



Sin-Wit-Ki

Volume 5, Issue 5
May, 1999

"All life on earth"

Celilo salmon feast attracts many

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Special points

of interest:

- Yakama tribal women first recipient of national award.
- Tribal fisher and technician gives his view on program.
- OMSI sets science program to lure tribal students.

First food ceremony takes place thanking Creator for bringing the salmon back for the tribal people.

One of the tribal traditions in the Columbia Basin is—as food becomes available throughout the year, a first foods ceremony is conducted to thank the Creator for bringing the resources back.

On the Oregon side of the Columbia River, seven miles east of The Dalles, Ore. the 'river people' held their first salmon ceremony April 11.

People arrived throughout the morning. At noon the drums were still vibrant as the religious songs for the Washat services continued in the longhouse at Celilo Village.

Salmon is the main diet for tribal people in the region and each year during the spring ceremony they assure the Creator they will continue to care for the

salmon's return. That same day the Rock Creek longhouse, located 18 miles east of Goldendale, Wash. also held their salmon ceremony. Recently Lyle Point, near Lyle, Wash. Held a salmon ceremony with the late Ladd Kahclamat, Yakama tribal elder, presiding.

"We used to get about 75 salmon for this feast. Today we have about 20, a lot less than before.

(Celilo-Continued on page 2)



Celilo salmon feast keeps food preparers busy. Warm Springs elder, Geraldine Jim and Dawn Kenoras, Yakama, carefully position salmon and check on it. "You rub the back of the fish and if it is warm all the way down then it is done," Kenoras said. (Photo by Carol Craig).

Celilo feast: Teaching the young tribal culture

It's really sad," said Dawn Kenoras who assisted in preparing the salmon. She and other young tribal women were kept busy carefully sliding cedar sticks up the filleted backs of each salmon. Smaller, thinner pieces of cedar were inserted sideways to help prop the fish up near the fire. Bright orange piles of filleted salmon were stacked on a table as they continued preparation.

At age 15, Kenoras began learning how to cut, fillet and put the cedar sticks in place from Geraldine Jim, Warm Springs elder. "She showed all of us girls how to do this and I have learned a lot from her," Kenoras said. "I'm grateful to know how to do this kind of work."

When she realized how little fish they had one year she decided to help in some way. That is when she decided to join Salmon Corps, a branch of AmeriCorps created by President Clinton. Corps members from 18 to 25 years old assist in restoring salmon habitat in the Columbia River Basin and upon completion receive a college stipend to further their education. She completed one year with the Corps and plans on continuing her education.

Other tribal people were briskly walking around the fire and smoke-filled area preparing other traditional food—elk and deer. And, for the first time dinner guests were about to taste mountain sheep coming from Navajo country.

Bobby Begay, half Yakama and Navajo has organized the feast for the last 17 years. "I started out just helping my grandmother and still do it today. It is important to continue this," he said.

Begay said tribal fishers appointed to gather the fish were concerned because they were not catching a lot of the spring chinook salmon. "We got some more fish from Yakama and Warm Springs," he said. "We'll have enough for today. Around 40 Navajo relatives

were there. Some were inside the long-house, some in the kitchen and others outside helping cook the fish. Two Navajo women patted out huge, circular pieces of Navajo bread. It was then placed below and near the fire on a rectangular piece of wrought iron. The bread would bubble on one side and be quickly turned over so the other side could cook. Several non-tribal visitors slowly walked around the village watching the tribal people prepare the food and continually checking on what else had to be done.

It was also evident many younger people, in their pre-teens, were ready to carry on the tribal tradition and culture. All were dressed properly in wing dresses and ribbon shirts. Some were

(Celilo-Continued on page 3)



Noticeably younger people are taking part in traditional gathering and learning what to do. Giggling and posing for the camera (top photo), are left to right-Mariah Slickpoo, Rachele Begay and Justine Begay. Bottom photo—Once they were told what they should be doing, the young girls became obediently quiet and very attentive. Photo by Carol Craig.

Sin-Wit-Ki translated from the Yakama language means "All life on earth." It is a monthly publication written, edited and photographed by Carol Craig, public information manager for the Fish and Wildlife Program. To receive at no cost, phone 509-865-6262, or write P.O. Box 151, Toppenish, WA. 98948 or e-mail ccraig@yakama.com. Sin-Wit-Ki is printed on recycled paper.

giggling and teasing one another. Once instruction began on what to do when they entered the longhouse, they became very calm and polite, carefully listening for more direction.

