

Sin-Wit-Ki

(All life on earth)

March 2000
Volume 5, Issue 3

Inside this issue:	
Cultural sites	2
Pasco hearing	3
Staff awarded	4
CRK and tribes	4
Breaching dams	7
In-lieu site regs	10

Hanford elk prove to be elusive

When some 200 elk were finally herded and packed into trailers for transportation the death toll numbered 15.

Considered the largest wildlife round-up in the state, a helicopter hovered over elk herds forcing them into a make-shift corral near the Hanford Nuclear Reservation March 6.

According to Dale Bambrick, regional director for the Washington State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) seven collapsed from stress after being packed into the corral March 7.

The first day there was a morning and afternoon chase that ended with the elk winning both rounds which resulted in both state and

federal agency staff going into a huddle to rethink the process.

The following day after revamping the corral U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and WDFW herded two groups into the corral. Several Yakama tribal technicians observed the March 7 operation. "They [state and federal agencies] just ran them to death," said Phillip 'Bing' Olney, wildlife technician. Olney, Alvin James and John Carl left before the round-up was completed. "I just couldn't watch that anymore," Olney said.

The helicopter chased the two herds into a quarter-mile long funnel made from two eight-

(Elk—Continued on page 8)

Special points of interest

- Celilo pictures
- Who said what at Pasco
- Salmon Corps
- 'Lil Beaver' hits rez stores

Tribe insistence--"Elk be tested"

Once the Yakama Nation was aware of state and federal plans to relocate a portion of the elk from the Hanford Reserve to other locations, the tribe insisted testing be done prior to the move. "They just were not going to bother with testing," said Bill Bradley, Yakama Nation Wildlife Program manager.

The tribe instead, received opposition from WDFW and USFWS who wanted to do minimal marking of 10 to 20 percent of the elk captured and then only do radio collar attachments.

"You don't take elk and dump them somewhere else believing they are not diseased or sick and we had to insist on that procedure," he said.

In a strongly worded letter to the director of the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the tribe reminded the state of sharing managerial duties on fish and wildlife matters. The Feb. 28 letter stated: "...certain specific information should be collected by the co-managing

agencies." The tribe indicated tests should be done for age estimates and obtain blood samples for pregnancy testing from a large proportion of the relocated elk to better assess the prevailing patterns of recruitment especially among yearling and very old females.

"I tried to explain that the tribe has been doing this type of work for years and we would be able to assist them, but both agencies insisted upon doing it their way," said Bradley.

The tribe is interested in the genetic aspects of the elk and funded a study to address genetic variability in the Hanford elk. The only requirement for the genetic testing would be an ear punch sample from a large segment of those elk being relocated.

"Genetic data would help us assess the consequences of growing nearly 1,000 elk from six or seven seed animals and may also help us understand where we can move these elk to

(Tribe—Continued on page 8)

Columbia River archeological preservation

Protecting cultural sites from looters & thieves

Hood River, Ore.— Two years ago as officer Lori Watlamet, who is a Cayuse-Umatilla tribal member, patrolled an area of the Columbia River she noticed numerous mounds of dirt as if someone was digging. She found more freshly dug holes in another area and began to wonder.

"I asked a Warm Springs tribal elder about where the old village sites were and he basically told me all along the river." She got the same answer from other tribal elders and realized the digging was for something other than flowers or plants. "She's the only one that began working on protecting the cultural sites and still does," said Fred Ike, Sr. Yakama Tribal Councilman, elder and Cultural Resource Committee member. "We need that patrol on the river because people keep digging up those places and taking artifacts that should not be touched. Without her patrolling it would continue," he said.

The cultural sites need protection not only from how the dams are operated and maintained but also from looters and thieves according to Watlamet, Law Enforcement Archeological Coordinator for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement (CRITFE).

CRITFE is the enforcement branch for the four Columbia River treaty tribes—Yakama, Nez Perce, Warm Springs and Umatilla that protects tribal fishers, upholds treaty rights and ensures tribal fishers are in compliance with tribal fishing regulations.

Drastic fluctuations of pools at the dams have caused severe erosion exposing some of the cultural sites. "We lose sites this way more and more every year," Watlamet said. Since July 1998 CRITFE has totaled 27 cases with 19 received from callers reporting suspicious activity.

Wana-pa Koot Koot was formed three years ago. The multi-agency manages the tribes' natural and cultural heritage along the Columbia River. Translated to 'those who work along the river,' its' mission includes protecting the significant cultural resources. It is comprised of the Columbia River treaty tribes, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Portland Ore.

Once she reported seeing more evidence of vandalism and looting to CRITFE Chief, John Johnson, he requested she investigate to see what they could do to further protect those sites along the river.

Watlamet has attended cultural camps learning how to identify a cultural site and determine if it has been tampered with. Tribal elders were also invited to talk about cultural sites protected under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) signed into law since

