

Remembering when...



These photos are courtesy of Sam Kentura, from a photo album kept by Martha Henning. How many of these people do you recognize? (See the next Spilyay for their names.)



Idaho, tribe break ground on sockeye hatchery

LEWISTON (AP) – For more than two decades, Idaho, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe and the federal government have tried to prevent the extinction of Snake River sockeye salmon. Now the coalition is poised to take what an Idaho Fish and Game biologist calls a real step toward recovery of the highly endangered species. The state broke ground earlier this month on the long-planned Springfield Hatchery near American Falls. When finished sometime next year, the hatchery is expected to boost production of sockeye smolts from 200,000 a year to more than 1 million, with the first release of hatchery sockeye planned for 2015. "Springfield is going to allow us the opportunity to get these things out of the museum," said Jeff Heindel of the Idaho Department of

Fish and Game, said. "We have spent 20 years trying to prevent extinction of the stock and to maintain genetic diversity of the stock. Only now are we going to have the opportunity to make a step forward and try to recover these fish," he said. The Northwest Power and Conservation Council signed off on the \$13.5 million hatchery set on the north shore of American Falls Reservoir near the tiny town of Springfield. The state received funding to build the hatchery in 2008 when it, other Northwest states and most Columbia River treaty tribes signed agreements known as the Columbia River Fish Accords. "This is an important step for our state and for the Northwest, as we are showing how a species on the brink of extinction can be restored through the dedication and

collaboration of state, federal, and tribal scientists and policymakers," said Bill Booth, one of Idaho's representatives on the power and conservation council. Sockeye were the first species of Snake River anadromous fish to be protected by the Endangered Species Act. They were listed in 1993 following the return of just one fish, a male dubbed Lonesome Larry in 1992. No fish made the 900-mile journey up the Columbia, Snake and Salmon rivers to Stanley Basin in 1990. The fish were put on life support after the listing and all adults that returned successfully were spawned in hatcheries. To boost the numbers, most of the offspring were kept in a captive breeding program. Instead of being released as smolts to begin a downriver journey toward the ocean, they were

raised in hatcheries to adulthood and spawned artificially. The state continued to breed the fish in captivity and increasingly released more and more smolts each year. Over the past several years about 200,000 smolts have been released to make their way to the ocean. The increased hatchery program, in combination with improved ocean conditions and spill at Snake River dams, led to increasing returns of the fish. More than 900 fish have made it at least as far as Lower Granite Dam since 2008. Heindel expects returns to bounce between 500 to 1,500 over the next few years but to jump up once Springfield comes on line and the production of smolts jumps five-fold or so. Eventually the hope is the fish will become re-established in the wild, with many of the young fish released in the Stanley Basin.

Alaskans wonder where the king salmon have gone

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) – Alaskans again this summer are wondering: Where are the king salmon? Some of Alaska's largest and best rivers are closed to king fishing because state and federal fisheries managers have determined that the largest of the salmon species, also called Chinook, aren't showing up in enough numbers to ensure sustainable future runs. In western Alaska, people living in dozens of villages along the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers are turning to less desirable salmon species—fish with lower oil and fat content—to fill their freezers for winter in what one official described as a summer of "food insecurity." "It is pretty scary," said Timothy Andrew, director of natural resources with the Association of Village Council Presidents in Bethel. "Chinook salmon is probably the biggest species that people depend on for drying, salting and putting away in the

freezer to feed the family throughout the winter." Fishery managers predict that this year's Yukon River king salmon run will be worse than last year, and that was the worst showing for Chinook in 30 years. Commercial fishermen on the Yukon and Kuskokwim are turning to less desirable but more plentiful species of salmon that sell for under \$1 a pound. King salmon sells for more than \$5 a pound. With gas costing \$6.70 a gallon in Bethel, many fishing boats are sitting idle, he said. People living in the region's 56 villages are devastated, Andrew said. "It is an incredibly stressful time," he said. In mid-July, the Kenai River—considered by many to be Alaska's premier river for salmon fishing—is normally crowded and chaotic with fishing guides steering their boats to give their clients the best opportunity to catch a trophy king. But a ban on king fishing

