

Upscale development in Manson awaits lease OK

Federal government must sign off on deal for 75-home gated community

By K.C. MEHAFFEY
World staff writer

MANSON — A 75-home gated community on Lake Chelan near Mill Bay Casino could become reality if the federal government agrees to issue a 99-year lease for the property.

Michael Arch, a Wenatchee lawyer who represents the property's lease holder, Wapato Heritage LLC, said he asked the Bureau of Indian Affairs earlier this month to consider issuing a long-term lease on 140 acres south of Manson. The land includes Mill Bay Casino, Mill Bay Resort RV park, a nine-hole golf course, and some undeveloped property.

Arch said if a lease is issued, beneficiaries of the allotment — about 33 American Indians whose ancestors were part of the former Chief Moses Indian Reservation — still have to approve a development plan. Wapato Heritage represents those beneficiaries, who include descendants of Manson's Wapato family, Arch said.

The land, known as Moses Allotment 8, belongs to the federal government, and is held to benefit those descendants, he said.

Arch said the lease holders need a long-term lease to make the investment to build the residential resort on the Lake Chelan's north shore, which tentatively includes 75 residential lots, a pool and a marina with 75 boat slips.

He said this first phase of development would look like the final phase of development at Wapato Point Resort.

It would be built across Highway 150 from Mill Bay Casino, and west of Mill Bay Resort, an RV park where 180 members have agreements to rent space for their RVs until 2034. The new lease would not affect RV members, or the Colville Tribal Enterprise Corp., which rents property for Mill Bay Casino from Wapato Heritage.

Chelan County Commissioner Buell Hawkins said the county agreed to support the 99-year lease after Wapato Heritage offered to make annual payments instead of taxes to help pay for county and local services. The support helped convince federal lawmakers to push for the long-term lease.

Since the property belongs to the federal government, it isn't subject to local taxes.

In January of 2005, Wapato Heritage agreed to pay 4 percent of its rental agreement with Colville Tribal Enterprise Corp., which is based on a percentage of the Mill Bay Casino revenue, Hawkins said. The payment will vary based on the casino's profits, he said.

The county received its first annual payment for \$13,167 on Tuesday, he said.

That will be distributed to several taxing districts, including the

county, Manson Fire District, Manson and Chelan school districts, the Manson Park and Recreation District and Lake Chelan Community Hospital.

The ability to seek the 99-year lease took an act of Congress.

President George Bush recently signed the Native American Technical Corrections Act of 2006, which includes the provision to allow this long-term lease, if approved by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. Jessica Gleason, spokeswoman for Rep. Doc Hastings, who introduced the bill in the House of Representatives, said the provision extending the long-term lease only covers the 140-acre allotment near Manson.

Arch said Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, and Hastings all sought passage of the provision once local entities, including Chelan County commissioners, the city of Chelan, the Manson Business Association and the Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce, supported it.

A similar lease authority in 1980 allowed for development of the Wapato Point resort, about one mile west of this allotment.

Generally, Indian allotment property can only be leased for 25 years, or at most for two 25-year periods, Arch said.

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Photo courtesy/South Columbia Basin Irrigation District

An aerial view shows the magnitude of a landslide that stretches across Road 170 in Franklin County. Geologists who have studied the problem say much of the water involved in the slide came from irrigation.

Irrigation water largely to blame for massive landslide in Franklin County

By ANNA KING
Tri-City Herald

Puffs of pale brown dust shoot up into the air every few minutes, a reminder that the landslide isn't finished.

The massive slide that tore apart Basin Hill in north Franklin County on May 14 continues to threaten nearby homes and parched crops.

The rubble buried 38 acres, obliterated a quarter mile of Road 170 and smothered 1,000 feet of the South Columbia Basin Irrigation District canal, blocking water to about 2,000 acres of crops.

Some blame God, but a look back reveals previous slides, costly federal studies, lawsuits and repeated warnings from landowners that forewarned of the massive landslide.

Many agree a combination of irrigation water and unstable soils are to blame, but how to solve the problem remains unclear.

Responsibility for cleaning up or building around the landslide

has fallen to Franklin County and irrigation district officials. The agencies are pursuing grants, but the bulk of repairs most likely will be paid by Franklin County residents and irrigation district ratepayers.

Little work can start until engineers declare the area safe. And meanwhile the great mound of earth sprawled down from the hill has heaped more controversy onto a politically tense subject.

Jim Thornton, the son of Columbia Basin Project farmers, has watched Basin Hill slide away all his life, but this slide was different.

"Usually you kind of notice big cracks appear," he said. "This thing didn't give any warning."

Thornton said he has no immediate plans to abandon his house, which sits about a quarter mile from the slide. But his 360 acres have been devalued and now his crops grow just a couple of paces from the unstable cliff. The farm sits upon what geologists call the Ringold Formation. It's an ancient

lakebed that consists of many layers of fine organic materials interspersed with slick layers of clay.