When the religious service ended people were invited inside the longhouse for dinner. The young tribal girls waited outside the longhouse. Then they grasped the tulle mats in their hands and were told to turn a complete circle before entering the longhouse. Once they were inside they quickly set the tulle mats on the ground as other young people were bustling about setting dinner places for the guests. As one would walk by dinner plates were set down. Another one directly behind would place bowls, then silverware. Tribal custom have the people take a drink of chush (water) before they begin eating and again when they are finished with the meal. Water is the life-giver. Tribal elders say without water nothing on earth would exist.

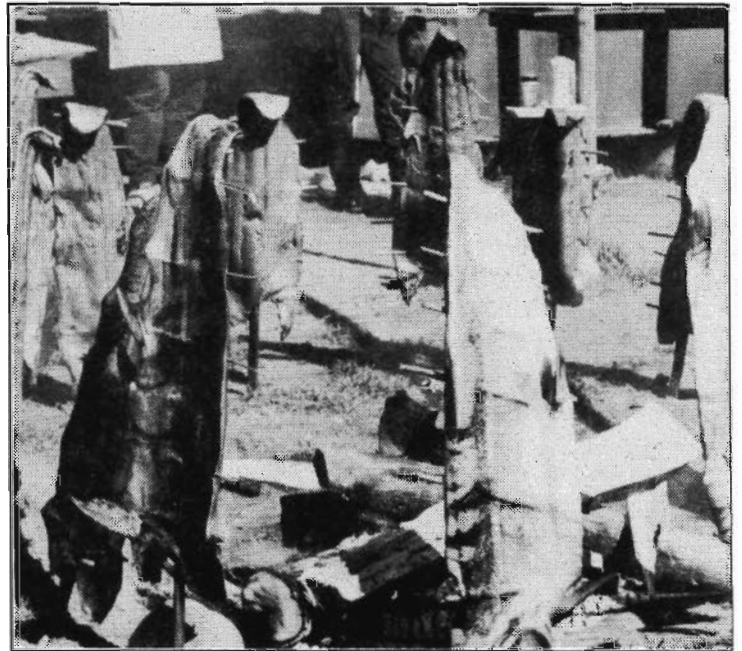
Once dinner was completed the young people were immediately on hand to clear the dinner dishes. Everyone began moving to another area where the powwow was just about to begin. More people arrived ready to compete in the tribal dances that lasted into the evening.



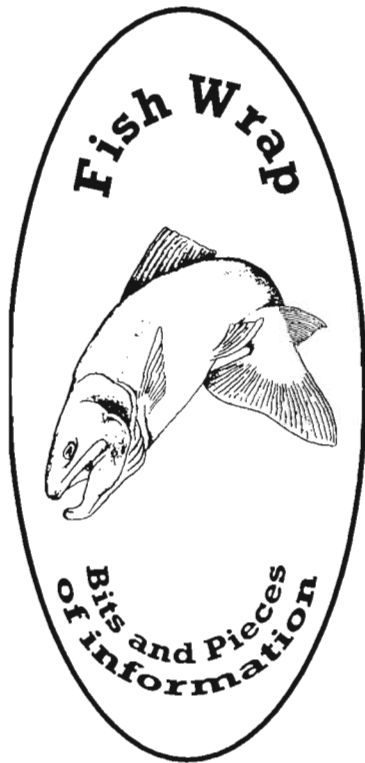
Navajo relative, Neva Begay George cooks bread and continues to fill huge bowl with bread to take inside longhouse.



Ready for the fire-Delilah Heemsah takes salmon to cook over coals.



Sizzling hot and dripping with scrumptious aroma salmon cook over the fire just before dinner was served. Photos by Carol Craig.



Heemsah garners first NAFWS 'Manager of the Year Award'

A Yakama tribal woman has earned top honors from a national tribal organization for her dedication and leadership skills to the Wildlife Program.