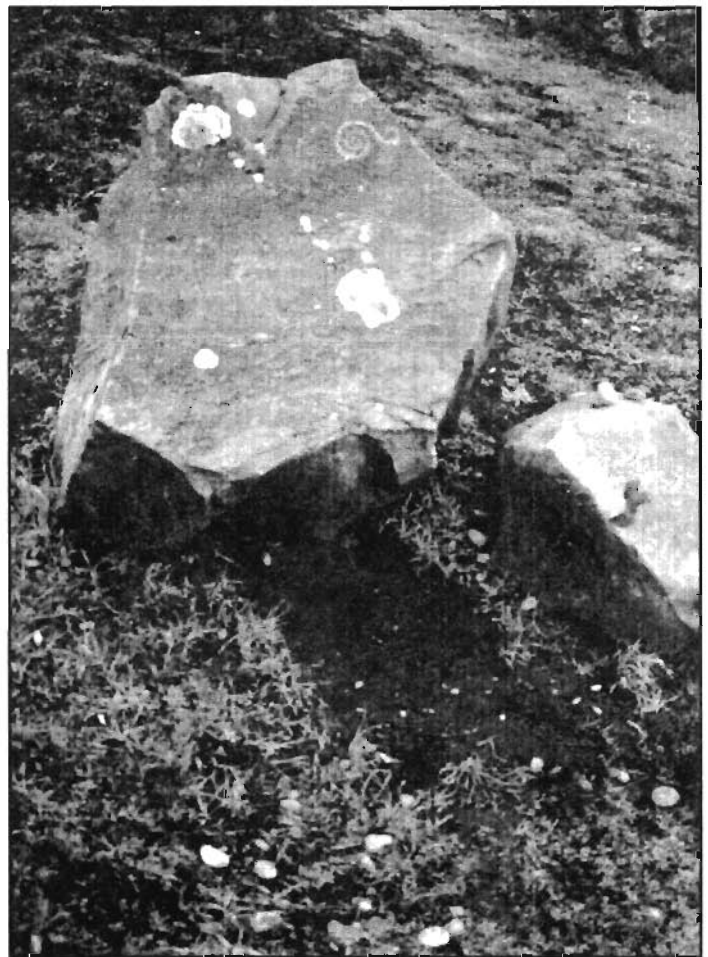
1990.

"Even some of the pictographs and petroglyphs have not escaped vandalism." Almost daily she sees the graffiti riddled ancient drawings, some covered over with paint while others look as though someone was trying to wedge them out of the rock standings.

Last year CRITFE held a two-day course for state and federal staff in the region. Watlamet coordinated and provided 41 officers and attorneys with information on theft or damage that occurs at the archaeological sites.

This year the protective measures are moving upriver above McNary Dam into the Snake River area because grave digging and looting is on the rise. "More counties are getting involved. This year we will began

(Protecting—Continued on page 6)



On the north side of the Columbia River, Watlamet discovered a spot where someone was digging for artifacts and appears to have left in a hurry leaving their find. Just below the huge rock the dark portion is where a hole was dug. To the right some of the tools and rocks rest on the smaller rock. Watlamet says looting is a constant problem. Both boulders have tribal etchings that need to be protected. Photo courtesy Lori Watlamet.

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.

Hearing takes on farmers

Pasco, Wash.—Over 700 people, mostly farmers, made sure they were heard during a federal hearing about breaching the four lower Snake River dams which was a resounding "no."

The fourth of 15 hearings scheduled on salmon recovery had some, at times, shouting to panel members during the public hearing comment Feb. 17.

Prior to the hearing a crowd of people shoulder-to-shoulder, waited in the lobby at the DoubleTree Inn to sign-up to speak and were verbose about not breaching dams to save salmon and verbally attacked pro-breaching dam people as they waited. The afternoon session began with a presentation from the panel and continued with testimony by elected tribal and non-tribal officials. Each individual was permitted three minutes to testify. The audience abandon rules set by the nine federal agencies hosting the hearing and continued clapping and booing at various speakers.

There were few pro-breaching dams people at the afternoon session with many who wore "Save our Dams" stickers on the shirts with yellow ribbons tied around their arms in support of dams.

Farmers finger-pointed tribes as the main culprit of salmon decline insisting gillnets

on the Columbia River kill salmon and their farm practices were being threatened.

"How does a \$2-a-pound salmon sales have any relation to fishing for ceremonial use?" shouted Clint Diddier. The room burst into cheers. The moderator asked the crowd to withhold their applause because it took up others talking time. The crowd continued unabated as farmers, one after the other, stood in favor of keeping the dams.

"The tribes are always the target when it comes to salmon decline," said Charles Hudson, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission's public information manager. "Yet people fail to recognize all of the other problems salmon face."

"Breaching the dams is about as useful as bringing back the horse and buggy for public transportation," said Dave Glessner. "Don't wash away productive farmland and put a dust bowl in its place."

Will Stelle, NMFS regional administrator said, "I heard a lot about dams, but I haven't heard a lot about water or about land use or about cows in the stream... We need to broaden the debate so it's not just about dams. What commitments are local governments and people willing to make to rehabilitate the health of our salmon systems?"

(Protesters—Continued on page 12)



Fish & Wildlife Committee chair, Randy Settler gives testimony during evening session in Pasco.

Who had to say what at Pasco

Many people provided testimony during the Feb. 17 hearing in Pasco, Wash. Here is a sample of what some had to tell the panel.

Brenda Alford--"You must begin to listen or face the consequences of civil disobedience. Agency drones will not be allowed to take away our way of life. If you East Coast Yankees thought the South put up a fight, you ain't seen nothing yet. Because you threatened us, you can consider yourselves threatened."

Clint Diddier--"We've progressed from being the freest nation in the world to being unfree. Government can and does pose a threat to our liberties in this salmon issue."

Fred Bennett, Port of Walla Walla Commissioner--"Our jobs and way of life are at stake. Dam breaching is extreme and it is risky."

Dean Strawn--Kennewick businessman--"We're not hearing people talk about just don't breach the dams and to heck with the salmon. They are looking for solutions."

Leo Hill--"Breaching the Snake River dams is too drastic of a move to take before addressing the other issues. Any reasonable person can see it would have a more immediate impact on salmon."

Rella Reimann, president of T & R Farms read a letter from Senator Slade Gorton, R-Wash. "I can state definitively that no federal proposal to remove Snake or Columbia river dams will see the light of day in

(Who—Continued on page 12)



A Umatilla tribal group drums and sings as supporters wave fish banners to passers-by in Pasco, Wash. Feb. 17. Photo by Carol Craig.

Fish wrap



Bits & pieces of
information

Good to the Corps

Yakama Nation Salmon Corps members have put in 12,496.5 hours since they began their new assignment last October.

