

# Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation



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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Sams Elected Chair of Task Force on Tribal Consultation

CANYONVILLE – Oregon Task Force on Tribal Consultation members elected Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) Board of Trustees Member at Large Corinne Sams as the entity’s chair during its July 23 meeting at the Seven Feathers Casino & Resort.

“I am extremely excited and grateful for the confidence and support of the Task Force on Tribal Consultation members to serve as chair. I hope to work very closely with each of the representatives to define what sovereignty means to each of us collectively and then define what consultation means to our sovereign governments,” Sams said. “The nine tribes of Oregon are all unique. We all have varying priorities and governance structures. Upholding each tribe’s sovereignty is paramount. We want to ensure that meaningful consultation is clear and works in a way to better serve our tribal nations while fostering long viable partnerships with the state government. Thanks to Gov. Tina Kotek and her administration for making this effort a priority and providing this opportunity for the nine tribes of Oregon to have a collective voice.”

State and federal law requires state agencies to consult with the CTUIR; Burns Paiute Tribe; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw; Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation; Coquille Indian Tribe; Klamath Tribes; Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians; Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde; and Confederated Tribes of Siletz when making decisions that affect them.

However, Rep. Tawna Sanchez, D-Portland, who is Shoshone-Bannock and Ute, didn’t think the law clearly defined what consultation was and how it occurred. So she filed House Bill 3173, which was passed and signed into law in 2023.

It created the task force to determine what meaningful consultation should look like, the specific situations when it should occur and with whom and hold agencies accountable when consulting with tribes.

“Consultation is vital for the tribes and the states to understand one another’s rights and interests,” said Sams. “This task force will create a path forward, continuing to build upon our existing government-to-government relationships and ensuring state agencies honor tribal sovereignty, cultural competency and tribal voices for better outcomes across Oregon.”

Other current task force members are:

- Tracy Kennedy, Burns Paiute Tribal Council chair,
- Natalie Ball, Klamath Tribal Council Member at Large,
- Bobbie Bruno, Warm Springs Tribes secretary-treasurer,
- Anna Richter-Taylor, Cow Creek Band tribal representative,
- Brenda Meade, Coquille Tribal Council chair,
- Dee Pigsley, Siletz Tribal Council chair and task force co-chair,
- Doug Barrett, Coos Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians chief,
- Jon George, Grand Ronde Tribal Council member,
- Julie Johnson, Oregon Health Authority Tribal Affairs director,
- Rep. Tawna Sanchez, House representative,
- Patrick Flanagan, Legislative Commission on Indian Services executive director,
- Shana McConville Radford, Tribal Affairs director, Office of Gov. Tina Kotek.

When fully seated, the task force will have a representative from each of Oregon's federally recognized tribes, three lawmakers, a member of the Governor's Office and two members representing state agencies.

*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: Corinne Sams