recently completed the Dutch Creek Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Project. The complex project aimed to greatly improve salmon rearing habitat conditions and increase channel complexity across a half-mile stretch of the Trinity River near Junction City.

Over the course of four months, the Trinity River Restoration Program team constructed a new main channel, a seasonal channel and new floodplain features. A large wood jam was built to encourage channel migration and improve rearing habitat. The combination of all these constructed features will provide large increases of rearing habitat for juvenile salmon across a wide range of flows, throughout the early stages of the fish's lifecycle. The new floodplains will also encourage a wide variety of riparian vegetation to flourish, which will also benefit birds and other wildlife. In cooperation with the Hoopa Valley Tribe (who led the revegetation effort) a broad selection of native grass, shrub and tree species were planted throughout the 155-acre project site.

The construction teams have set the stage for this segment of the Trinity River to return to a healthy ecosystem, which will support struggling salmon and steelhead for many decades to come.

The Trinity River is Klamath River's largest tributary and it has been negatively impacted by multiple extractive industries, such as mining, dams and water diversions.



Yurok Heavy Equipment Operator Dwayne Davis worked on the Dutch Creek project.



Photo credit: Aaron Martin

Yurok Heavy Equipment Operators construct new salmon habitat on the Trinity River.

The Yurok Fisheries Department staff who worked on this project include:

1. Matt Williams
2. Anthony Alameda
3. Richard Bates II
4. Loren McCovey
5. Joe Marrufo
6. Josh Meyer
7. David Williams
8. Dwayne Davis
9. Mitch Jones
10. Aaron Martin
11. Luis Santana
12. Dara Gaeuman
13. Cassidy Gilmore
14. Max Ramos
15. Jonathan Guczek
16. Ari Gaeuman
17. Matthew Marshall

For more information about the Trinity River Restoration Project, please visit <https://www.trrp.net/>

Yurok Fire Crew increases capacity

Tribal fire department in the midst of a major growth period

Building on a strong foundation that was established over the last five years, the Yurok Fire Department is in the midst of its most substantial growth period.

The Department recently hired five new permanent personnel, including a new Chief. Using CARES Act funds, the Yurok fire team purchased two wildland fire trucks and is building a new headquarters in Tulley Creek. Recently hired Yurok Fire Department Chief Rod Mendes foresees more improvements in the very near future.

"I am so impressed by this group of young men and women," Chief Mendes explained. "Right now, we are growing by leaps and bounds. We are rapidly enhancing the Department's capacity to keep Yurok Reservation residents and tribal resources safe."

New to the department, but not to the industry, Mendes is a dyed-in-the-wool Fire Chief. With more than 35 years of Fire Officer leadership experience, including lengthy stints as a District Fire Management Officer for the Klamath National Forest and as the Chief of Fire and the Office of Emergency Services for the Hoopa Tribe, and over 20 years as a member of Inter-agency Incident Management teams, he brings to the Department a wealth of hard-earned firefighting knowledge, coupled with a strong desire to teach the young Yurok firefighters every aspect of the profession. He is a certified Fire and Emergency Services instructor for the State of California, the National Wildfire Coordination Group curriculum, and the Emergency Management Institute's tribal curriculum. The highly qualified fire chief is also an exceptionally credentialed emergency manager, and is one of the first nationally recognized Emergency Managers in Indian Country. Chief Mendes maintains his Incident Commander and Command and General Staff accreditation, which he has employed in responding to multiple real-world events. Most notably, in 2005, Mendes answered a call to administer a team that was responsible for thousands of people in a New Orleans evacuation facility in San Antonio Texas following Hurricane Katrina. He has occupied similar roles during many other catastrophic natural disasters throughout his 45-plus year career.

Over the past few months, the Yurok fire team has been busy protecting the community from a large wildfire. The Yurok crew spent 56 days serving as part of the team that is battling the Red Salmon Complex, which has now burned more than 140,000 acres on the Klamath, Six Rivers, and Shasta-Trinity National Forests. The crew monitored containment lines, put out hot spots and performed many other essential duties while on the Red Salmon Complex. For the newer members of the team, there could have been no better learning experience than camping out on the fire's flank and working 14 consecutive days without a break. The more seasoned Yurok



Photo courtesy of Andy Lamebear

(left) Yurok firefighters Andy Lamebear, Talbert Alvarado and Cesar Kartaltepe protected tribal lands during the Red Salmon Complex.

firefighters were grateful for the opportunity to prevent the fire from reaching tribal lands.