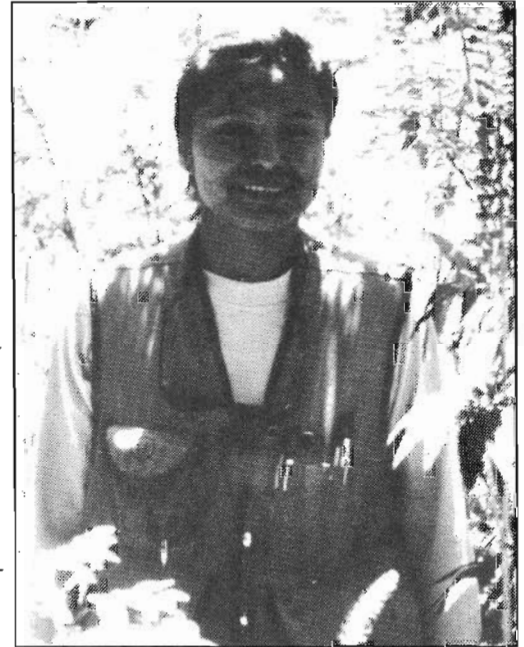
Yakama Nation's Spotted Owl Crew leader, Pat Heemsah, was selected as 'biologist/manager of the year' by the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (NAFWS).

Heemsah is the very first recipient of the annual national award which recognizes individuals who have had a significant positive impact on tribal resources.

NAFWS executive director, Ken Poynter and president, Arthur "Butch" Blazer congratulated Heemsah in a March 15 letter. "Your involvement, both locally and regionally, to learn, enhance and protect tribal natural resources has not gone unnoticed by your friends and colleagues. Your positive attitude, respectful demeanor and exceptional leadership are qualities you project and a standard for the rest of us to strive for."

Heemsah and Agnes Ketchen, Spotted Owl crew technician, will travel to the Society's annual meeting in Connecticut next month where she will be among the honored at an Awards Luncheon.

She has been crew leader since 1991. During that time Heemsah assumed ever-increasing responsibilities including managing the complex project. "Her leadership and management skills have kept the project on



track, even as supervisory biologists have come and gone," said Gina King, tribal biologist with the Wildlife Program.

Her dedication to the program was evident in 1998 when one biologist left the project and another one was on maternity leave for much of the field season. Heemsah and the permanent technicians handled the entire spotted owl survey coordination, as well as completing the rigorous schedule on time.

Ketchen nominated Heemsah for the award along with other wildlife program employees who provided letters of support.

Fly-fisher group may assist fishery program

Some of the vast problems that salmon face can be seen and heard through the media. After reading about the tern problem in the last edition of *Sin-Wit-Ki* Yakima Fly-Fisher Association President,

Dan Davis, wanted permission to reprint the tern article written by Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission Managing Scientist, Roy Beaty. "Our fisher's need to know about this problem and we want to consider how we can help," Davis said.

He also noted that perhaps in the future the association would be able to donate a trailer of some sort to help the tagging crew with transportation of their equipment to each site. "I read about how cumbersome it is to transfer all the equipment each time the crew goes to another location to do their tagging," he said. "The tribe is helping rebuild the fish runs and working so hard, we should be able to work something out." Davis also said he would like to continue dialogue with the fisheries program and began a closer working relationship.

Rowe-Soll to depart

Wildlife Program's Melissa Rowe-Soll will be leaving in May. She came to the program from Timber, Fish, and Wildlife in 1996 to began reviewing planning documents and assisting in preparation of grant applications. She gradually moved into data management, and mapping and analysis using the Geographic Information Systems. Rowe-Soll will be moving to Portland with husband Jonathon and one-year-old son, Jasper. Her husband accepted the Nature Conservancy's Portland Area Preserve Manager position. Staffers agree she will be missed for her warm personality as well as her GIS expertise.

An open letter about the river sturgeon program

A concerned Yakama tribal member and technician with the Yakama Nation Fisheries Program asked permission to print a letter to other tribal members. "It's about the program we're currently working on and I hope I explained things clearly," said Charles Gardee. He submitted the letter April 12.

An open letter to all tribal members of the Nez Perce, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Yakama tribes:

First of all let me introduce myself. I am Charles T. Gardee, an enrolled member of the Yakama Tribe. I am writing this letter to explain the importance of our tribal involvement in the sturgeon tagging program and population study being done in Zone 6 fishery reservoirs.