This isn't the first landslide, just the worst.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has installed drains along the hillside on Thornton's farm and others to help reduce the high water table. But agency officials say the drains were to keep crops growing, not to prevent landslides.

Geologists who have studied the problem say much of the water involved in the slide came from irrigation.

New technology allows farmers to apply water more precisely so less water seeps out of the root zone and through the sediment layers.

But water has been poured on the area since the Columbia Basin Project brought irrigation here in 1959.

"Irrigation on the Ringold Plain is inducing sliding," a 1987 study found.

Briefly

CASHMERE
Tree fruit profitability seminar deadline coming

Leaders in the tree fruit industry will discuss how to increase profitability at a seminar from noon to 5 p.m. June 6 at the Cashmere Riverside Center.

The session is open to growers and all in the industry. To reserve a spot and a \$7 lunch, call 884-1494 by Wednesday.

The seminar is the fourth in a series on restoring profitability hosted by the North Central Washington Fieldmen's Association and sponsored by a USDA Risk Management partnership with the Washington Growers Clearing House Association.

Presenters and panelists include: Lindsay Buckner, senior vice president of Field Services, Tree Top Inc.; West Mathison, president, Stemilt Growers Inc.; Randy Steensma, president, Nuchief Sales Inc.; Steve Lutz, vice president, The Perishables Group; Dan Kelly, assistant manager, Washington Growers Clearing House; Clark Seavert, agricultural economist, Oregon State University Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center; and Monica Dixon, registered dietician and president of Empower Communications.

WENATCHEE
Housing Trust holds farmworker housing forum

The Washington State Farmworker Housing Trust, a new nonprofit organization started with the help of Sen. Patty Murray, is holding a forum on new strategies for providing farmworker housing.

The forum, including lunch, is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 13 at Wenatchee's Red Lion Hotel. Reservations must be made with Craig Nolte of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco by June 9 at craig.nolte@sf.frb.org.

The trust's 16-member board is made up of grower representatives, farmworker labor representatives, developers, owners, managers and farmworker advocates. Tom Byers, trust coordinator, is among the speakers.

COULEE CITY
Mold-resistant wheat varieties explained

Hard red winter wheat varieties that are mold resistant and ideal for Douglas and Grant counties will be discussed at the Washington State University Extension annual twilight wheat variety tour on June 7.

Stripe rust also will be a major topic of discussion. New spring wheat varieties, called Louise and Nick, will be explained. They are expected to replace Alpowa, Zak and Wawawai varieties.

Discussion of 50 no-till spring varieties starts at 5 p.m. at the Bill and Dean McLean farm, eight miles north of Highways 2 and 17. Trials of 54 soft white winter wheat varieties and 30 hard winter varieties will be discussed at 7 p.m. at the Larry Tanneberg farm following a 6 p.m. barbecue dinner there. The Tanneberg farm is on St. Andrew's Road off Highway 2.

More information: 745-8531.

WENATCHEE
State Patrol to explain new fruit bin tie-down rules

Truckers hauling fruit bins may still use 3/8th-inch cables but additional straps or tie-downs will be needed to secure fruit bins on trucks starting Aug. 1, according to the Washington State Patrol.

It's part of a change in Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administra-

tion rules intended to make cargo hauling safer.

The State Patrol will hold a public meeting to explain the rules at 10 a.m. June 5 at the Wenatchee Apple Commission Building, 2900 Euclid Ave. The Patrol will begin enforcement Aug. 1 with written warnings and will issue citations to repeat offenders after Jan. 1.

PULLMAN
Stripe rust starts out light

Stripe rust, a disease that can reduce wheat yields by 30 percent to 60 percent, has started the season light, in the Palouse, because of hot weather but could become a problem from more recent rains, says Xianming Chen, a USDA plant pathologist at Washington State University.

— compiled by Dan Wheat,
World staff

What Tree Fruit Is Worth Of Taking To Market Creating Consumer Delight

A seminar for tree fruit growers, warehouse management, marketers, horticulturists and others in the Washington tree fruit industry interested in discussing and planning for returning profitability to Washington tree fruit production.

- ❖ Profitable Choices: Supplying Products Worthy of the Market
- ❖ Capturing a Larger Portion of the Retail Sales Dollar
- ❖ What and Where are the New Demand Opportunities
- ❖ Translating Small Adjustments into Big Results

**Tuesday, June 6th
12 noon to 5 p.m.**

**Cashmere Riverside Center
201 Riverside Drive
Cashmere, WA**

A BBQ lunch will be available for \$7
Please RSVP to Susan at 884-1494 by June 1st

Presented by North Central Washington Fieldmen's Assn., Washington Growers Clearing House Assn., and Washington State Horticultural Assn. in partnership with RMA and supported by a USDA Risk Management Agency grant.



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