The 14-member team with a squad leader have strung 3,000 feet of fencing and removed 1,500 feet of old fence line.

Working with the fisheries program they have cleaned and maintained four raceways at the Cle Elum Supplementation and Researcher facility. At Prosser they sorted 214 coho for spawning. Out of that process 600,000 are now fry and the crew assists with feeding them.

In the community effort the young tribal adults winterized tribal elders homes by putting 1,100 feet of plastic on windows, cut 20 cords of wood--delivered and stacked-- and assessed repairs for over two dozen homes.

The Corps was a tremendous help during the holiday season. They accompanied 400 children to the various events, wrapped over 50 presents destined for tribal elders and served over 200 lunches at the Cultural Center during the governor's visit. They set up tables, chairs, table cloths and balloons for events at Legends Casino and during the General Council meeting.

They toured two college campuses at Yakima Valley Community College and Central Washington University. The largest Corps group in the basin, the hard-working crew strives for perfection and also earn college dollars.

Two staffers take awards

Two staff from the Yakama Nation Fish and Wildlife program received 'Supervisor of the year' awards including earlier national winner, Patricia Heemsah.

Heemsah has now racked up two prestigious awards receiving the 'Supervisor of the Year' award from the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society at the annual gathering last year. She works with the spotted owl program on the closed portion of the reservation, follows her traditional upbringing and has a strong knowledge of her outdoor work.

Jim Matthews was described as 'picking up the ball and running with it.' Matthews, fisheries biologist II and acting program manager was surprised when he heard his name announced at the Yakama Nation Employees Award and Dinner event Feb. 24. "I didn't even know about this," he said with his trademark smile and uplifted eyebrow. The entire Timber, Fish and Wildlife staff recommended him for the award. Matthews did not hesitate to step in as manager when the position was vacated. According to TFW staff "Once we were without a manager, he stepped right in. He first took on the task for 90 days last October which has extended each time to the present. With a limited budget he wears two hats everyday, all day long."

CRK merges with tribes and river communities

After a decade Columbia River United (CRU) in the Mid-Columbia area has merged with Portland-based nonprofit, Clean Water Columbia to form "Columbia Riverkeeper (CRK).

"Licensing was granted for use of the name by Robert Kennedy, Jr. and the Waterkeeper Alliance, a national coalition working to protect our rivers and waterways," said Cyndy DeBruler of Hood River, Ore. DeBruler is former CRU director and will now serve as director of CR.

More impressive is designated spokesperson, Elizabeth Furse, former Oregon Congresswoman and CR board member. Donald Sampson, executive director for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission is another key board member. Sampson will form CRK's Board of Tribal Advisers that will serve as a direct link to the tribes and their traditional wisdom on river issues.

The tribal board will be comprised of policy-level tribal members who will meet quarterly to help CRK establish priorities for river work.

DeBruler said, "The core values of CRK is education through community outreach and will host quarterly meetings with local watershed representatives and other environmental group leaders in key river communities."

The Yakama Nation Fish and Wildlife Committee is comprised of four members appointed by the Tribal Council who serve four-year terms. Members include Randy Settler, Chair, Duane Clark, Secretary, Ross Sockzehigh and Leo Aleck, Members.

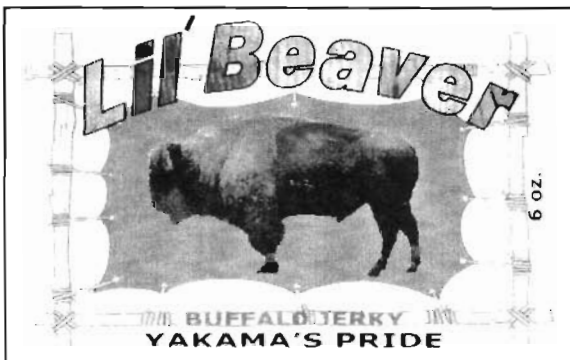


The star—'Lil' Beaver out on the foggy range near Harrah, Wash. takes to winter weather while munching on hay. Photo by Carol Craig.

Jerky snack at rez stores

Last month the Yakama Nation was preparing to stock shelves with buffalo jerky at two tribal locations on the reservation. The earth-color label includes one of the Yakama Nation herd designed by the Yakama Nation Printing shop in Toppenish, Wash.

"Lil Beaver" one of the buffalo from the Yakama herd was chosen to be in the design.



"We were busy putting the labels on the packages," said John Carl, caretaker of the buffalo.

Outlets that will have the buffalo jerky include the Yakamart and the Yakama Nation Cultural Heritage

Gift Center. The 6 oz. packages sell for \$9.00. According to Carl the when jerky is made only a certain portion of the buffalo is used and it is healthier than beef.

Ceremony at Celilo site

The Celilo Treaty Fishing Access Site on the Oregon side of the Columbia River will hold a gathering April 6 at 10 a.m.

Traditional artwork plaques will be placed on the building along with a ceremonial blessing to honor the event. Tribal elders will conduct the ceremony.

The plaques are a gift from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For more information contact either Joanna Meninick at 509-865-5121, ext. 4736 or Lynda Walker with the Corps at 503-808-3715.

Mean-spirited and tasteless remarks abounded at the Northwest Power Planning Council meeting held in Pasco,



Wash. Feb. 17. Comprised of farmers and irrigators, the over-flowing crowd of around 800 were less than polite. Outside the DoubleTree Inn people against breaching dams waved placards to passers-by while a half a block away a Umatilla tribal group drummed and sang tribal songs as young tribal people waved fish banners.

Inside people stood shoulder-to-shoulder waiting to sign up to give their opinion. The packed room heated up quickly with some making snide remarks. Police surrounded the building inside and out.

