



# NEWS RELEASE

## WYOMING DISTRICT OFFICE

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### **Pete Calhoun Named Minority Small Business Champion of the Year 2007**

**Crowheart – Pete Calhoun** is President and co-owner of Wind River Canyon Whitewater & Fly Fishing. He is a lifelong resident of the Wind River Indian Reservation and an enrolled member of the Eastern Shoshone Indian Tribe. Pete has been selected as the Minority Small Business Champion of the Year 2007 by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The award will be presented to Pete by Steve Despain, District Director, of the Wyoming Small Business Administration on April 9, 2007 at the opening reception of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Native American Business Expo at the Inn at Lander, starting at 5:00pm.

Each year since 1983, the President designates one week for recognition and celebration of the accomplishments of minority entrepreneurs. The award selection includes evaluation of growth in sales, profits, and employees; participation in community and charitable affairs; overcoming adversities; uniqueness and special attributes of the business; and the use of other minority firms as suppliers or subcontractors.

In 1968, Pete started his own cattle ranching operation in Crowheart. He started out with almost nothing, having to borrow all his equipment and operating needs. He spent the last 38 years growing the business into a successful ranching operation.

After taking a whitewater rafting trip with his son, Darren, in 1989, Pete recognized the potential of such a business on the Reservation. In 1992, at Pete's prodding, Pete and Darren opened Wind River Canyon Whitewater Rafting and Fly Fishing. The business provides guided whitewater rafting and fly fishing trips down the Wind River Canyon. Through an outfitter's permit granted by the Shoshone & Arapaho Tribe, Pete and Darren obtained the exclusive right to guide these pristine waters. Fourteen years later, the business is going stronger than ever, having experienced an average of 25% growth per year over the last five years.

In addition to Pete's business commitments, he has always volunteered his generosity of time to promote economic development in his community. Pete has been involved in helping youth develop ranching and business skills through participation in 4H. He has always had a strong interest in natural resource issues and believes that he has an obligation to be a strong steward of the land. He has implemented numerous self-imposed conservation practices in his business. He has also served on the Shoshone & Arapaho Water Board for many years. Pete was one of the founders of the tribal economic development corporation and Wind River Development Fund, a non-profit organization developed specifically to assist small business development on the Reservation.

Pete's nominator, Lisa Wagner, Executive Director of the Wind River Development Fund, says "Pete's an amazing guy whose dedication and commitment to small business development on the Wind River Indian Reservation is unparalleled".

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