on the Kenai and Kaslof rivers went into effect Thursday. Robert Begich, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's area management biologist, said the Kenai king run looks to be the lowest on record going back to the 1980s. While the continued downward trend in kings isn't clear, Begich suspects a combination of factors, with researchers looking more closely at changes in the ocean environment. King salmon usually spend several years in the ocean before returning to riv-

ers to spawn. Ray Beamesderfer, a consultant with Cramer Fish Sciences in Gresham, Ore., also suspects changes in the marine environment. He thought he and his family would be fishing for king salmon on the Kenai River on Thursday. Instead, they were casting for rainbow trout or smaller sockeye salmon. Beamesderfer said in the late 1970s, there was a change in ocean currents that favored Alaska salmon but contributed to poor salmon runs in the Pacific Northwest.

Salmon Camp in August

The Tribal Salmon Camp this summer will be August 6-10 near Pendleton. The camp is a chance for youth to: Learn about the science and lifecycle of salmon; Work on salmon restoration projects, and explore traditional ecological knowledge; Meet tribal professionals working in the field, and gain

unique and valuable hands-on experience. For more information contact Katherine Walker, tribal workforce development coordinator, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. She can be reached at 503-238-0667. Or email: walk@critfc.org Go to www.critfc.org for application materials.

Climate change affecting Native communities

WASHINGTON (AP) – Native American and Alaska Native leaders told of their villages being under water because of coastal erosion, droughts and more last week during a Senate hearing intended to draw attention to how climate change is affecting tribal communities. The environmental changes being seen in native communities are "a serious and growing issue and Congress needs to address them," Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation of New Town, N.D., said Wednesday.

land and off the waters and continue to do that. But we're bearing the burden of living with these conditions today," Williams said. Sen. Daniel Akaka, committee chairman, acknowledged that environmental changes are widespread, but the Hawaii Democrat said native communities are disproportionately impacted because they depend on nature for traditional food, sacred sites, and for cultural ceremonies. Several tribes already are coming up with plans to adapt to the changes and federal agencies are assisting with resources, Akaka said.

Mike Williams, chief of the Yupit Nation in Akiak, Alaska, said in the informational Senate Indian Affairs Committee hearing, that villages are literally being wiped out by coastal erosion. Williams said he can cast a net and catch salmon at his childhood home because the home is under water, he said. He also described how the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, in which he participates, has been moved because of lack of snowfall and that dogs must run at night to stay cool. "We've always lived off the

Members of several West Coast tribes and Alaska communities have been in Washington this week for a symposium at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian on the impact of climate change on indigenous people and their communities. The symposium, titled First Steward, brought together tribal leaders, people experiencing the changes and scientists.

Tribes protest state decision on Klamath dams

KLAMATH, Calif. (AP) – Two Northern California Native American tribes are protesting a decision by state officials to postpone the relicensing process for four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River. The Hoopa and Resighini tribes are upset over the unanimous vote by the State Water Resources Control Board to put the process on hold for another year.

doesn't make sense to go through the costly relicensing process because the dams could be removed in 2020 under the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement. Federal lawmakers have introduced legislation that would allow the U.S. Interior Department to determine if the dams should be taken down. PacifiCorp officials are frustrated with the federal government's pace, but the company is already collecting money from energy customers to pay for dam removal activities, company spokesman Bob Gravely said. He added the company can't charge its customers to both upgrade the dams and remove them.

The tribes want the dams to undergo the Clean Water Act certification process, so their owner, Portland-based utility PacifiCorp, will be forced to remove toxic algae and make it easier for fish to travel. "The initial dam license was issued 50 years ago, at which time they had no environmental laws," said Hayley Hutt, a member of the Hoopa Valley Tribal Council member. "To be licensed, they'd have to meet the new water quality laws." PacifiCorp officials say it

"We're not going to carry out relicensing steps that would add a bunch of additional costs," Gravely said. "Just because Congress hasn't passed legislation at this point is no reason to put the brakes in place."