As I stood waiting among the crowd me and an unidentified gentleman felt the anger among the crowd. As soon as he indicated he wanted the dams breached some began to chide him. A man in front of us decided to leave so we inched our way forward. One man yelled in his face saying, "You crowded and I've been here since 8:30!" The gentleman said, "I've been here since 10 a.m. and I saw you come in." The man stepped directly in front of him and said, "I'm going to do what you did to me." A woman behind me said, "These two crowded and we were here first." She pushed against my back several times. "Would you like to talk about who was here first?" I thought, but remained silent. Finally the gentleman turned around and left the crowd. The woman said, "Well, that worked." The man standing in front of me turned and while looking at me said, "Almost!"

Most speakers were against dam breaching. Some threatened the panel saying if they breached the dams it would become another Vietnam. Others had easy solutions. "Why can't you eat hamburgers like us." "Treaty rights have nothing to do with this." "We made the Makah stop whaling and they rebounded." "If you just get the nets out of the river."

I took a rest during the evening session at the CRITFC information booth where there was a short, balding man talking with Charles Hudson, CRITFC public information manager. "Can I tell you a joke," he said. I leaned over and said, "Is it racist?" "Well, yeah," he said. I shook my head back and forth. Hudson told him the time was not appropriate. He began his joke. "He tells us anyway!" I said. He stopped, turned around and left after some people who heard me laughed.

At times I felt like I was back at Neah Bay when the Makah were being attacked for reviving their tradition of taking a whale.

Most of the 300 people at the evening meeting were in favor of breaching dams and were less boisterous and more polite.

Views expressed in this column are solely of the editor of Sin-Wit-Ki and not the Yakama Nation or the Fish and Wildlife Program.

Protecting cultural sites along river

(Continued from page 2)

to patrol an area from Palouse Falls to Lewiston, ID.”

The four treaty tribes continue fieldwork surveying and recording cultural sites in the basin. Since her work time is devoted to protecting the sites and working with tribal archaeologists her eyes have opened wider. “The whole gorge is covered with these rock drawings. Some we can see by water as we patrol looking for nets. Before I just concentrated on the water and didn’t look above. Every time I go out I see something new,” she said.

Yakama Nation archeologist, Chris Landreau has worked alongside Watlamet for the last year and appreciates her assistance. “We were doing a cultural survey on the north side of The Dalles Dam pool and we showed her some of the sites that are in danger of being looted and some that were being looted,” he said. Last summer Landreau located a series of sites in Klickitat County. “There were Chinese ovens in a cooking area that were probably there since they helped build the railroad system out this way,” he said.

Watlamet was with Landreau one day when they came upon five individuals in two separate incidents digging for ‘looters gold.’ “She cited them and some have been prosecuted for a felony,” he said. Landreau says he is trying to educate people on the evils of destroying or disturbing a cultural, historical site. “Some of the people claim they did not realize what they were doing was wrong or even a violation.” “The more involved I get, the more I learn how much people left behind. So many people have left their mark. The gorge is rich in everything,” she said.

With the latest technology available, enforcement officers will be able to detect any suspicious activity. Evening patrollers will use an infrared beam from Night Owl monocular night vision gear and will know immediately if someone is on a looting rampage. Night vision goggles can be hand held or worn on the head for patrolling by vehicle, foot or boat. “All of the night vision equipment can be enhanced with an infrared spotlight that can light an area up to one-quarter of a mile away,” she said.

More citizen involvement is evident too. “We get calls from non-tribal people who will tell us they saw something suspicious. I got a call from a tribal fisher who said he noticed some people on Miller Island. It was me and two tribal archaeologists surveying the island. It’s good to know people are getting

involved.”

For the last two years BPA has funded the effort to stop the looters from grave digging and vandalizing the sites. “The four tribes received direct funding through the Corps. BPA handed the money over to the Corps so they could get it to the tribes then the Corps contracts with the tribes.”

The word is gradually spreading about NAGPRA and how that is being enforced in the basin. Watlamet recently received a call out of Washington, D.C. from special agent Dave Nicolas, BIA enforcement branch who got a call from a Clark County resident in Washington State reporting vandalism. “I’m happy that anyone is doing it. We have a number of programs around the country protecting these cultural sites and I’m glad our people cover these crimes. It is more than a violation of law and we have native people who are taking the bull by the horns to stop this looting.”

Nicolas is Munsee-Thames River Band of Delaware Indians of Ontario, Canada.

“Chris recently told me they just found an unrecorded place and I got goose bumps all over,” said Watlamet.

Last summer while she was on patrol she spotted another unrecorded location. She sat down to rest and at the same time looked down and saw cupules (indentations in the rock formation). There were around 40 on the huge rock formation. “It looked like someone dug out small bowls and I tried to figure out for what purpose.” On another sweltering day she pulled her boat alongside what she thought would be a good spot just to jump in the

river to cool down, clothes and all. As she sat down to take her boots off she had the eeriest of feelings. She hesitated, then stood up and saw a red circle with another thinner circle around it painted on the rock formation above her. She remembered an elder describing the circle that meant someone died at that location. “As a tribal person we know not to bother a location like that and I left in a very, big hurry.”

She has also seen some curious etchings. She grabbed a pencil and tablet and sketched a ‘stick man’ that had what looked like four arms, one long, thick, strand on top of the head portion with two eyes and a big smile resembling today’s ‘happy face.’ “Maybe we had visitors from somewhere else long time ago,” she said.

It is a major violation to loot and vandalize any tribal cultural site on the river and to assure the regulations are upheld more enforcement officers are now getting involved to preserve the sites. “Hopefully we will be able to retrieve some of the stolen loot to return to the tribes.”



Watlamet scales Columbia River bank on north side to inspect landscape. Photo courtesy Don Ellingson, CRITFE.

What are organizations and individuals saying about the four dams?