"I learned a ton about fire and life," said Yurok Fire Fighter Cesar Kartaltepe. "I learned a lot from my mentors Andy Lamebear, Dave Rubalcaba and Rod Mendes. They were constantly in my ear giving me guidance."

Prior to taking the fire assignment, the Yurok team delivered firewood and emergency food boxes to tribal elders to help these vulnerable citizens stay home, where the potential for COVID-19 infection is greatly reduced. Now that the fire season has ended, the crew is back delivering firewood and is training to expand each team members qualifications.

The department's primary objectives include: fire prevention, detection and suppression, hazardous fuels reduction and elder home protection. The crew will be working with the Cultural Fire Management Council to implement traditional burning on tribal lands, which Mendes sees as a primary function of the Department. Together, these efforts are designed to safeguard the Yurok community and resources as well as to restore the natural environment.

In addition to building up personnel, infrastructure and equipment, Mendes is transforming the Yurok fire Department into a more comprehensive organization. To accomplish this objective, the Fire Chief is in the final stages of making the Department a tribally chartered entity. The charter will open up numerous federal funding

opportunities for projects that will improve forest conditions on tribal lands and prevent out-of-control fires. It will also make Yurok firefighters eligible to be sent all over the United States and will open up new well-paying jobs for Yurok citizens.

“The charter will give us parity with every Department in the US,” Mendes said. “It will also elevate our profile and significantly raise the ceiling on how big we can grow the Department.”

The Department is also expanding its role on the reservation. The Yurok Fire crew will be trained and prepared to respond to any type of emergency, ranging from hazardous waste spills to tsunamis.

“We are developing our organization to be more than a wildland firefighters. We are working toward becoming an all-risk organization

that is ready address any type of disaster on and near the reservation,” Mendes said. “In these days and times, organizations cannot be Pidgeon-holed into just one mission. We need to be flexible and adaptable to our environment.”

The new Fire Chief wants the Yurok team to be recognized nationwide as an organization that embodies the highest professional standards. To make the team more distinguishable, the Yurok Fire Department recently selected a new uniform and commissioned the creation of a slick new logo.

“We hope folks love the new logo. Everywhere go, people are going to perceive the Yurok fire team as one of the most respected outfits in the business,” concluded Mendes.

UFC President hires Yurok brothers

Orion and Louis Cosce, 14-0 combined, shine in live event, earn UFC contracts

For uninitiated fans, commentators and oddsmakers, the likelihood of Orion and Louis Cosce decisively beating their opponents and earning an Ultimate Fighting Championship contract, via UFC President Dana White’s Contender Series, seemed like a long shot. For the people of the Klamath River, the only possible outcome involved the Yurok brothers conclusively crushing their competition and getting their hands raised on the global stage and that is exactly what happened.

Earlier this year, the Yurok brothers, born and raised in Weitchpec, competed on season 4 of the extremely popular Contender Series. The television show, aired live on ESPN+, is essentially a highly selective tryout. On each Tuesday evening during the six-week season, the best young MMA prospects on the planet are paired to fight against each other for a spot in one the UFC’s 12 men’s and women’s weight classes. In order to get signed, the competitors not only have to be victorious, they have to win with style.

On fight night, Orion Cosce (7-0) and Louis Cosce (7-0) introduced themselves in an impressive fashion to the worldwide MMA leader’s fanbase by handily beating their topflight competition and giving the UFC President no other choice but to hire them. Seeing the Yurok brothers win in a definitive fashion did not surprise the Yurok people, the Cosces’ coaches or their longtime fans.

The 24-year-old Louis “The Monster” Cosce called his shot and rendered his rival defenseless at 1:12 of the very first round. Looking like Chuck Liddell 2.0, The Monster employed lightening quick head movement to elude Victor “Kelevra” Reyna’s offensive offerings before leaping in with a devastating left hook that put the 11-4 veteran on his hands and knees. After nearly separating his opponent from consciousness, Louis dispersed a few ground strikes and the official



In fighting for the UFC, Yurok athlete Orion Cosce is fulfilling a lifelong dream.

waved off the bout, declaring a Technical Knockout. Louis Cosce is a visceral fighter with fast, heavy hands, bone-crunching kicks and extremely quick reflexes. Unlike the aforementioned UFC hall of famer, he executes excellent defensive mobility. In other words, he is able to attack his opponents while avoiding any serious blows. As evidenced by the Tuesday Night Contender Series match, The Monster is also effective in the clinch.

