

# County reviews cop deal

By Dan Hammes

Published: Tuesday, March 23, 2010 3:13 PM PDT

The Benewah County Commissioners took no action Monday on a deputization agreement with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe.

The agreement, negotiated last week, has been approved by the tribal council.

"We had not even seen the agreement until yesterday (Monday). We want to take some time to review it," Commissioner Jack Buell said.

The agreement would end a long dispute between the tribe and the county over the deputization of tribal officers. It was negotiated last week in Boise after members of a legislative committee urged the two parties to reach a compromise. Legislators made the plea after conducting hearings on legislation drafted by the tribe that would mandate Indian police be deputized in Idaho.

The tribe and the county have been at loggerheads over deputization since the county ended the previous agreement in 2007. Sheriff Bob Kirts rescinded the agreement because tribal police continued to cite non-tribal members into tribal court in violation of their rights.

That issue is resolved in the new agreement, county prosecutor Doug Payne said.

Chief Allan, tribal chairman, praised the agreement.

"The Coeur d'Alene Tribe believes the agreement marks a new chapter with Benewah County," he said. "The tribe's goal from the beginning was to improve public safety on the reservation."

Under the proposal, the agreement would be renewed annually. If one party does not want to renew the agreement, a 60-day notice is required. If either party wishes to end the agreement early, 30 days notice and non-binding arbitration is required.

The agreement does give tribal police authority to cite non-tribal members into tribal court for infraction committed on the water n if the person being cited agrees.

Mr. Payne, who was involved throughout the negotiations, said the agreement complies with the state constitution and protects individuals rights. He charged the tribe's legislation was unconstitutional.

"This is an entirely different matter than the state of Idaho just inventing police officers not responsible to anyone," Mr. Payne said.

Commissioner Buell did not say when the county would complete its review of the agreement.