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had done to the salmon, it passed the Mitchell Act, creating 25 hatcheries on the Columbia River to replenish salmon runs. The majority of these are located downstream of the Bonneville Dam, hardly benefiting the tribes above it, whose fishing villages were flooded after the river was stopped and backed up.

"We were never compensated," Carlos Smith of Warm Springs explains. "They built the hatcheries to give more salmon to commercial fishermen."

Congress, working together with state fisheries, then forced tribal peoples living at Oxbow Springs to re-locate to the Warm Springs reservation to build Oxbow Hatchery.

Despite this history, Smith explains that the tribes are committed to seeing salmon restoration succeed, with the help of hatcheries like the one at Oxbow. And giving special access to Nestlé does not fit with that plan. "Everyone knows that you need good cold water to run a hatchery," Smith explains. "That's why they started a hatchery there."

According to Professor Mary Wood, an environmental law scholar at the University of Oregon, indigenous peoples of the Northwest managed their salmon successfully because they never took so much that the following salmon run was harmed – the same principle that applies to management of a financial trust, in which beneficiaries live off of the interest, but not the capital. But for dam operators today, any water dropping from the Columbia that does not produce electricity is considered "waste" – an attitude that guarantees dams will remain salmon killers.

Professor Wood explained "Under tribal stewardship, the Columbia River carried between 10 million and 16 million fish a year. These populations were sustained with concentrated human use for 10,000 years." By contrast, "State and federal trustees (managing agencies like the Army Corps of Engineers) have run the asset into bankruptcy within just the last century and a half by allowing the eradication of natural capital across the entire basin – everything from dams, clear-cuts, pollution, paved-over wetlands, to over-harvest of fish." By 1995, wild salmon runs had dropped to about 2 percent of their historic abundance. That same year, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, or CRITFC, announced a plan for salmon recovery based on indigenous knowledge and indigenous land-management. Since that plan was implemented, Columbia River salmon runs have actually stopped declining, and some are showing important signs of recovery.

According to Professor Wood, this is precisely the type of management we need to stop the rapid depletion of the natural environment. "To arrest the hemorrhage of natural systems brought about by federal and state trustee mismanagement, tribes must reclaim a measure of their ancestral environmental sovereignty."

Besides being ineffective from a historic perspective, colonial administration of the environment has also carried with it a prevailing cultural attitudes of white supremacy and manifest destiny. Theodore Roosevelt, who oversaw the creation of the

National Park and National Forest systems, also celebrated the destruction of their native inhabitants, calling the newly acquired lands "the heritage of the dominant world races."

John Muir, a close friend of Roosevelt, described the natives of Yosemite as "fallen" and "unclean," and complained that he did not experience the "solemn calm" of the forest in their presence. He therefore asserted they had no place in the landscape – a position he would successfully advocate with the federal government.

In similar fashion, early fishing commissions of Oregon and Washington were notorious for going out of their way to harass, intimidate and control Native fishing peoples, using environmental protection as a pre-text for the continuation of racism, genocide and cultural annihilation by other means.

In 1954, the federal government began proposing in-lieu fishing sites to replace the ones that had been flooded by the Bonneville Dam. But because salmon runs were in decline because of severe commercial over-fishing, the chairman of the Oregon Fish Commission wrote, "We formally protest the granting of these sites to the tribes for it is our belief that the major use to which they can be put is that of fishing, and fishing is a threat to the continuance of the salmon runs."

These efforts were across-the-board violations of treaty rights, which guarantee Native Americans the continued right to hunt, fish and gather at their "usual and accustomed" places – affirmations of rights that pre-existed the United States.

The historic tendency of state and local governments to defy these guarantees, and to continue promoting the cultural extermination of indigenous peoples, has created intense conflict between state and federal government in the past, earning states the reputation of being the "deadliest enemies" of local tribes (U.S. v. Kagama, 1886). The trend away from such conflict, and toward direct consultation with tribes from both state and local governments, offers a way out of this historical dead-end, and an opportunity to manage natural resources wisely with the help of traditional ecological knowledge.

In 2012, a ballot initiative called Measure-81 attempted to ban the purchase of salmon caught by native gillnets. Supporters said gillnets did harm to the salmon runs and worked against conservation, but in reality, this was a traditional fishing technique that worked fine with the salmon for many generations. Naturally, CRITFC opposed the measure, with Executive Director Paul Lumley calling it "a distraction from the real issues this region faces – rebuilding healthy and abundant salmon populations," adding "We need to be working together to rebuild salmon runs, not fighting over who gets to catch the fish."

In 1974, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla chose to suspend all fishing in the upper Grand Ronde River to protect weak runs of spring chinook salmon, hoping to inspire similar sacrifice from dam operators, timber companies and ranchers.

