



## PRESS RELEASE

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION

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### **Indian Health Service Selects Omak Clinic for Joint Venture Construction Program**

**(Nespelem, WA)**- The Chairman of the Colville Business Council announced today that the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation's application for a new clinic in Omak was one of five projects selected nationwide by the Indian Health Service (IHS) for its Joint Venture facility construction program. The Joint Venture program is a highly competitive program where an Indian tribe builds a health facility and the IHS pays for the recurring staffing costs. The four other projects IHS selected are in the states of Alaska, North Dakota, and Oklahoma.

"The Colville Tribes have been pursuing a new clinic in Omak for nearly three decades," said Colville Business Council Chairman Rodney Cawston. "IHS's decision to select the Omak facility will allow the Tribes to build a new clinic in Omak and ensure that we have federally funded staffing to provide uninterrupted health care delivery," Cawston added. Cawston noted that selection of the project by the IHS will allow the Colville Tribes to update its historically low staffing ratios, which have been in effect since the 1930s.

The IHS Portland Area, which includes Indian tribes in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, has traditionally not benefited from IHS facility construction programs and has had only one Joint Venture project awarded in 1988. Cawston said that the Colville Tribes were the only Portland Area finalist and received support for its application from many members of the northwest congressional delegation, including members in Oregon and Idaho. Senator Maria Cantwell and Rep. Dan Newhouse led two bipartisan, bicameral letters to the IHS in support of the Tribes' application during the first and second application review phases. "I would like to express my appreciation to Brian Gunn who facilitated the opportunity to meet with Washington State Senator's Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, Oregon Senator Ron Wyden, members of the Washington State Congress Dan Newhouse, Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Mike Simpson, Suzan Delbene, Jaime Herrera Beutler, Derek Kilmer, Denny Heck and Kim Schrier who all made time to talk with us about federal support for our I.H.S. Joint Venture application. I would also like to thank our Staff, Community and Council who spent many hours of planning, meeting and developing our proposal," Cawston added.

“The Colville Tribes is grateful to our congressional delegation for their longstanding support for our efforts to get a new Omak clinic,” Cawston said, noting that over the past decade Senator Cantwell has highlighted the need for a new clinic with IHS officials in congressional hearings and correspondence. The Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, of which the Colville Tribes is an active member, also supported the application.

The next step is for the IHS to approve the Colville Tribes’ planning documents, at which time the Tribes can begin construction. The Colville Tribes’ application plans for a 32,000 square foot facility, which would provide primary care, dental, behavior health, and pharmacy services in one location.

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About the Colville Tribes:

Today, more than 9,526 descendants of 12 aboriginal tribes of Indians are enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of the Colville. The twelve tribes which compose the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation include: ščəlámxəx<sup>w</sup> (deep water) or Chelan; walwáma (Wallowa people) or Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce; sǰyʔiṭp (sharp pointed trees) or Colville; šntiyátk<sup>wəx</sup> (grass in the water) or Entiat; snǰáyckst (speckled fish) or Lakes; mətx<sup>w</sup>u (blunt hills around a valley) or Methow; škwáxcənəx<sup>w</sup> (people living on the bank) or Moses-Columbia; nspilm (prairie) or Nespelem; uknaqin (seeing over the top) or Okanogan; palúšpam (people from Palouse) or Palus; sənpǰ<sup>w</sup>ilx (grey mist as far as one can see) or San Poil, and šnpəšq<sup>w</sup>áwsəx<sup>w</sup> (people in between) or Wenatchi.