

NEWS RELEASE  
September 27, 2007  
Media contact: Cynthia Johnson  
503-227-6225 ext. 302  
johnsoncynthia@att.net  
www.ecotrust.org/buffettaward

**Buffett Award For Indigenous Leadership Honors  
Northwest Community Leader and Museum Director Roberta Conner  
Finalists From Oregon, Washington and Canada Also Honored**

Portland, OR (September 27, 2007) – Ecotrust will present the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Buffett Award for Indigenous Leadership to Roberta Conner at a ceremony in Portland, Oregon on November 29, 2007. The ceremony will also honor four other Northwest finalists for their achievements: Carol Craig (Yakama), Zillah, Washington; Alfred (Bud) Lane III (Siletz), Siletz, Oregon; Michael Pavel, Ph.D. (Skokomish), Skokomish, Washington and Lillian Moyer (Tahltan), Dease Lake, British Columbia, Canada.

Supported by the families of Howard and Peter Buffett, the Buffett Award recognizes indigenous leadership which improves social, economic, political or environmental conditions. This year, the \$25,000 Buffett Award for Indigenous Leadership goes to Roberta Conner (Umatilla/Cayuse/Nez Perce) of Pendleton, Oregon. The four other finalists will each receive a \$5,000 cash award.

Roberta (Bobbie) Conner is the honored recipient of the 2007 Buffett Award for Indigenous Leadership for her work representing the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation as a community and national leader, museum director, curator, speaker and author. Since 1998, Conner has served as the Director of the Tamástsiht Cultural Institute, which preserves, protects and promotes the culture of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla. She assisted with curation of the *Many Nations Many Voices* exhibit.

“Bobbie Conner demonstrates business acumen within a deep indigenous cultural framework like no one else we know,” said Spencer B. Beebe, President of Ecotrust, on behalf of the Final Jury Panel.

Conner is a lecturer and writer on cultural preservation issues. She currently serves on the board of the Wallowa Homeland Project and the Oregon Cultural Trust as a special advisor for tribal issues. From 1984 to 1997, she worked for the U.S. Small Business Administration in Denver and Sacramento as a Presidential Management Intern, Branch Manager and District Director.

“I firmly believe the work many of us do today was willed to us by our ancestors,” said Roberta Conner. “Their prayers and deeds that ensured our future were accompanied by great sacrifice.”

Carol Craig is an honored 2007 Buffett Award finalist for her work educating the public about tribal treaty rights, salmon recovery and environmental protection. As part of her public education efforts over the past twenty years, Craig has addressed many civic organizations, government employees and Northwest students from kindergarten through college. Since 1995, she has worked as the Public Information Manager for the Yakama Nation Fish and Wildlife Resource Management Program.

-over-

Alfred (Bud) Lane III is an honored 2007 Buffett Award finalist for his tireless efforts to restore, teach and promote understanding of Siletz tribal culture. Since 2003, Lane has taught the Athabaskan language as well as basket weaving, regalia-making and traditional foods gathering/preservation. He is currently Vice-Chairman of the Siletz Tribal Council. Since 2005, Lane has served on the Board of Directors of the Northwest Native American Basket Weavers Association.

Michael Pavel, Ph.D. is an honored 2007 Buffett Award finalist for his work as a Salish tradition bearer, professor, researcher, author, environmental conservationist and community leader. Dr. Pavel is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling Psychology, College of Education, Washington State University, Pullman. He is also the co-author of *The American Indian and Alaska Native Student's Guide to College Success* (2007).

Lillian Moyer is an honored 2007 Buffett Award finalist for her work as a community leader and her ongoing efforts to protect the watersheds of the Sacred Headwaters of the Stikine, Skeena and Nass wilderness river systems. She is the President of the Tahltan Elders Society and often serves as a spokesperson. Since 1996, Moyer has worked as a Family Support Worker for the Tahltan Band Council.

Established in 2001, the Buffett Award provides resources for the development and transfer of knowledge in indigenous communities. First Nation, Alaska Native or tribal members over 35 years of age who exhibit extraordinary community leadership within the Salmon Nation region from Alaska to California are eligible for nomination.

The Billy Frank, Jr. Conference Center in the Natural Capital Center is the site for this year's Buffett Award Dinner and Ceremony. The ceremony is an opportunity for the Buffett families, Ecotrust staff, friends and supporters to celebrate and honor these leaders. The annual event brings together current and prior honorees, ties in with other Portland-based community events, and provides networking opportunities for the Buffett Award finalists.

### **About Ecotrust and its Native Programs**

In addition to the Buffett Award for Indigenous Leadership, Ecotrust's Native Programs' projects and services include land repatriation, native youth leadership, education and research, and support of the Elakha Alliance. Recent programs have included a youth education and recycling program with the Canoe Journeys, support for Native youth education through scholarships, and innovative research into climate change impacts on indigenous communities.

Ecotrust is a conservation organization committed to strengthening communities and the environment from Alaska to California. In addition to its Native Programs, Ecotrust works in the fisheries, forestry, and food sectors to build a regional economy based on social and ecological opportunities. For more information about Ecotrust and the Buffett Award honorees, see [www.ecotrust.org/buffettaward](http://www.ecotrust.org/buffettaward).

-end-