Donald Sampson, the former executive director of CRITFC, explained back in 1999 that the Umatilla were legally entitled to half of the fish, "but we're not catching

that at all. We have cut back on our fishing voluntarily, but no one else has stopped killing fish. The big, indiscriminate killers – the dams – operate 365 days a year, 24 hours a day."

In 2000, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission reported that their treaty tribes had voluntarily reduced salmon harvests by 80 percent to 90 percent to protect weak runs of wild salmon.

On Nov. 2, The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla announced their solidarity with Warm Springs against the Nestlé bottling plant. Chuck Sams, Communications Director for the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla emphasized "that territory... is Warm Springs territory. It was ceded to them in their treaty. But we have rights to that and to the water uses ..."

Wilbur Slockish, a hereditary Klickitat Chief whose relatives lived at Oxbow Springs, said that the Nestlé proposal is emblematic of a disrespectful and destructive approach to land that has gone unchecked for too long.

"Water is being harvested for somebody that doesn't live here, that will never live here, will never come here, and are not even a local people – they're from Switzerland. They're here and gone – when the water's gone they're gone. But the damage will have to be paid by the taxpayers. This is the problem with the 'free market' and the 'American dream,' where you take a resource for wealth and don't look at the consequences."

Slockish said this attitude moved west with the extinction of the buffalo and the destruction of the salmon as dams were constructed in the rivers of the Pacific Northwest.

"The same thing is going on with Nestlé," he continued, "and nobody ever pays attention to the water rights of the first animals that lived there, like the salmon and all the fish species. That's their home – that's where they lived."

Across the border in California, the same conflict is still playing out.

On Nov. 5, a coalition of Native American and environmental groups in California sent a letter to Senator Barbara Boxer urging her to drop a plan to raise Shasta Dam, which they say would harm native fish populations and violate both federal environmental laws and the cultural rights of the Winnemem Wintu people.

The letters reads: "For too long dams have been used to solve our water problems with no consideration given to their community and environmental impacts. The time has come to stop this thoughtless, unethical behavior. ... Raising the dam will harm the Winnemem Wintu people who have already been harmed by the dam. Shasta Dam flooded most of their sacred sites and traditional homelands, including their cemeteries. Raising the dam will flood out the little that remains."

On the other side of the issue, Cascade Locks city councilor Jeff Helfrich and State Rep. Mark Johnson have famously called opponents of Nestlé "outsiders" – a charge that makes Chief Slockish laugh. "Does he want to call me an outsider? Someone should ask him where his burial sites are. We've been here thousands of years – not a hundred years."

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the money was sent.

**INSP:** *As a boy, did you dream of being the pope?*

**Francis:** No. But I will tell you a secret. When I was little, there weren't many shops that sold things. What we had was a market, where there was the butcher, the greengrocer, etc. I went with my mother and my grandmother to do the shopping. Once, when I was quite little, about 4, someone asked me: "What do you want to do when you grow up?" And I answered: "A butcher!"

**INSP:** *You were unknown to many until March 13, 2013. Then, overnight, you became famous throughout the world. How was that experience for you?*

**Francis:** It happened, and I was not expecting it. But I have not lost peace. And that is a grace from God. I don't really think about the fact that I am famous. I say to myself: Now you have an important position, but in 10 years nobody will know you anymore." (He laughs.) You know, there are two types of fame: the fame of the "greats," those who have done truly great things, such as Madame Curie, and the fame of the vain. But this second type of fame is like a soap bubble.

**INSP:** *Can you imagine a world without poverty?*

**Francis:** I want a world without poverty. We need to fight for that. But I am a believer, and I know that sin is always within us. And there is always human greed, the lack of solidarity, the selfishness which creates poverty. That is why it is difficult for me to imagine a world without poverty.

If you think of the children exploited for slave labor, or of children exploited for sexual abuse. And another form of exploitation: killing children to remove their organs, organ trafficking. Killing children for their organs is greed.

That is why I don't know whether we will ever have a world without poverty, because there is always sin, and it leads to selfishness. But we must always fight – always.



We have finished. We thanked the pope for the interview. He thanked us as well, and said that he enjoyed our chat very much. Then he takes the white envelope that has been next to him on the sofa the whole time, and takes out a rosary for each of us. Photos are taken, and then Pope Francis bid us goodbye. As calm and relaxed as when he arrived, he walks out the door. Ready for his next appointment.

*Courtesy of INSP News Service [www.INSP.ngo/Stratniewu](http://www.INSP.ngo/Stratniewu)*

*This interview includes questions asked by reporters Stijn Fens and Jan-Willem Wits and vendor Marc.*

*Translated from Italian to English by Translators without Borders*