

March 29, 2007

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Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Tribe of Oregon

Dear Editors of *The Midden*,

The recent issue of *The Midden* contains an article by Dr. Dale Croes about the Sunken Village site in Oregon. Grand Ronde is actively working on this site and has been for some time. In the article there are photographs of the site, cultural materials found at the site, and one of a Tribal member and Grand Ronde Tribal site monitor at the site.

As far as we at Grand Ronde can determine, no permission was given to Dr. Croes to publish these images. Likewise, we were never made aware that the archaeological team was writing an article about the site. We have concerns the public will be able to identify the site from the photos, and that the image of a Tribal site monitor has been used without permission.

Collaboration and cooperation between tribes and anthropologists in the field is critical. Tribes are now partners and team members with many anthropologists conducting research. As part of this relationship, tribes have some say in the outcome of the research and will often enter agreements with the anthropologists on the disposition of the cultural materials and how or if the research may be published. Increasingly tribes are stipulating that they do not wish any publication of site locations or photographs of cultural materials and tribal representatives without the tribes' approval. These agreements are meant to protect tribal cultural resources from amateur excavations which can and do affect tribes every year, as well as honor tribal spiritual and legal relations with these resources. Similarly, many federal and state agencies have policies that place security protocols on their archival databases in order to protect and secure tribal cultural resources. If the tribes and anthropologists are to continue their close working relationships, anthropologists need to understand these policies and agreements and abide by them.

It is gratifying to hear a positive response to our concerns from *The Midden*. It is encouraging when professional journals choose to listen to the people most affected by the outcome of their publication and make a responsible decision that protects the continued relationship enjoyed throughout the community. Grand Ronde wishes to recognize *The Midden* for making such a progressive decision.

As the relationship between tribes and anthropologists continues to evolve, tribes are increasingly partners in research which concerns them. In cultural anthropology, researchers must abide by policies that protect people affected by their research. The same protection standards should apply to archaeology, because of the deep cultural, political, social, psychological, and spiritual connection between tribal people and their cultural resources. By treating cultural resources with care and respect, scientists treat tribal people with care and respect, and in doing so the sovereignty of tribes and the human rights of tribal people are protected.

It is the Grand Ronde Tribe's sincere wish to continue creating positive relationships with our scientific colleagues and to work collaboratively with them on their research and publication of their findings.

Sincerely,

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