

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue Mountain Action Council Receives Grant from the Wildhorse Foundation for Backpack Bridge Program

WALLA WALLA, WA, November 18, 2025 – Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) has received a \$15,000 grant from the Wildhorse Foundation to support the Backpack Bridge program, the weekend meal program that ensures elementary students who rely on free or reduced-price school meals do not go hungry over the weekend.

Backpack Bridge, launched in 2017, provides participating students with a Friday meal kit containing two breakfasts, two snacks, two fruits, and two entrées—enough to bridge the gap until school meals resume on Monday. Demand for the program has surged in recent years, nearly tripling in some schools. Last year alone, BMAC distributed more than 18,000 weekend meal bags, up from 11,000 the previous year. “This support from the Wildhorse Foundation ensures that local children have consistent access to nutritious food, even when school is not in session,” said Danielle Garbe Reser, BMAC CEO. “When kids return to school on Monday nourished and ready to learn, the whole community benefits.”

Each year, the Wildhorse Foundation makes grants to eligible nonprofit, government, and Tribal organizations within the homeland area of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla people. Also eligible for funding are Tribal government agencies or Native American charitable organizations with their base of operations within Oregon, as well as national or regional Indian organizations.

The Wildhorse Foundation has awarded more than \$19 million in grant funding since its establishment in 2001. Grants are awarded quarterly, with deadlines on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. For more information, visit the Foundation’s website at **thewildhorsefoundation.com**.

About Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC):

BMAC is our region’s designated community action agency and home to our region’s food bank. The BMAC Food Bank has the warehousing, storage, and distribution capacity to support food pantries across Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties. BMAC also provides other assistance to help people and change lives, including affordable housing, energy assistance, job training and more. Learn more at: bmacww.org.

About the Wildhorse Foundation:

The fund reflects the commitment of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to take a proactive, positive role in the well-being of the community. Funds, derived from a percentage of revenues from Wildhorse Resort & Casino, are managed and distributed by a Board of Directors comprised of community leaders and representatives of the CTUIR.

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