“This guy is a bad boy. Let me tell you how badass this guy is. Reyna has never been knocked out and look who he’s fought,” said UFC President Dana White, who referenced Louis’s ability to render his quarry unresponsive in under two minutes. “The only problem with Cosce is (he’s won his fights) in eight seconds, eighteen seconds, one-minute nineteen seconds, one-minute twelve seconds. You haven’t got to see much. That’s a damn good problem to have. Congratulations

kid! You're in the UFC!"

Orion "Galaxy" Cosce, 26, slow-cooked his adversary, the previously 9-0 Magic Matt Dixon, who was dubbed "the best prospect on the fight card." Dixon, built like a brick house, briefly took Cosce to the ground in the first round, but was unable to pose the slightest threat. Orion thwarted all takedown attempts in rounds two and three when the Yurok athlete was responsible for the majority of the offense. At one minute and five seconds into the third, he picked up and slammed the highly praised Dixon on the canvas, signaling the beginning of the end. Nearing the four-minute mark in the final round, Orion put his opponent in a crucifix, a supremely dominant position where both arms are trapped, and he dished out a barrage of punches until the referee stepped in to save the wilted competitor from further damage. After finishing his seventh straight fight, Cosce paid his respects to the challenger and from inside of the octagon, he immediately began making his case to the UFC President.

"I'm ready to fight this weekend. I'll fight this Saturday," Cosce yelled through the chain-link to UFC President Dana White.

Orion Cosce's determination and tenacity made a lasting impression on the UFC boss and the commentary team, who in the first round clearly favored Dixon to win, but changed their tune as the fight unfolded.

"To come in here as a huge underdog against an undefeated kid in Dixon, lose the first round, show the grit, to make the adjustments and to seal the deal in the third. If I could sign him, I would sign him right now," exclaimed commentator and UFC star Paul "The Irish Dragon" Felder.

"That was quite an endorsement from the Irish Dragon right there. This was a statement win for Orion Cosce," added broadcast partner Dan Hellie. "I don't know if I've seen a story that I have enjoyed as much as the Cosce brothers'."

The next day, the Yurok fighters' inspiring path to becoming professional athletes, combined with their definitive victories, generated headlines across the international MMA media.

Orion and Louis Cosce were raised in Weitchpec and graduated from Hoopa Valley High School. In high school, they were both dominant wrestlers in the state of California. During high school, the brothers did not have a consistent home. Anchored by a strong desire to make something of their lives, they survived with the help of family and friends. After graduating from high school, they dedicated themselves to becoming elite martial artists. The handsome and extremely fit young men have worked tremendously hard to pursue their dream of competing on the international stage.

The UFC is to MMA what the NFL is to football or what the NBA is to basketball. Only the best and brightest athletes are offered an



Born and raised in Weitchpec, Yurok athlete Louis Cosce has knocked out 7 consecutive opponents in the first round.

opportunity to fight under the UFC banner. Unlike the NFL or the other primary sports leagues, UFC fighters face competition from all over the globe. For example, the champion in Orion's 170-pound divisions is from Nigeria and the belt holder in Louis's future 155-pound weight class is from the Republic of Dagestan, Russia.

Prior to the Contender Series, the Cosce brothers each participated in and won six professional fights. They finished all of their opponents before the conclusion of the matches, which is an extraordinary accomplishment in this mentally and physically challenging sport. As its name suggests, MMA requires an intimate understanding of multiple martial arts, whether its boxing, Thai kickboxing, jiu-jitsu or the many other approaches to hand-to-hand combat. It also calls for an exceptional amount of strength and stamina. A standard bout is 15 minutes, with three 5-minute rounds and two one-minute breaks. Physically, it is as demanding as any athletic competition. The mental fortitude required to walk into an arena and square up with another trained fighter is equally challenging. None of this is lost on the Cosce brothers. It is why they dedicate several hours a day, nearly every day of the year, to sharpening their abilities in every facet of the sport.

"I want to be a champion in multiple weight classes and go down as one of the more exciting, dominant fighters in the history of the sport. I've had a rough life, I know what it is to fight through adversity. I don't quit. Lot's of hard work is paying off. I love it," Orion Cosce explained.

