

Bye-bye, bogs!

Debris hauling clears way for construction

Dump trucks will shuttle through the Kilkich Reservation in late April and early May, as a contractor clears vegetation and water pipes from two cranberry bogs.

The Coquille Tribe ended cranberry production last year, after years of low prices made the farm unsustainable. All five bogs at Kilkich eventually will be used for future development.

Depending on weather, work on the two southwestern bogs could begin as early as late April, making way for construction of a Tribal wellness center.

Wheeler Excavating, led by Tribal spouse Tom Wheeler, will truck the remaining vines, foliage and pipes to an off-reservation dump site. Tribal Operations Manager Fauna Larkin said the truck traffic will be short-term, and Wheeler will aim to minimize neighborhood impact.

“Tom understands the Tribe,” she said. “His kids have spent time at the Learning Center, his wife works on the reservation, and he has extended family living there. He’s sensitive to concerns about safety and noise.”

Here’s a loose timeline (subject to change based on weather and other factors):



The bog behind the Community Health Center is on track to become the site of a larger, more comprehensive and holistic wellness center.

- All the cranberry vegetation and related irrigation should be gone in early May.
- Then comes a geotechnical analysis, to determine further excavation and fill needs.
- Based on the analysis, contractors may remove some soil, then truck in sand to level both bogs.
- Bog filling should be complete by early June.
- That should leave time to tidy up the area before June’s Restoration Celebration.
- After that, no activity is expected until late summer or early fall.

Larkin said the sand may come from a Tribe-owned “borrow site,” accessed by Tribal roads behind the Community Plankhouse. Taking sand from that location would reduce truck traffic past the Learning Center.

The project team’s goal is to begin construction before the end of 2019 and finish the wellness center by early 2021. As of late April, the Tribe was in negotiations with a lead contractor for the building’s design and construction.

Excavation and fill at the remaining three bogs is scheduled for 2020. Development plans for those areas have not been determined.