

Dec. 30, 1998
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Spilyay Tymoo

(Coyote News)

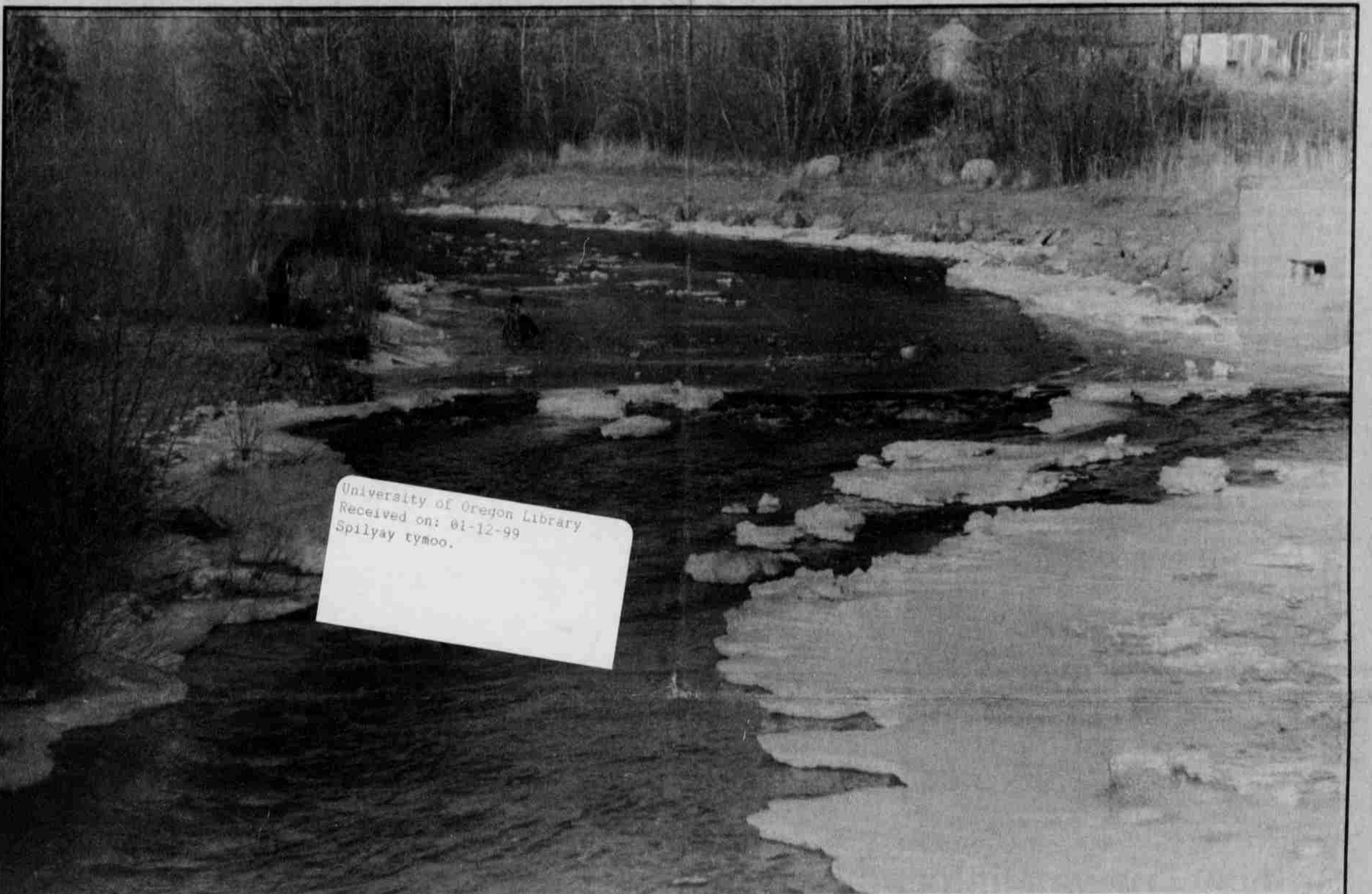
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Freezing temperatures create beauty on the river.

Pat Courtney-Gold studies in New York City Museums

I have just completed an artist-in-resident program at the National Museum of American Indians, New York City. I was there from October 25 to November 15.

My research focused on the study of Wasco-Wishram Sally Bags, artifacts, and other northwest basketry items. Time flew by and I learned so much in the three weeks. I helped to identify baskets, to correct mislabeled items, and to identify some items labeled as "unknown". But I wish that I had more time to view the Plateau items.

Many of the Wasco-Wishram baskets were in storage and not seen for many years by a Wasco person. It was a spiritual experience making contact with these Sally Bags. I was reaching into time, connecting with the past. As I held a Sally Bag, it was like holding hands with my ancestors. In the museums, I felt like I was in a church, a spiritual place.

It was sad knowing that the baskets were stored in the dark, far away from home, with no contact from their Wasco-Wishram families.

Brooklyn Museum of Art. This Museum is big, and has many beautiful collections. Part of their exhibit included the beautiful woven Peru textile weavings. I was told that they had only 1 Wasco-Wishram Basket. While I was studying in their storage collections, the curator and I found 8 more Wasco baskets—they were all mis-labeled. They have 2 special baskets: one has finely twined Wasco figures done in red and green wool. Five years ago I saw a similar basket at the Yakama Cultural Center. The second is a basket donated from the Tiffany Collection. (yes, the well known stained glass artist). The basket is large with a zigzag rain design. Both baskets are very beautiful.