"Watching my mom beat bipolar schizophrenia, being homeless, being poor, my boy battling cancer, it truly does make this fight thing super easy for me. It's easy for me to make the walk to the cage and try and crush somebody," concluded Louis Cosce.

"THIS GUY IS A BAD BOY. LET ME TELL YOU HOW BAD... HE IS."

UFC President Dana White



Yurok shares heartfelt recovery story

Will Hodges hopes to help others overcome early childhood trauma, addiction

By Will Hodges, West Regional Lead for Celebrate Recovery Native Nations

Hi, my name is Will. I am a West Regional Lead for Celebrate Recovery Native Nations. I am a Native American and a member of the Yurok Tribe. I am a recovering addict with a story that might be useful to those who have turned to substance abuse as a means of coping with childhood trauma.

Have you ever felt lost or hopeless? At one point in my life, I felt defeated and unable to get past being abused as a child. I knew I needed help, yet I was extremely confused and felt lost.

For many years of my life I used drugs and alcohol to numb the pain I was in. I would drive long distances under the influence without any concern about getting a DUI. I would put myself and others in danger all the time. This should have been a wakeup call. It was not.

My addiction was so strong that I just did not care about anyone or anything. I made promises to myself about not using on week days. I was able to do this for many years as a functioning addict. Eventually, I broke that promise along with so many others. It turned me into a broken, hurt, angry, dangerous and frustrated individual.

I needed help but was afraid to ask for it. I had serious trust issues as a result of severe childhood trauma. My pride and ego always got the best of me. I seriously thought the only way I would be able to quit was to commit suicide. That was a few years ago. My life is much different now after finding my path to recovery.

I was born in Santa Cruz, Ca. in 1964 to a loving mom and an absentee father. I had three brothers and two sisters. As a child, it always seemed like we were hiding from something or someone. I would later find out it was my father we were hiding from. He was an extremely violent man who hit my mother all the time. My father was an addict at the time of my birth. Every time I saw him he was intoxicated. My father was convicted for killing a woman in a drug induced rage while in Ogden, Utah and later sentenced to life in prison.

My mother was a strict disciplinarian and a police dispatcher for Santa Cruz PD. She did the best she could without my father's help.

I had many problems with my anger during this time. When I blew my top, everyone would hide or take cover. I was very self-destructive and would destroy anything I could get my hands on. I had so much pent up anger that I would explode and then get emotional or cry afterwards.

We ended up moving from Santa Cruz to San Jose. My mother worked numerous jobs at night so that we would have food on the table and a roof over our head. My mother also went back to college to get a degree in economics and finance. She always told us she loved us very much and gave us everything she could. I don't know how she did it but every one of my brothers and sisters graduated high school & went to college. I know that without the help of my grandparents we would have been lost.

My grandparents were wonderful to us kids. I will always appreciate the lessons I learned from them. They took us on camping trips, where we learned how to hunt and fish. My Grandfather would read the San Francisco Chronicle and then we would read it back to him. He was incredible. My other Grandfather was a Yurok Indian and sat on the Tribal Council. He would tell us great stories about our heritage and where we came from.

Everything seemed to go back to normal once we moved to San Jose. We moved into a new house, got into great schools, had new friends and started going to church. After a while, my mother started to date again. She met an extremely educated, handsome, smart and funny guy. Eventually we learned to love him. He would become my step father. If you saw us, you would have thought everything was fantastic. It was not.

One summer, my step father started abusing me & my siblings. I remember drinking something that made me feel woozy. I was so confused and unable to comprehend why this was happening to me. He stole my innocence and I lost my adolescence. I had nightmares almost every night. I lived in a constant state of fear. I tried to tell my 3rd grade teacher but she did not believe me. Instead she called my stepfather and he told me if I ever did that again he would kill me. I continued to be abused for another couple of years.

Eventually, my mother was told that he was abusing us. She called my grandparents and they immediately got us out of the

house. He eventually ended up going to prison for his actions.

I was so broken and never felt more alone in my life. I started running away from home, stealing, getting into fights and did not want anything to do with authority figures. This behavior would cause me many problems later in life.

I realized I needed to get through school if I was to ever escape. I could not wait to go to school each day. For 6 hours a day I felt safe. I worked very hard to keep my grades up. I graduated High School with full honors in 1982, when I moved to New York City. I found work at a night club, which is where I began drinking and using drugs. It was the perfect job for me. I worked long hours and started using more and more. I decided to go to college and eventually earned a Culinary Degree in Restaurant Management. My boss at the club promoted me to manager of guest services. I was successful at my job.