As a tribal fisherman, you know we have had to go along with Oregon State regulations on our sturgeon fisheries for a number of years. All because we had no numbers of our own to go on.

I had the privilege of working with Oregon State Fish and Wildlife for two seasons from 1995 to 1996. Back then we were tagging and

making population estimates. The first year-1995-was spent between McNary and Priest Rapids dams. We also had two Washington State people who were getting their experience in long line fishing so they could start their own research in Washington State rivers like the Snake River and the upper Columbia as far as the Canadian border. They have been doing this since 1996.

During my time with Oregon State I realized mistakes can be made in population estimates. A good example was the 1991 John Day Pool estimate which were quite a few thousand off. We confirmed that with our net fisheries in 1996 put together by Blaine Parker from the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

A fishermen tagging program by members of the four fishing tribes completed the survey. Afterwards the allowable catch of sturgeon jumped from 100 plus to 1,300 plus. Quite a jump if I say so myself. But still we have a few tribal members who disagree with the tagging program.

Maybe we should go back to the original allocation of 100 fish per season for sturgeon and let the people that are complaining stay home and not reap the rewards this tagging sturgeon program has brought to the tribal fishermen from the four tribes.

I am all for the research program because it is helping our tribal fishermen in their struggle to make a living. Thank you, I am,

Charles T. Gardee, P.O. Box 914, Carson, Wash. 98610.

New project hopes to move salmon-eating birds

Longview, Wash.—A new project is getting off to a good start that may attract salmon-eating terns near the mouth of the Columbia River to another location.

Caspian terns return to the mouth of the Columbia to man-made Rice Island each spring where they nest. To reduce and deter the birds, officials set up nesting barriers on the island and improved nesting habitat on East Sand Island by Chinook, Ore. which lies 15 miles downstream from Rice Island. Biologists are hoping the birds will eat salt-water herring luring them away from salmon.

Researchers have estimated the bird have eaten six to 25 million young salmon each year which are already protected as a threatened species. And, as of last week, more than 200 of the terns had landed on East Sand Island. In one more month around 20,000 birds are expected to arrive and nest.

"We are happy to see the birds spending time on East Sand Island, but until nesting begins we will not know how many terns we actually succeeded in moving," said Bob Willis, chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Environmental Resources Branch in Portland, Ore.

With assistance from Oregon State University, researchers will study the tern's diets to see whether their take of salmon drops off.

Terns used to be distributed throughout the Northwest coast but have gathered at the mouth of the Columbia since other nesting habitat was developed or was washed away.

This story contains Associated Press material.

Sturgeon fishery set

Spring season sturgeon setline fishery is open from April 1 to July 31. There may an early closure if the harvest guidelines are met before July 31. Bonneville and John Day pools are open with no setline fishery at The Dalles Pool. Allowed sales include sturgeon only. Sturgeon between four feet and five feet in length may be sold commercially. For more information contact 1-800-487-FISH.

The Yakama Nation Fish & Wildlife Committee is comprised of four members appointed by the Tribal Council who serve four-year terms. Members include Randy Settler, Chair, Jack Piander, Secretary, Clifford Moses and Duane Clark, Members.

Update: Projected run sizes & fishery results

On March 20 the winter season gillnet fishery officially closed. Tribal commercial harvest during the winter season fisheries, including the January setline fishery was: 1,723 sturgeon, 165 walleye, 93 steelhead, and one chinook. By pool statistics, the sturgeon harvest was 3,809 in Bonneville Pool; 1,005 in The Dalles Pool; and 338 in the John Day Pool.

The Sturgeon Management Task Force adopted annual harvest guidelines for 1999 which included 1,300 sturgeon in Bonneville Pool, 1,000 to 1,200 in The Dalles Pool and 1,160 in John Day Pool for a total of 3,460 to 3,660 sturgeon for the entire Zone 6 commercial sturgeon fishery.

According to tribal biologists, about 800 to 900 sturgeon remain within the annual guideline for the Bonneville and John Day pools. The Yakama Nation Fish and Wildlife Committee issued regulations opening a setline fishery for sturgeon in the Bonneville and John Day pools from April 1 through July 31. The season includes sturgeon caught from scaffolds which can also be sold. "The fishery may close earlier than the July 3 closure if annual sturgeon harvest guidelines in these pools are achieved," said Steve Parker, harvest manager for the fisheries program.

