Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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For Immediate Release: July 11, 2008
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WASHINGTON – Mr. George Skibine, Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, announced today that the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation of Pendleton Oregon have submitted a plan to participate in Indian Affairs' Public Law 102-477 (477) initiative. The program is a comprehensive employment and training program for federally recognized tribes to address economic and workforce needs in their communities. Along with the plan, Antone C. Minthorn, Chairman of the Tribe submitted a tribal resolution stating the tribes' intent to improve their employment opportunities for their people. The Confederation consists of people from three tribes: the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla.

"I commend the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation for their vision and foresight to streamline the management of their workforce development programs," said Bob Middleton, Director, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development. "Participation in the 477 program has helped tribes decrease their administrative burden, allowing them to better address their employment and economic development needs and serve their clients."

According to the Tribes' 477 Program plan, they are developing workshops covering job readiness and wellness, computer skills, etiquette techniques, providing resources to access employment opportunities, workshops on stress reduction, conflict resolution, diabetes maintenance and a wellness conference.

The 477 Program, established in 1994 under the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Act (Public Law 102-477), allows federally recognized tribes to combine funds from 12 federal employment, training and welfare reform programs administered by the Department of the Interior, which serves as the lead agency, the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services into a single, tribally operated program with a single reporting system. Participating tribes can devote up to 25% of their total 477 funding for economic development projects to provide employment opportunities for their members.

For more information about the 477 program, contact Lynn Forcia, Chief, Division of Workforce Development, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, U.S. Department of the Interior, at (202) 219-5270.

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