Dam breaching proponents region-wide

So far federal agencies, independent science groups, environmental organizations and tribes have agreed that breaching the four lower Snake River dams is essential if salmon are to survive. Those dams include Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor.

Who are they and what to they have to say?

Last month representatives from the **Umatilla Tribe** met with Bruce Buckmaster, producer of food for fish hatcheries and President of Salmon for All; Doug Thompson, Astoria city councilman and Astoria Chamber of Commerce members to form an alliance for breaching dams. Together they will demand the federal government to breach the four lower Snake River dams.

The **American Fisheries Society (AFS)** endorsed Snake River dam breaching Feb. 18 through a resolution adopted by a vote of 103-0 at their annual meeting representing around 500 biologists. "If society at large wishes to restore these salmonids to sustainable, fishable levels, a significant portion of the lower Snake River must be returned to a free-flowing condition by breaching the four lower Snake River dams," the biologists' resolution said.

Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber announced to AFS on Feb. 18 that after reviewing the different approaches and trade-offs in each of the two alternatives of leaving or taking the dams out. He prefers the alternative that includes breaching the dams.

The **Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission** that works for the four treaty tribes including, Yakama, Nez Perce, Warm Springs and Umatilla nations also advocates breaching dams in the Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit (Spirit of the Salmon) salmon restoration plan. The Columbia River treaty tribes are the only organization that has a complete comprehensive restoration plan with a detailed plan listing All-H measures to protect, recover and restore salmon, lamprey and other resource throughout the Columbia River Basin. The tribes' preferred alternative for dam draw down would require structural modifications to allow for draw down to natural river levels.

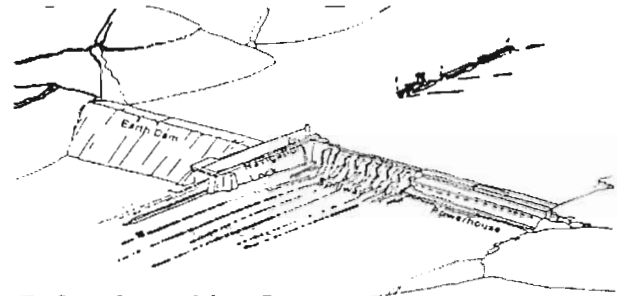
The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** says the biological benefits of draw down for fish is a "no-brainer."

The **Process for Analyzing and Testing Hypothesis (PATH)** determined that breaching the dams has the highest probability of restoring healthy, harvestable salmon populations. The PATH report concluded breaching the four dams by removing portions to allow the river to flow unimpeded will improve the chances of restoring threatened and endangered fish populations. "Breaching doubles odds of fish survival; Scientists say removing parts of the four Snake River dams is the best bet for fish." *Lewiston Tribune*, Lewiston, ID., Dec. 11, 1998.

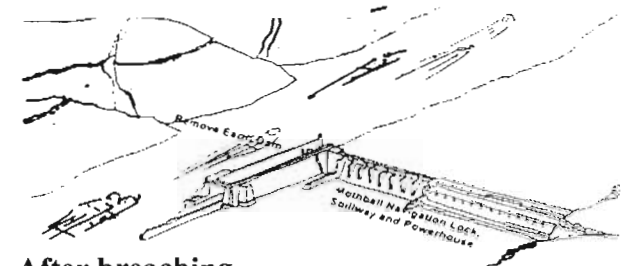
Biologists, tribal and state, 206 in all, recently supported breaching the four dams in a letter to President Clinton.

The **Idaho Fish and Game Commission** said that restoring the Snake River is the best biological option for restoring Snake River salmon and also supported natural river draw down in the Lower Snake.

The *Idaho Statesman* and the *Idaho Post-Register* newspaper have editorialized in favor of breaching.



Before breaching Lower Granite Dam



After breaching

The 'run of river dams'

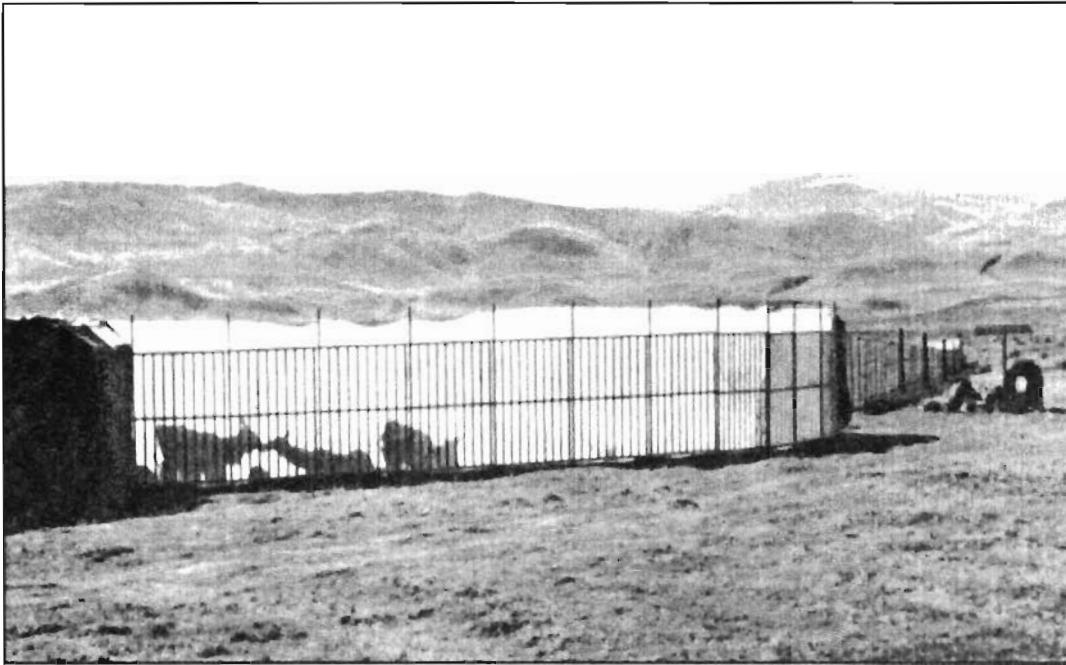
As the 'don't breach the dam' rhetoric continues what will anti-dam breaching people lose?

