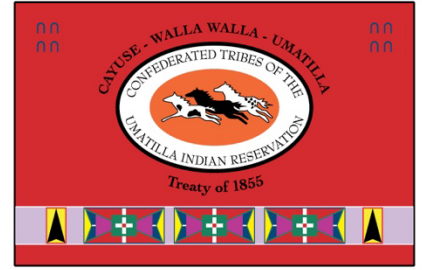


Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation



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PELC Students Get Hands-on Salmon, Lamprey Education

MISSION – More than 200 students from the Pendleton Early Learning Center (PELC) got a hands-on lesson about salmon and lamprey eels April 3-4 while visiting the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's (CTUIR) Pendleton Acclimation Facility.

Shawndine Jones, PELC Walk to Language teacher, said during the two days of field trips to the facility, approximately 220 kindergarten students learned about salmon and lamprey lifecycles.

"It's important to collaborate with the tribe," she said. "And they've been very, very generous to offer the field trip for us. And they (students) really learn a lot more when they have hands-on experience, getting to see the salmon and the lamprey. And they are really excited about it."

Shaun Montgomery, CTUIR hatchery satellite facilities assistant project manager, said students got to learn while touching and feeding the coho salmon, summer steelhead and lamprey eel that are kept in the facility's ponds.

"And so they get to see the fish, kind of hear what we're doing here and why we raised fish and then see lamprey, too, which is kind of unique," he said.

Approximately 660,000 coho and steelhead, which arrived at the facility in March, were expected to be released later in April after increasing in weight and length.

"We're trying to get them to smolt...where they're at this transition stage from going from freshwater to the ocean," Montgomery said. "So there's kind of these size thresholds that they've come up with, this ideal size for getting them to that smolt."

Students also learned what the CTUIR is doing to preserve salmon and lamprey as well as keep the Umatilla River clean.

"So maybe when they're going home to their family they can tell their families how important the salmon are to our ways, our ecosystem in our world, so that when they grow up they can help be advocates for the salmon," Jones said. "I think that it's important to keep the Earth clean and keep our rivers clean and

protect the salmon. So if they're starting at a young age, learning about the salmon and the lamprey, they'll grow up to just... be more empathetic about our planet and why it's important to keep them, preserve them for the future."

PELC students have visited the facility for the past several years as a way to get out of the classroom and into the community.

"It's a positive experience for them. A lot of children just love nature and animals, so it allows them a chance to get close with the salmon and the lamprey. I think it's going great," Jones said.

Montgomery agreed that it's valuable for students to visit the facility and experience hands-on learning. "It's really important for them to learn to, you know, this is all part of the (salmon) reintroduction effort that was started. And eventually I would hope that some might be interested to pursue a career in fisheries or continue the restoration.... But anytime we can do outreach like this, what we're doing to get the public support, I think it's a great thing."

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.

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Caption 1: Kanim Moses-Connor, a lamprey technician with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's (CTUIR) Department of Natural Resources, holds a lamprey eel while a student from Pendleton Early Learning Center touches it on April 4 at the CTUIR's Pendleton Acclimation Facility. The facility hosted more than 200 PELC students April 3-4 as students got hands-on learning about salmon and lamprey eels. CTUIR

Caption 2: Pendleton Early Learning Center students feed salmon on April 4 at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Pendleton Acclimation Facility. PELC students took field trips to the facility April 3-4 to learn more about salmon and lamprey eel life cycles. LEE GAVIN/CTUIR

Caption 3: Shawndine Jones, Pendleton Early Learning Center Walk to Language teacher, talks to PELC students on April 3 at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's (CTUIR) Pendleton Acclimation Facility. PELC students visited the facility April 3-4 as field trips. Also shown is Shaun Montgomery, CTUIR hatchery satellite facilities assistant project manager, who helped host the students. LEE GAVIN/CTUIR