Counting of fish at Bonneville Dam began on March 15. As of April 8, the count of adult spring chinook was 763 fish. "The return of adult spring chinook above Bonneville Dam in 1999 is expected to be about 24,600 fish," Parker said. Currently counts at Bonneville are below the preseason expectations. A run size update is not expected until after April 21 when close to half of the runs has normally been counted at Bonneville Dam according to Parker.

With the low expected run size a limited fishery will be expected in the ceded area tributaries this year. All fisheries are subject to change with run size updates.

Satus Creek and its tributaries-Logy and Dry creeks-Marion and Harrah drains are closed to fishing for non-tribal members until further notice.

For tribal members, Satus and its tributaries are closed until June 15. Marion and Harrah drains are open as of April 1, no fooling. Other creeks, drains and ponds are open.

Questions about on-reservation fishing seasons should be directed to Dave Lind at 509-865-6262, x-6687.

Elderly and handicap non-tribal members may obtain a complimentary reservation fishing permit by contacting Francis Bushman at 509-865-6262, x-6644. Other non-tribal members must purchase a reservation license.

Fishing area	Run size forecast	Projected harvest Non-tribal Tribal	Escapement goal	Remaining (natural spawn or hatchery surplus)
Columbia River	24,600	<250 1,230	—	—
Wind River	800		1,700	None
Drano Lake	700		1,500	None
White Salmon River	100	<50 <50	—	100
Klickitat River	900	50 100	500	250
Yakima River	1,200	— 120	—	1,080
Ringold	400		500	None
Icicle	500		1,500	None

River	Season dates	Season times
Columbia	Jan. 1—Dec. 31	Year around
Wind	No fishery expected	
Drano Lake	No fishery expected	
White Salmon	April 7—June 12	Noon Wednesday—6 p.m. Saturday
Klickitat	April 7—May 29	Noon Wednesday—6 p.m. Saturday
Yakima	April 7—June 19	Noon Wednesday—6 p.m. Saturday
Ringold	No fishery expected	
Icicle	No fishery expected	

Table 1 above is a summary of expected spring chinook runs, harvest and escapement in 1999 with proposed sport and tribal fisheries.

Table 2, left, is the summary of 1999 Yakama Nation tributary fishing seasons.

'Save buffalo' says Inter-Tribal Corp. and enviros

Seattle, Wash.—Joint management plans on buffalo by the state and National Park Service (NPS) in Montana was in question here during the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals April 14.

The Inter-Tribal Bison Corporation (ITBC), comprised of 47 tribes nationwide and environmentalists asked the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to stop the state of Montana from killing buffalo when they leave Yellowstone National Park during winter foraging.

Both the state and NPS say buffalo that migrate from the park have to be killed to prevent brucellosis that might spread to Montana cattle. The ITBC and conservation groups argued that the risk of transmitting the disease to cattle is extremely low. Their lawsuit also contends the plan violates federal law that requires natural management of wildlife in Yellowstone. The state plan targets buffalo captured on the park's borders.

Yakama Nation special project leader, John Carl and wildlife technician, Phillip 'Bing' Olney attended the hearing. "The judges were very stoned face," said Carl. "It was difficult to tell what they were thinking of the testimony being provided."

During the winter of 1996 about 1,100 buffalo were rounded up and shot to prevent them from mingling with Montana cattle as they grazed in nearby pastures. About 50 were killed this winter and the winter before.

Still, the debate is whether the buffalo are likely to transmit the disease to cattle. "Do you agree that controlling brucellosis is a serious matter that has serious consequences for people raising cattle in Montana?" asked Judge Harry Pregerson. James Angell, attorney for Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund said, "No buffalo has ever passed the disease. If it was passed, it would lead to the control of that particular cattle herd."

But John Bloomquist, Montana state lawyer, said he credited the state's stringent measures for preventing the disease from becoming a danger to the state's cattle industry. "Transmission has not occurred in the wild and many believe that is because of the control efforts."

A ruling by the Ninth Circuit three-panel judge may very well take several months.

This story contains Associated Press material.