A free ride from the federally subsidized program that barges farmers goods to the Port of Portland which comes solely out of taxpayers pockets.

In a short three decades the salmon stocks have declined dramatically. The four dams produce the barest of minimum electricity, five percent total. They were not built for flood control nor do they store irrigation water. They were constructed to make a cheap liquid highway transportation system for farmers who pay nil towards salmon restoration.

So while farmers and irrigators point the finger at the tribal fishery they continue to say they can not pay farm workers minimum wage, provide decent housing while they are working at the farms, and want to farm their way with some not complying with federal regulations for water quality or quantity.

Since the dams were built wild Snake River salmon runs have dropped almost 90 percent. Breaching the dams, as most agree, will be the best way to restore harvestable runs to the Snake, Clearwater, Salmon, Grande Ronde and other watersheds freeing up to 140 miles of the river and improve water quality. With the return of salmon, more nutrients for other wildlife, plants and trees will be available.



Elk cast shadows behind make-shift corral constructed near the Hanford. The elk were transported to trim herd size. Photo courtesy John Carl, Yakama Nation Wildlife.

(Tribe—Continued from page 1) without compromising other gene pools and would also provide a population 'fingerprint' for future forensic needs," wrote Randy Settler, chair of the Yakama Nation Fish and Wildlife Committee.

The state and federal agencies planned to do marking with paint but the tribe in the letter said the method is insufficient and was developed with no participation from the tribe. "The Yakama Nation finds paint-ball marking of a culturally important animal to be objectionable. We suspect the paint-ball marking plan is an attempt to appease the Yakama Nation's insistence that relocated elk be marked without addressing the needs behind the marking request."

(Continued from page 1)

Elk herd eludes helicopter

foot high fences covered with burlap.

A small eight-foot opening at the entrance to the corral was widened to 20 feet and wildlife crew moved the main burlap curtain from 30 yards in front of the gate to a wider part of the funnel about 150 yards away.

The out-of-state helicopter pilot, Gary Brennan of Wyoming, plus numerous volunteers assisted once the animals were corralled.

The herd has expanded since 1972 from eight to over 1,000 today and may have roamed southeast from the east slopes of the Cascade Mountains. Today the animals are a thorn in the side for farmers who say the elk are eating their crops and trampling shrub-steppe habitat.

"When a large number of panicked animals are packed into a corral, they lose their ability to release body heat and cool off properly," Bambrick said. "They got too hot. They were under stress too long."

One elk was fatally trampled Mar. 6. Three elk died Mar. 8 when they were trampled as about 80 elk broke through the corral to escape.

The captured elk were taken to the Selkirk Mountains in northeast Washington State and the Blue Mountains in the southeast portion.

A week earlier Yakama tribal technicians herded around 20 elk to do testing. "We used another method by dropping nets on them then taking them out of there one-by-one," Olney said. There was a two elk mortality during that round-up.

In the long-term, plans call for relocating 500 elk from the Hanford Reserve over the following three years. If left alone, the herd could double in size every four years.

Tribe's objective in testing Hanford elk

- ◆ Capture of the elk creates opportunity to handle and obtain biological samples from serum for pregnancy analyses, age data for population reconstruction, tissue samples and hair for genetic analyses.
- ◆ Three to five minutes required per elk to physically obtain samples in squeeze chute.
- ◆ Additional objectives in a scientific approach to manage elk population being relocated.
- ◆ Obtain serum samples from 100 elk during relocation. Yakama Nation to fund pregnancy analyses.
- ◆ Aging large segment of elk being relocated. Data essential to better understanding past and present ecological processes in the population and judging the likely success of individual elk accommodating a range change.
- ◆ Conducting genetic analyses of population to quantify existing genetic variability, possibly gain insight into source population, and providing a database for future forensic analyses. Genetic data important to long-term management.
- ◆ Yakama Nation interested in cooperating with any state or federal agency involved to further tribe's basic knowledge of Hanford elk and improve management of this unique elk population.

Methow Valley salmon: action, not words

By Katherine Ransel

This past summer, in an effort to protect salmon, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) shut down irrigation in certain parts of the Methow Valley.

The problem was the lack of irrigation screens that prevent salmon and steelhead from being diverted, along with their precious water habitat, to the apple and alfalfa fields of the valley. Outmoded screens kill many of the fish they are supposed to protect because of design flaws; and even modern screens kill fish if diverters are taking more water than their water rights specify.

Under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the U.S. Forest Service, which authorizes rights of way for the irrigation ditches, was required to assess the impact of the ditches on the fish. Subsequently, NMFS rendered a "biological opinion" that there was clear evidence of harm to the fish.

The assessment and opinion came hard upon the 1999 irrigation season. There was an outcry not only from local community, but a shaking of heads in the Puget Sound region that such "arbitrary enforcement" of the ESA was a terrible blunder, one that seriously wronged the ESA and the community.

But it seems there is a misunderstanding of NMFS' obligation under the law, and either a lapse of memory or an honest ignorance about the long history of what can only be called paralysis by state and local officials, irrigation districts and canal operators in the face of the long-acknowledged effects of irrigation screens and deficient river flows on fish survival in the Methow.

NMFS cannot ignore the evidence and allow the ditches to operate if to do so would jeopardize the fish. And ditch operators have known for years that they needed to take steps to conserve water for the river and upgrade and install properly functioning screens.