While in New York, I was recruited by a national electronic retailer and hired as an area manager. I moved to Vancouver, Canada for the job and began a new chapter in my life. I met a woman named Sharon who would become my first wife and we became using friends. I asked her to marry me. She said yes, but our relationship was destined for failure from the start. It was annulled. My second marriage was to a woman named Debbie. Our marriage was so toxic and it was also annulled.

I still used and drank but only used on weekends. I traveled extensively and this provided me with the freedom to use even more. Eventually, my addiction kicked into full gear and I began using every day. I lost everything, my home, family and friends. I had nowhere to turn and hit bottom.

No one knew that on the inside I had deep hurts, bad habits and emotional hang ups that were destroying me. I was confused and unhappy. I looked for and attended other 12 Step programs sporadically in my life. I was never able to stay clean or sober. One day I was driving in my car and had a flat tire. I pulled into a parking lot and lost it emotionally. Some men came out to see if I needed help. I did. The tire was changed and they invited me to come inside. That was my first experience with Celebrate Recovery. I attended sporadically and was always greeted with a warm smile. Unfortunately, I was not ready for recovery. I stayed out for 1 more year.

I was working as a supervisor for Placer County CPS when I was asked to take a random drug test and it was dirty. I was fired. I could have faced disciplinary action and possibly time in jail. At the beginning of my recovery I went to a drug treatment center called Mountain Vista Farms in Sonoma, Ca.

Sometime later, I suffered an aneurism that almost ended my

life. I woke up in the ICU and had a significant traumatic brain injury. My liver, kidneys and heart were all damaged. I had to relearn how to take care of myself. It was during this time that one of the ministry leaders from CR Bayside came and visited me. I remained in the hospital 294 days. This was a gift. I was discharged from the hospital and immediately started going to CR Friday nights. That is when I really got involved in Celebrate Recovery. It was the best decision I ever made. I knew this was my chance to expose my deepest darkest secrets in a safe environment. I found accountability partners and a sponsor that could lead me. I did the work necessary for my recovery. It provided me with a safe place to deal with the hurt and the pain I was in. I learned practical tools that could help me stay in recovery. Celebrate Recovery is more than a drug & alcohol addiction treatment program. CR deals with many other issues and works on the whole person whatever their Hurt, Hangup or Habit may be. The tools I acquired from Celebrate Recovery have helped me stay clean and sober to this day and I am so grateful for it.

If you can relate to this story, I encourage you to seek professional help, whether it's through Celebrate Recovery, Red Road to Recovery, your local 12-stop group or any other treatment option. If your first choice doesn't work out, try another one and don't give up until you achieve your goal. You are not alone. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you would like additional information about Celebrate Recovery.

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Celebrate Recover's Eureka office can be reached at (707) 298-4397.





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Free COVID-19 TESTING

The COVID-19 test is available to all Yurok Reservation residents and employees. The free test is being offered outside of the Weitchpec Tribal Office and the Redwood Hotel Casino. **Register at the testing site between 10am and 5pm on the following days:**



NOVEMBER

- 11/19-RHC Parking Lot
- 11/20-RHC Parking Lot
- 11/21-Weitchpec Office
- 11/22-Weitchpec Office
- 11/25-RHC Parking Lot
- 11/27-RHC Parking Lot
- 11/28-Weitchpec Office
- 11/29-Weitchpec Office

DECEMBER

- 12/3-RHC Parking Lot
- 12/4-RHC Parking Lot
- 12/5-Weitchpec Office
- 12/6-Weitchpec Office
- 12/10-RHC Parking Lot
- 12/11-RHC Parking Lot
- 12/12-Weitchpec Off
- 12/13-Weitchpec Office
- 12/16-RHC Parking Lot
- 12/17-RHC Parking Lot



The test is open to all reservation residents, including tribal elders, adults and youth of all ages. Parental permission is required for individuals under 18-years-old. It takes approximately one week to receive test results. Another free test is offered Wednesday from 9am-2pm in the Redwood Hotel Casino parking lot. To register for a Wednesday test, please visit: projectbaseline.com/covid If you have questions or need assistance, please call the Klamath Office (707) 482-1350 ext.1403 or (707) 457-7201.