

# Hanford project helps to revitalize salmon, students



**NORTHWEST**

**RICHLAND, Wash. (AP)** — With defunct nuclear reactors as a backdrop, a group of five young Yakama Indians shovels

river sediment from an acre-large cement basin on the north end of the Hanford nuclear reservation.

The huge, 17-foot-deep cement pond once held Columbia River water which had been cleared of debris before it was pumped through the reactors to cool them.

The reactors are now a thing of the past, but Westinghouse Hanford Co. has found a use for these half-dozen holding ponds that overlook the river: They make great fish tanks.

Once the Yakama crew finishes the messy job of cleaning the sediment out of the tank, it will be refilled with river water and will serve as temporary home to about a half-million freshly hatched fall chinook salmon.

"Though I don't fish and catch salmon, there are a lot of Yakama people who rely on salmon and I see this as helping them," said Alan Tahsequah, 18, of Wapato. "I see it as a contribution."

Alan and his four co-workers are volunteers, who along with 12 other Yakamas are among the 72 participants in the \$1.6 million Salmon Corps project. The Yakama crews, along with their fellow volunteers from the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Shoshone-Bannock tribes, are working to restore the dwindling salmon runs along the Columbia River and its tributaries.

The year-long project, which began in November, is part of President Clinton's Americorps plan in which young adults exchange public service for a stipend and college tuition. Salmon Corps is a partnership among the tribes, the U.S. Department of Energy, the Earth Conservation Corps and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

Last year, the Yakama tribe successfully raised a half-million salmon in one of the ponds. Westinghouse Hanford then gave the go-ahead for the Salmon Corps to continue the project and clean out and use two more of the cement basins.

"Look what they've done already," said Hanford Special Projects Manager Nick Anderson, impressed by the progress made by the Salmon Corps crew.

By spring, the Salmon Corps crews and the Department of Energy hope to have

the tanks ready for the baby salmon. A million or so fall chinook salmon will be brought in from Columbia River hatcheries. The fish will take about six weeks to mature to the smolt stage, when their physiology changes and they begin to seek the saltwater of the Pacific Ocean. Once released, it is hoped, they will make the journey West and then one day return to the Columbia River to spawn.

"Chinook salmon go to sea for three years," Anderson said. "It's not biologically understood, but they'll know where they come from and they'll come back to spawn. We have lots of natural spawning ground in the Hanford reach."

While Salmon Corps' mission is to help revitalize a valuable tribal resource, its goal is twofold. The program is also designed to help another precious tribal resource: its youth.

## Alliance devises salmon plan

**PORTLAND (AP)** — A coalition of Columbia River Basin towns and businesses claims the Northwest can save endangered salmon without costly changes affecting irrigation and power production.

The Columbia River Alliance favors barging more young fish downstream, instead of changing water levels at hydroelectric dams as recommended by scientists and environmentalists.

The alliance's salmon plan, called Recover 1-Plus, is the latest in a series of fish recovery plans circulating around the Northwest as the region struggles to save declining salmon runs.

The alliance represents tens of thousands of people in agricultural, navigation, labor, industry, community and electric utility organizations that depend on the Snake and Columbia rivers.

Recover 1-Plus would restore endangered Snake River salmon and provide benefits for other salmon in the basin, "but it will not cripple the economy of our region," said Bruce Lovelin, executive director of the Columbia River Alliance.

The group claims that putting more salmon in barges would eliminate the need to use precious water to increase flows in the Snake and Columbia rivers.

The alliance plan, estimated to cost \$158 million to \$200 million a year, is based in part on computer models showing that barging the fish gives better results than increasing river flows.

But environmentalists, Indian tribes and state

biologists have long criticized the government's nearly 20-year practice of barging salmon down the Columbia River. During that time, salmon runs have steadily declined.

The Bonneville Power Administration, which markets the electricity generated by Snake and Columbia river dams, estimates it already spends \$300 million a year to restore salmon runs.

Most of the power administration's cost comes from using water to help fish rather than maximizing power production and sales.

A salmon plan recently put together by the Northwest Power Planning Council, a regional federal agency, is estimated to cost about \$177 million, in addition to BPA spending.

The alliance claims that a bigger, better fleet of barges and improved methods of collecting and releasing young fish would give far better results than increasing river flows to flush salmon downstream, especially along the Snake River Basin.

The alliance plan also calls for improving the quality of streams in the upper Columbia and Snake where salmon reproduce, reforming commercial fishing practices to avoid catching weak salmon stocks, marking all hatchery salmon and reducing hatchery production in streams targeted for wild stocks.

Snake River salmon are protected under the Endangered Species Act, which requires the federal government to save them.

## Sweet revenge



**Roger Lavery, associate professor of journalism, was the first to have pies thrown at him at the Ad Club's annual fundraiser.**

## Truck carrying gasoline wrecks on I-5 Saturday

**SALEM (AP)** — Traffic backed up for miles Saturday on Interstate 5 before highway crews could repair damage from an early morning tanker truck explosion that damaged all three southbound lanes.

A Chevron tanker carrying 10,000 gallons of gasoline overturned, caught fire and exploded about 2 a.m. just north of Salem where the freeway widens from four lanes to six.

The driver escaped and nobody was injured, according to Jerry Martin, Oregon State Police spokesman.

Highway crews were using asphalt to patch the concrete road surface damaged by the explosion. They hoped the temporary repairs would last until a new concrete surface can be poured later this week, said Dave Davis of the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The explosion apparently did not penetrate deep enough to damage the underlying metal-reinforced layer of the concrete roadway, Davis said.

Both sides of the freeway were closed after the explosion but northbound lanes were reopened by 7 a.m. A detour for southbound traffic had caused a back-up stretching at least two miles by early Saturday afternoon but at least two lanes were reopened by 3 p.m. and all three were clear about 8:30 p.m.

State police said it appeared that the driver, Charles Naone, 31, of Tualatin, had fallen asleep at the wheel. He did not return phone calls Saturday. Police said the accident remained under investigation.

Chevron will reimburse the state for the cost of removing gasoline-contaminated soil along the freeway, Holmes said.

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