NMFS certainly could have acted more quickly, and perhaps much more gracefully. But what NMFS did was compelled by law. And law enforcement is never "fair" in the classic sense. Many people who break the law are not caught, and others are never prosecuted. This is because government does not have the resources to uncover and bring to justice everyone who is out of compliance.

Irrigation districts in the Yakima Valley understand that. They have requested the state and federal government to meet illegal water use with a strong enforcement strategy.

Recognizing that those who comply with the law are at a relative economic disadvantage to those who do not, they have asked the Secretary of Interior and the state of Washington quickly to meter all water use in the Yakima Valley (both ground and surface), and to begin an enforcement program that:

targets examples of illegal water use; exacts penalties that make the cost of noncompliance greater than the cost of noncompliance; and wildly publishes those enforcement actions.

That is the most efficient use of limited government resources to gain widespread compliance with the law.

The fact of the matter is that the rumbling from the Methow is a sign that we are finally beginning to grapple with water issues that are fundamental to saving salmon. For many years, water users, environmentalists and water administrators have been talking about how Western water law--a system developed largely to take water out of our great Western rivers--can accommodate environmental values, which require water flowing in natural patterns in our streams. This process has been pervaded by long meetings, windy speeches, footnoted articles and new laws that look good on paper but so far has meant nothing to our rivers.

The State of Washington and the Methow Valley have been front and center in this debate. Washington has organized a long series of task forces and committees to consider changes in water laws to accommodate environmental values.

In the Methow alone, over \$6 million in state and federal funds have been spent to help with water shortages, with no real gain for stream flows. Countless plans and studies have yet to be implemented. The Methow has generated multiparty negotiations, complex agreements, pilot programs and proposals for reform--buy no water. Streams ran dry and salmon were out of luck.

Now, because of the ESA, people are finally having to do something about the fact that depleted rivers can't support salmon. The ESA and the government agencies that implement it--NMFS, in this instance, the USFWS--are forcing action on issues that have almost literally been talked to death.

State and local governments, water users and other interests are engaged in negotiating how to meet the needs of Methow River salmon without imposing unfair burdens on individual water users. They are on the verge of doing something instead of just talking about it.

Not everyone feels the process has been constructive, obviously. Leaving more water in rivers is not an easy prospect for any water-dependent community. But these are no doubt many in the Methow Valley who would hate to see the last Methow River salmon floundering in a dried-up river.

If we really hope to save salmon, we are going to have to change the way we use water in many watersheds. From that standpoint, the discussion in the Methow, however heated, is a welcome sign that we may be getting somewhere.

Katherine P. Ransel is director of the Northwest Regional Office of American Rivers. Reprint from The Seattle Times, Jan. 28, 2000.

As fishing season nears--know the rules

In-lieu fishing site regs for tribal members

As the spring fishery season approaches, Joe Aleck, Yakama and Bureau of Indian Affairs Fish and Wildlife officer would like tribal members to review the in-lieu fishing site regulations.

"Last year we had a couple of problems and we want to clear that up," said Aleck.

Aleck sent a packet of information with rules and regulations that were also placed at the old sites as well as the newly constructed treaty fishing access sites that opened for the first time last year.

Tribal members eligible to use the fishing access sites includes the Yakama, Nez Perce, Warm Springs and Umatilla nations. The sites are not for general public use. Tribal families who possess tribal identification may use the sites.

Access site regulations include:

- You may not use any of the sites for any activity that is contrary to the provisions of your tribe or contrary to Federal law or regulations, or in the absence of Federal law or regulations governing health, sanitation, and safety requirements. State or U.S. Public Health Service standards.
- The Area Director may suspend or withdraw the privileges of use of any or all of the facilities at the sites for any violation of the regulations in this part or for any violations of any rules issued under the regulations in this part.
- You cannot dig in, destroy, or remove any portion of a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or artifact.
- Nothing contained in the regulations in this part is intended or shall be construed as limiting or affecting any treaty rights of any tribe nor as subjecting any tribal member properly exercising tribal treaty rights to State fishing laws or regulations that are not compatible with those rights.

If there is any vandalism, depredation,

destruction, theft, or misuse of the land, buildings, fences, signs or other structures those cited will be subject to prosecution under Federal or State law.

Tribal members utilizing the camping facilities may also use tents, campers, teepees, temporary drying sheds and mobile trailers. Temporary sheds must be dismantled once drying is finished. The Area Director may also have temporary



In the 40s and 50s tribal women were kept busy in drying and smoking sheds along the river. Photo courtesy Oregon Historical Society.

drying sheds removed if necessary at the cost of the builder.

Fishers are responsible for campsites, drying sheds and other facilities while using them. Any personal property erected, placed or maintained on the site should be taken when finished.

No one is allowed to take possession, occupy or use any access site or structure for residential purposes. If any property is abandoned at the sites, it will be removed without consent of the owner and disposed at owner's expense if the Area Director approves.

Posting of regulations at each site will cover picnicking, alcohol use, setting or use of fire, use of sites for cleaning fish, disposing of garbage properly and use of the site for any commercial purpose including selling fish.

There is no fee to use the fishing in-lieu sites or access to them. The Area Director may close facilities at the sites necessary for maintenance during the winter or at other times when necessary. Any tribal fisher may access fishing sites on the Columbia River while sites are closed. Any site closed or restricted may be opened at request of Area Director who works with the tribes to consider such requests.

Sharing of on-site facilities includes short-term hose use because of the limited number of faucets at the site. No one is allowed to tap into electrical lines or outlets or have electrical power brought in from an outside source for campsite use.

A campsite cannot be reserved nor can it be held by another person saving it for another tribal member. Use of facilities is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Fires are permitted in designated areas and can be used inside a drying shed in a safe manner. There is no burning of timber, trees, slash, brush or grass unless a permit is issued by the Area Director. Fires should be extinguished completely before leaving area.

