

Fisheries: tribal reaction to administration decision

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Tribal Council Chairman White continues:

“We gave much, including millions of acres of our land, but reserved these rights to steward the Creator’s gifts: the fish we rely upon to feed our people and continue our culture, and the clean water to sustain them.

“The Resilient Columbia Basin Act was a commitment from the United States government to honor its obligations to ensure healthy, thriving fish stocks through investing in hatcheries, improving fish passage throughout the Columbia River, and improving fish habitat, and was the result of years of coordination and collaboration among the regions’ sovereigns and fish managers.

“We hope that the federal government recognizes the importance of these agreements and will work with our nations to identify new ways to collaborate to improve the health of our fisheries.

“The Columbia River treaty tribes’ very future depends on our salmon. While this decision will challenge our efforts, we remain committed to our efforts to restore these critical treaty resources.”

Some of the terms

Among its provisions, the agreement, now without effect, called for a pause of up to 10 years in litigation over the management of the river system, especially Columbia system dam operations. There were about \$1 billion in backlogged fish restoration projects, such as improvements to hatcheries, that are now unfunded.



Spill rates at Columbia River dams, like The Dalles dam (above), have been subject to litigation by tribes over the years.

Through the agreement, the tribes would have had more say over the spills times and rates at the Columbia dams, as operated by the Bonneville Power Administration.

Another key aspect of the agreement was that tribal treaty rights were acknowledged as a priority among the guiding principles, as the tribal treaties remain ‘the supreme law of the land.’

The parties to the agreement were federal government, and ‘the six sovereigns’: The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Yakama, Umatilla and Nez Perce tribes, and the states of Oregon and Washington.

CRITFC reaction

Jeremy Takala, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission chairman, gave the following assessment of the development:

“We are dismayed that an agreement that was among the best roadmaps charted for helping Columbia Basin salmon—representing years of work by tribes, states, and the federal government—was undone with the stroke of a pen. This action, done without consultation with the tribes, dismantles what should have been celebrated as a historic achievement.

“If you love salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, and lamprey, the Resilient Columbia Basin Agreement was a groundbreaking commitment that provided critical funding for tribal and other hatcheries, habitat restoration, predation management, infrastructure upgrades, and support for energy projects that would be less burdensome on the environment and tribal cultural resources.

“The disregard shown to the countless hours of effort, meetings, and actions that went into this agreement is disappointing. Tribes opened our doors and our hearts, hosting federal officials along the Big

River to show them in person why this work is critical. From the banks of the river to dinners in longhouses, we shared the needs for our fish, for our people, and the entire region from the Pacific Northwest to Southeast Alaska. We patiently explained why protecting and restoring salmon is not only a fundamental treaty obligation, but also a duty the federal government has to be a good steward to these resources for everyone.

“Despite the administration’s withdrawal, the partnership among our four tribes and the states of Oregon and Washington endures. We are still united in the cause of protecting salmon

and rivers and there are many efforts and pledges between us that continue this vital work.

“The need for salmon recovery hasn’t gone away with the president’s executive order, but neither has our resolve—it has only strengthened. Salmon recovery represents both economic opportunity and conservation success. Healthy salmon runs support commercial and recreational fishing industries that employ thousands of workers and generate millions in economic activity across rural communities. Restoring these fisheries strengthens local economies while honoring our nation’s treaty commitments—promises made that must be kept. This work also demonstrates responsible resource management that

benefits private landowners, farmers, businesses, and the residents of the Pacific Northwest who depend on clean water and healthy ecosystems.

“Building on the foundation laid forth by our ancestors and our commitment to future generations will drive our work to protect salmon forever. Moving forward, we seek bipartisan leadership and collaboration with lawmakers from both parties who understand that protecting salmon means protecting jobs, honoring America’s word, and ensuring our children inherit the natural heritage that defines the Pacific Northwest. Working in unity, support, and collaboration, we will continue to advocate for the salmon and the rivers where we live.”

Pi-Ume-Sha

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Endurance Horse Race

The Pi-Ume-Sha Treaty Days Endurance Horse Race is on Saturday, June 28.

Race divisions are the Senior 16 and older; and the Junior 15 and under.

Pay-outs are for first, second and third places.

On race day, registration will open at 7 a.m. at the 1910 Warm Springs Shaker Church.

The Senior Division race starts at 8 a.m.; and the Junior Division at 8:15 a.m.

For more information contact: HisatakeRanch@gmail.com

Contacts

Following is the contact information for Pi-Ume-Sha:

The Stickgame Tournament, Vanessa Knight-Crance, 541-460-0105.

Traditional Dress Parade, Ramona Greene-Baez, 541-460-0077.

The Pi-Ume-Sha Rodeo, Alfredine Smith, 541-460-3257.

Vendor information, Sharon Katchia, 541-295-6046.

Powwow information, Cyrille Mitchell, 541-460-0241.

Health advisory regarding Lake Billy Chinook water

The Oregon Health Authority has issued a recreational use health advisory for Lake Billy Chinook, due to the presence cyanotoxins above recreational use values for human exposure.

People should avoid swimming and high-speed water activities in areas of the reservoir where blooms are present, as the major route of exposure is ingestion of water. Toxins are not absorbed through the skin. However, those with skin sensitivities may get a puffy red rash.

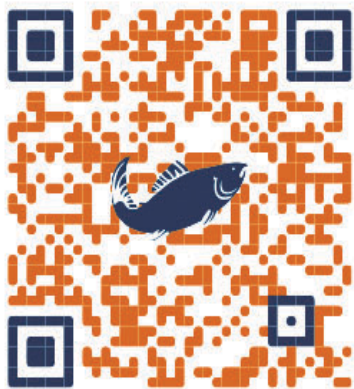
Drinking water directly from areas of the lake affected by a bloom is especially dangerous. Toxins cannot be removed by boiling, filtering or treating water with camping-style filters.

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