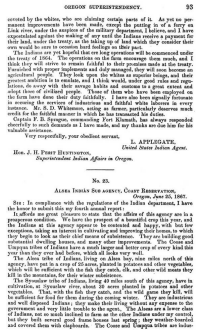
Alsea Subagency of Siletz Reservation



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accosted by the whites, who are claiming certain parts of it. As yet no permanent settlements have been made on the Siletz, Yaquina, Alsea, and Salmon Rivers, under the auspices of the military department, I believe, and I have expostulated against the making of any until the Indians receive a payment for their land, under the treaty, as the taking up of land which they consider their own would be sure to occasion hard feelings on their part.

The Coast Indians, I think, are generally disposed to be commenced under the treaty of 1854. The operations on the farm encourage them much, and I think they will strive to remain faithful to their promises made at the treaty. Furnished with proper implements and duly managed, they will soon become an agricultural people. They look upon the whites as superior beings, and their intercourse with them has been, so far, very beneficial to them. Left to themselves, do away with their savage habits and customs to a great extent and adopt those of civilized people. Those of them who have been employed on the farm have done their duty faithfully. I have also been signally fortunate in securing the services of industrious and faithful white laborers in every instance. Mr. Wm. Ward, the farmer, has been indefatigable and deserves much credit for the faithful manner in which he has commanded his charge.

Captain F. B. Sprague, commanding Fort Klamath, has always responded cheerfully to such demands as I have made, and my thanks are due him for his valuable assistance.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. APPLEGATE,
United States Indian Agent.

HON. J. H. PORT HUNTINGTON,
Superintendent Indian Affairs in Oregon.

No. 23.

ALSEA INDIAN SUB AGENCY, COAST RESERVATION,
Oregon, June 25, 1861.

SIR: In compliance with the regulations of the Indian department, I have the honor to submit this my fourth annual report:

It affords me great pleasure to state that the affairs of this agency are in a prosperous condition. The Indians are generally quiet and peaceable. The Indians at this agency appear to be contented and happy, will, but few exceptions, taking an interest in cultivating and improving their farms, to which they begin to look as their chief source of subsistence. They are building good substantial dwelling houses, and many other improvements. The Coos and Coquille Indians have made a good crop of potatoes, and a crop of every kind this year than they ever had before, which all looks very well.

The Alsea tribe of Indians, living on Alsea bay, nine miles north of this agency, have put in a crop of 25 acres, planted in potatoes and other vegetables, which will be enlisted with the fish they catch, elk, and other wild meats they kill, for their subsistence during the coming winter.

The Siuslaw tribe of Indians, living 40 miles south of this agency, have in cultivation, at Synslaw river, about 30 acres planted in potatoes and other vegetables. This, with the fish they catch, and the wild game they kill, will be sufficient for food for them during the coming winter. They are industrious and peaceable, and have made a good crop, and are well disposed toward the government and very little trouble to the agent. The Alseas are a lower class of Indians, not so much inclined to farm as the other Indians under my control, but they built several good frame houses last spring; they weather-boarded and covered them with clapboards. The Coos and Umpqua tribes are Indian-

In September 1859, Joel Palmer, the supervisor of Indian Affairs for Oregon, established the Alsea Subagency on the Coast Reservation to manage Indians who lived between Coos Bay and the Alsea River. The federal government managed reservation lands through a series of agencies and subagencies, where federal Indian Agents administered the agency and reported on conditions to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The Coast Reservation included the Siletz and Grand Ronde agencies and the Alsea, Yaquina, and Salmon River subagencies. The Alsea Subagency, located on Alsea Bay north of Yachats, was built by Indian laborers and operated until 1875.

President Franklin Pierce established the Coast Reservation by executive order on November 9, 1855. The military then removed the southern Oregon tribes from their homelands and shipped or marched them to the Grand Ronde and Siletz Agencies in different parts of the Coast Reservation.

In 1861, the Army removed the Alseans, Siuslawans, and a small band of Lower Umpquas to the subagency. Through the subagency, Indian Agents administered the Coos, Coquilles, Lower Umpqua, Alsea, and Siuslaw tribes, while they remained on their traditional homelands in Coos Bay and on the Yaquina and Alsea rivers.

Congress reduced the size of the Coast Reservation in 1865, dividing the reservation in roughly thirds with the Grand Ronde Reservation to the north, the Siletz Reservation in the middle, and the Alsea Reservation to the south. Ten years later, Congress reduced the Coast Reservation even further and eliminated the Alsea Reservation. The act directed that "the balance of said Alsea and Siletz reservations is hereby thrown open to settlement under the land laws of the United States." The regional Indian Office moved some of the people on the Alsea Reservation north to the Siletz Reservation, while others stayed in their homelands in off-reservation communities.

Today, descendants of the Alsea Subagency tribes are enrolled at the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, the Coquille Indian Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw tribes of Oregon.

Written by David Lewis

Further Reading:

Kappler, Charles J. *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*. Vol. 1. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913, 1902.

Zenk, Henry B. "Alseans." In *Handbook Of North American Indians*. Vol. 7. *Northwest Coast*. Ed. Wayne Suttles. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1990.

Zenk, Henry B. "Siuslawans and Coosans." In *Handbook of North American Indians*. Vol. 7. *Northwest Coast*. Ed. Wayne Suttles. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1990.

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