Garbage must be disposed of properly. Do not use toilets, toilet vaults or plumbing fixtures to dispose of any garbage. Any sewage disposal must be deposited in receptacles or at designated places. There is no dumping of refuse, debris, toxic or hazardous materials at the sites or into the river. If dumping stations are not available they must be transported off the site.

Tribal members may conduct activities during commercial fishing seasons, or subsistence activities, incidental to treaty fishing on the site. No other types of commercial enterprises are allowed.

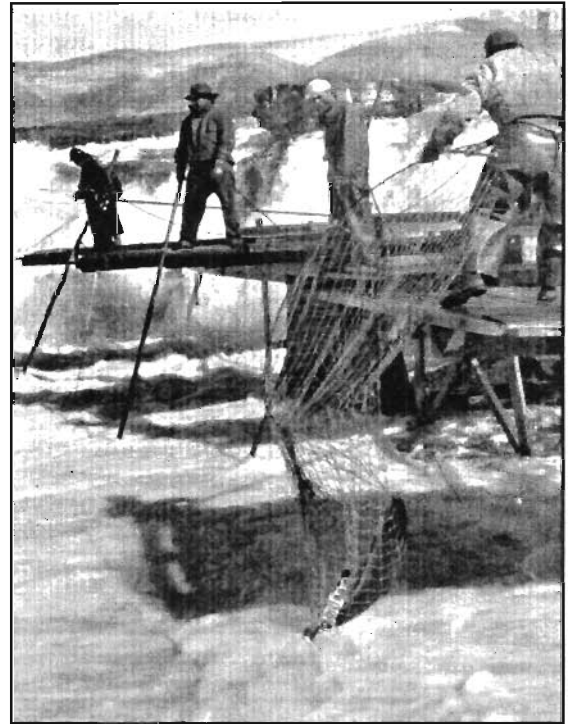
Annual journey to Celilo Falls

In one swoop of the huge hoop net into the swirling waters, tribal fishers usually had a salmon within minutes. Ropes dangled from their waists as a preventive measure in case they fell in they could be pulled out. Throughout the generations, Celilo Falls was considered one of the largest commerce centers in terms of trading and using salmon much like revenue. Tribes gathered at Celilo Falls to fish that usually lasted from early April through November as the different runs began their journey home to spawn.

Tribal people traveled from distant places to trade, gather, sing, dance, and take their share of salmon home. Other goods not readily available in this part of the country were transported by other tribal people from far away places.

As newcomers arrived they realized what an importance salmon had in a tribal person's life. In the Lewis and Clark journals it was reported they stopped at a spot along the Columbia River where they estimated 2,000 tribal people gathered and prepared fish for their journey back home. They were in awe of hundreds of baskets lined with steelhead skin and filled with dried salmon.

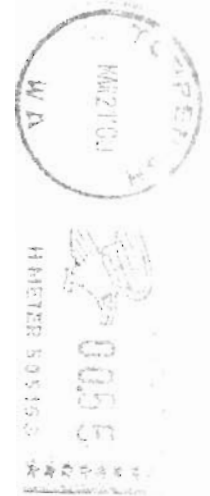
These Celilo photographs were found at The Dalles, Oregon in an antique shop. The photographs were taken by Lafie Foster, ©. 1953.



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Who said what...

(Continued from page 3)

Congress--at least while this senator is representing you."

Cecelia Bearchum, Umatilla elder--"I'm not going to talk about dams or fish. I'm going to talk about nature. When we were put on this earth, everything was made for a purpose and was chained together. When you remove one of them, we break the chain. We are very greedy, very vain, very thoughtless."

Levi Holt, Nez Perce--"It seems that the attitude here is much more intense than what I experienced in Clarkston, Wash. There's much more animosity toward Indians and all that we stand for."

Alana Farrow, Umatilla--"If you really want to talk to the people then step down from your pedestal and talk to all of us."

Outside the hotel, protesters lined 20th avenue. American Indians pounded a drum, forcing pedestrians into traffic lanes to get around them. A short distance away, a maintenance crew from Boise Cascade's paper mill in Burbank waved anti-breaching signs at passing cars. *Tri-City Herald* by **Mike Lee**.

And still more questioned the wisdom of continued tribal and commercial fishing when the fish are in such bad shape. *Tri-City Herald* by **Mike Lee**.

Some audience members snickered and whispered disparaging remarks when Native Americans spoke of their treaty fishing rights and reverence for salmon.

Spokesman Review by **Dan Hansen**.

Protesters--

(Continued from page 3)

The long afternoon session and discussion over the All-H paper had many speakers including city and county officials declaring disastrous results should the four dams come down. "It would be totally irresponsible to destroy dams that are a clean renewable resource industry," said Grant County Commissioner, Tim Snead.

Speaker after speaker continued to criticize the tribes' treaty right to take salmon. Umatilla tribal elder, Cecelia Bearchum silenced the crowd speaking in her tribal language. She translated telling the panel and crowd that "We are greedy. Vain. And thoughtless. Our God has given gifts to us; we have not done well by them. You cannot fool Mother Nature."

The evening session was less boisterous. Armand Minthorn set the tone saying he listened to others earlier and he was not there to criticize a people or their way of life. "We want the dams removed. I have to work with you folks, and if I am going to work with you in a good manner, we need to be treated as equals."

The *Confederated Umatilla Journal* reported that as one protester stood outside the hearing in Pasco, he also held a sign that read: *Save Our Salmon, Eat Indian Gillnetters*." It was clear he did not support treaty rights. The man was confronted by a Umatilla tribal leader. The protester could not defend his sign and walked away from the dam-breaching supporters who waved banners reading: "Get the nets out of the river" and "Dams equal jobs,"