I admired the unique round ball-shaped Sally Bag with red and black geometric figures; another Sally Bag had figures of condors, horses, and humans.

I also identified a net gauge for the museum. It was in a storage box, in excellent condition, and fit my hand

perfectly. I had time to examine some Klickitat baskets. One with the sturgeon roe design, and the other with the salmon gill design.

American Museum of Natural History. This museum is enormous; it takes up one whole city block and New York blocks are bigger than our city blocks. I was amazed at the huge collection of baskets, and the large amount of Wasco-Wishram Baskets! They have the basket collection summarized on a computer database, so we did a search for Wasco-Wishram baskets, then went to the storage collection to study them.

Many Sally Bags were made with colored wool yarn, hop string, dogbane, cattail, tule, and cornhusk. The wool was usually black, red or green.

I saw a Sally Bag labeled, "saddle bag from Warm Springs, Oregon, made of Indian hemp and cornhusk". Wow! A connection to home! I felt like I'd met a long lost relative! It had 3 rows of large triangles with squares inside, beautifully done.

I was awed and impressed with an old Sally Bag covered with a design of dancing women and men. The women had one hand up, as in a prayer.

Other Sally Bags include: one with intricate, finely twined diamond designs in red and green colors; another basket caught my eye because of human hair randomly woven into the bag (—from the weaver ??); another has horse hair mixed with plant fibers; root bags of all sizes, some used and some new.

Other items that impressed me: Wasco carved wooden bowls, some plain and some with beautiful carved faces and triangle designs on the rim; Wasco carved sheep horn spoons, tule baskets plainly woven but still beautiful in their simplicity; a basket with a salmon gill design and a "fishy" smell; a small oblong Klickitat basket; a small round Klickitat basket with a lid; a flat bag with vertical stripes that turned out to be a root bag cut, and sewn with the stripes rotated; and a very unusual cedar basket. It was twined, but the top 4 inches was coiled and imbricated.

New York Historical Society, I spent

a few hours here going through old photographs of Native Americans. I was looking for photos of baskets and items related to the northwest areas. I did find photos of the Warm Springs Scouts; photos of the Columbia River area and people, and some photos of the Puget Sound area. I was surprised at the amount of copies of old newspapers and periodicals that contained "romantic" articles on Indians in the 1860's through the 1880's. And there were quite a few articles from Germany, France and England. The themes were either romanticizing Indians as simple people living with nature, or "savages" brutalizing western frontiersmen and settlers.

National Museum of American Indians (NMAI). The main collection is in storage in the Bronx, and is in the process of moving to the new location in Maryland. A new Museum is under

construction in Washington D.C. The collection was not available to me. However, the George Gustave Heye Museum in downtown Manhattan had 2 exhibits and was open to the public.

These exhibits showcased Native American items from the Yeye collection. The items were impressive and represented all Indian Nations throughout the U.S., and I saw a lot of Mohawk and Iroquois artwork. The Wasco carved wooden bowl is mislabeled as "Chehalis", and the cornhusk bags are beautiful.

I gave a public presentation on Wasco Culture and Heritage and its role in my basketry. Professor Rob Moore of New York University came. He went to Reed College, Portland, where I met him. He is also known in Warm Springs, as he spent the summers of 1982-84 studying Wasco lan-

Continued on page 2

Teamwork pays dividends

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Bonneville Power Administration are about to complete the first phase of an agreement struck in 1978. At that time, BPA agreed to compensate the Tribe for lost forest growth as a result of Bonneville rights-of-way across tribal lands. The arrangement calls for a payment to be made every five years.

A team of tribal, BIA and Bonneville Power Administration foresters concluded a 2-year team effort to revalue lost forest growth. The revaluation uses computerized tribal forest inventory data to accurately value lost forest growth. A payment of \$126,159.44 will be paid to the Tribe in December by the Bonneville Power Administration. In a letter to the Secretary-Treasurer Charles V. Jackson, John Cowger of BPA stated, "Bonneville would like to recognize the fine teamwork from tribal foresters Mark Brown and Ken Borchert, and BIA forester Rich Lohman, that led to the improved method of valuing the loss of forest growth." Bonneville forester Kathy Stephenson also assisted in developing the new valuation. Lohman, the assistant forest manager for Warm Springs, said the payment is based on two factors; the growth of

the timber that would have occurred, and the value of that timber assessed at current market conditions. "Mark Brown and Ken Borchert did most of the work when it came to developing the procedures," Lohman stated. "There were some procedures established in the original resolution in 1978 that referenced some volume tables nobody uses anymore. The thrust of our group was to get everyone to agree to new inventory volume tables. That was done after several meetings." The inventory includes Douglas-fir and Western Larch, Incense Cedar, Lodgepole Pine, Noble fir, Ponderosa Pine and Western White Pine as well as White woods.

Tribal natural resource general manager Robert Brunoe commented, "We've been working with BPA on resource management, addressing noxious weeds, huckleberries and roads under the power line. Our team has worked well with the BPA team that's under the direction of Libby Johnson."

The tribe and BPA will continue to work on natural resource management on tribal lands, with the next reimbursement for lost timber scheduled in 5 years.



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