

Klamath tribes send letter to membership about Aurora property

Letter calls for meeting about the development of the Maletis property

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By Patrick Johnson

A letter sent to all Klamath Tribes members has sparked a flurry of activity in the quest for the land around Langdon Farms.

In the letter dated Aug. 24, tribal council president Joseph Kirk outlines the tribes' position on the property, the benefits and even what could be developed there if the land is put into trust.

The letter was sent to both the Canby Herald and the Wilsonville Spokesman anonymously from a Portland zip code. Both Kirk and Maletis family attorney Mark Cushing have denied sending the letter to the newspapers.

The letter details several uses for the property including sustainable manufacturing, commercial projects, a centralized food service facility for all tribes, a village shopping center and an outpatient medical facility.

Tribal leaders continue to say – and the letter states as well — there are no plans for a casino on the property. The letter includes a map to the property so members can visit the site.

But the letter does point toward an agreement for the Maletis' property. It states, "The property owners, Chris and Tom Maletis, are in negotiations with the Klamath Tribes for a Memorandum of Understanding setting for the terms for transfer of the property and commercial development through a partnership between the Klamath Tribes and the Maletis brothers."

In the letter, Kirk tells members why he believes the Klamath Tribes have a right to put the land into trust. The Klamath Tribes restoration agreement outlines the process for putting land into trust. He believes the Aurora property is within those bounds.

The letter also invited members to a tribal council meeting held Aug. 29.