

Rodney Cawston



Rodney Cawston is the Chairman of the Colville Business Council. Rodney's Indian name is tipyelene cicqn or Eagle Blanket which is a Nez Perce ancestral name that he received from his mother's side of his family. Rodney grew up on the Colville Reservation in Nespelem. He descends from the Nez Perce, Lakes and Okanogan Tribes. Rodney's 20 plus years of work experience with the Colville Confederated Tribes includes managing the Archives & Records Program, the Museum & Gift Shop, and the Language Program, all three of which he wrote the initial grants that funded them. He has also served as the Tribes' Contract Officer. Rodney wrote the initial grants for many of these programs. His work experience includes serving as a Regional Branch Chief for the Navajo Regional Office as the Self-Determination Officer. He also served as the Tribal Operations Manager for Washington State University to recruit Native American students and to work with signatory MOU tribes to establish research opportunities with the University. Additionally, Rodney was instrumental in the development of the Regents scholarship for Native American students attending WSU. Rodney served two Commissioners of Public Lands, which is a state-wide elected official in Olympia, WA providing leadership to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR has oversight over all of the public, commercial, agricultural, and aquatic lands in the State of Washington. At DNR, Rodney was responsible to work with all federally recognized tribes and he has met with each of their tribal councils on natural resource issues. Rodney drafted the "Commissioner's Order on Public Relations", which sets government to government policy between DNR and Washington's federally recognized tribes. Rodney also worked as the Self-Determination Specialist for the Puget Sound Agency, working with most of the tribal governments in Western Washington. Presently, Rodney is pursuing a PhD in the School of the Environment and Forest Sciences; he has completed all the required coursework and has to complete his dissertation.

Rodney has spent many years of learning traditional arts from many tribal Elders. He is a renowned traditional artist in weaving and beadwork. He and his family harvest and preserve as many of the traditional foods and plant materials of our Plateau people. He and his family participate in the dancing at local pow-wows and are active members in Nez Perce Longhouse.