Feds to protect Hanford Reach-last free flowing stretch of the Columbia

A management transfer of 90,000 acres of critical habitat that surrounds the Hanford Reach was announced by U.S. Secretary Bill Richardson April 10 during a visit to the last free flowing stretch of the Columbia River.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would manage the entire North Slope lands under an existing permit from the Dept. of Energy that will be managed as a wildlife refuge.

The North Slope is a critical buffer for the spawning grounds of Hanford Reach chinook salmon. Irrigation development in that area has already caused massive landslides that have smothered spawning grounds for salmon.

Now the Clinton Administration has an opportunity this year to take additional action that could restore Snake River salmon by partially removing the four lower Snake River dams. It is expected that a decision will be made this December.

Secretary Richardson traveled to the Tri-Cities area in Washington State to make the formal announcement of the management transfer. That transfer will go from the Dept. of Energy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The decision will also enable

the Murray-Dicks Hanford Reach Wild and Scenic Rivers bill to go forward. Earlier this year Senator Patty Murray, D-Wash. and U.S. Rep. Norm Dicks, D-Wash. Introduced modified bills in the Senate and House to put the Reach under federal control with a federal-state-local-tribal advisory commission controlling the 51-mile stretch and quarter-mile corridor on either side.

The bills would set up a 15-member federal, state, local and tribal commission to help draft a management plan for the reach. Both democrats said protecting the reach could prevent drastic, court-ordered actions elsewhere in the state to protect endangered and threatened salmon.

U.S. Rep. Doc Hastings introduced a bill in March that called for the National Academy of Sciences to study the possibility of using the slope for farming, mining, grazing, recreation and other development. Hastings 4th District includes the Yakama Nation.

Writers conference focus on dams and fish

Wenatchee, Wash.—The Northwest Outdoor Writers Association (NOWA) gathered here April 16-18 for their annual conference.

Saturday discussion centered on *Salmon, dams, and people on the Columbia River: Today's choices, tomorrow's choices*.

(NOWA-Continued on page 8)

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OMSI summer camp seeking tribal students

Young Oregon tribal students interested in the salmon life cycle are invited to a summer camp held the last week of June and the first two days of July.

The classes are designed for ages 11 to 14 and will follow the life cycle of the salmon from the Pacific Ocean to the headwaters of the Warm Springs Reservation. Classes will be conducted at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) in Portland, Ore.

Two separate camps will take place with the first session for 11 and 12-year olds from June 20-25. The second session for 13-14 year olds is from June 27 to July 2.

Sponsored by OMSI and the American Indian Science and Engineer Society, the two groups would like to attract Oregon tribal students from middle schools for an intensive science education and cultural experience, to motivate participation in the sciences, to expose students to role models at various stages of their professional development, to provide a rich variety of science, math and technology follow-up activities using the facilities at OMSI. There is no charge and the program is funded by the Vollum Foundation and United States Fish and Wildlife Service. It is co-sponsored by the Warm Springs, Grand Ronde and Siletz nations. Interested students need to fill out an applica-

tion from the 1999 OMSI Science Camps and Adventures catalog and submit a one to two page letter of introduction and explain why they want to participate. Deadline is May 10th.

(NOWA—Continued from page 7)

morrow's resolutions. Washington, Oregon and Idaho state fish managers, Ed Bowles, Bruce Crawford and Jim Martin along with Carol Craig-Yakama Nation Fisheries, Chris Zimmer-Save Our Wild Salmon and Bruce Lovelin-Columbia River Alliance were panelists for the over five-hour discussion.

NOWA had over 60 writers attending the three-day meet. During the panel discussion the state's acknowledged the state's commitment in honoring tribal treaties and how in earlier years, at times, the treaties were not even considered. "We have to continue to honor the treaties and the tribes," said Martin.

Lovelin representing the aluminum industries, and pulp and paper mills along the Columbia received the brunt of the dam issue. While Lovelin advocates not breaching dams, other speakers adamantly opposed him and told the audience irregardless of what Lovelin represents, the sky wasn't falling and dams can be breached to save salmon. "Are we going to tell our grandchildren that we did nothing to help salmon," asked Martin. "Are we going to do something so that won't happen?"

One audience member questioned whether the Yakama Nation has the authority through the treaty to sue the federal government and force them to breach the dams to save the salmon.