

NATIVE NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

Tribes To Ask Delay Of The Kennewick Man Study

Four Northwest Tribes are asking the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to delay a study of the Kennewick Man skeleton until the court can hear the case.

Attorneys for the Collville, Nez Perce, Umatilla and Yakama Tribes have filed a motion saying that the study would "irreparably harm the Tribes' ownership and property interest in the remains" and would result in destruction of the ancient bones "in both the physical and spiritual senses."

Earlier this month U.S. Magistrate John Jelderks in Portland re-

jected the Tribes' request to delay a study until the appeals court could hear the dispute. Last year, Jelderks ruled that eight anthropologists who sued the federal government could study the 9,300-year-old remains.

The anthropologists sued the government six years ago after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rejected their request to study Kennewick Man. They argued that the oldest, most complete skeleton found in the Northwest can provide information about the peopling of the Americas. The scien-

tist have given the Corps and the U.S. Interior Department a list of tests they want to conduct.

The Tribes want to bury the collection of about 380 bones and bone fragments. They asked the court to expedite a decision on the motion because they say an initial study might be conducted as early as February. "No study is imminent," said Alan Schneider, a Portland attorney representing the scientists. "We still have a lot of details to work out."

The remains were found in July 1996 along the banks of the Columbia River in Kennewick Washing-

ton. They are being stored in the Burke Museum in Seattle.

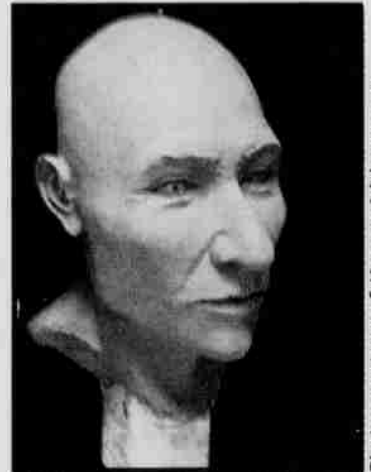


Photo courtesy of Kennewickman.com

Fighting Whites Raise \$100,000 For Scholarships

DENVER, CO — What started out as an attempt to shame a local high school into dropping a mascot name viewed as racist has raised at least 100,000 for scholarships for American Indian college students.

The effort began last winter when a group of American Indian students at the University of Northern Colorado asked officials at nearby Eaton High School to change their "Fighting Reds" name

because it was offensive.

The school refused, so members of the UNC intramural basketball team made up of American Indians and whites decided to do something.

They named themselves the "Fighting Whites" and began wearing t-shirts bearing the name. After getting national media attention, they began selling the shirts, which also bear the slogan "Everything is going to be all white," from their website.

More than 15,000 shirts and hats have been sold raising at least 100,000.

Jeff VanIwarden, a team member who helped manage the T-shirt campaign, said the amount of money available for scholarships would depend on an application for tax-exempt status. A 10,000 endowment already had been set up for one scholarship at UNC starting next year.

The money collected could have

been used to help campaign against the use of American Indian names as mascots, but most of the team members felt more would be gained by helping American Indian students, he said.

VanIwarden said he wasn't worried that the T-shirts might "be a form of white pride."

"We can't regulate who does or does not buy them. We do have their money," he said.



FIGHTING WHITES
Every thang's gonna be all white

Certificates To Allow Teaching Of Native Languages

OLYMPIA, WA. (AP) — Faced with a dwindling number of American Indians fluent in their Tribes' Native languages, the state Board of Education recently agreed to grant special teaching certificates that would allow speakers of the ancient languages to teach in public schools.

Tribal linguists cheered the board's unanimous decision, saying it will help them keep their languages from slipping into extinction.

"It's more than just the language or the culture — it's a way of being in the world," said Martina Whelshula of Spokane, a member of the Colville Confederated Tribes.

Her people's language, Okanogan, is a flowing language punctuated with tiny pauses. It's hard for non-Native speakers to tell where one word ends and the next begins.

"Through our history, it's the thing that has kept us together as a people," said Margie Hutchinson, a member of the Collville Tribes' Business Council. "And it's being forgotten."

Under the special certification pilot program, beginning in Febru-

ary and continuing through the 2005-06 school year, teachers of Indian languages would still face background checks and some other routine training.

But they won't have to go to college to earn a teaching credential before being hired by local school districts, as most teachers do.

Some state education board members voiced concerns about a potential conflict with federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation, designed to ensure that teachers are qualified. But Debbie May, President of the Board, said she's confident those hurdles can be overcome.

Speaking Native languages was officially discouraged in government and church schools for American Indians during much of the past century.

Hutchinson's mother spoke the Native language, but Hutchinson was taken to Catholic boarding school 30 miles away when she was 7 years old.

"We weren't allowed to speak it there, so no one did," said Hutchinson.

In 1995, the Tribes on the Collville Indian Reservation surveyed their people, and tallied up 281 fluent speakers. By last April, Elder deaths had pared that number to 51. Now it's 43.

In northwest Washington, the Lummi have just one person left who grew up speaking their language. She's 85 years old. The Makah lost their oldest member fluent in the Tribal language, 100-year-old Ruth Emily Claplanhoo, in August.

Sindic Jimmy, the last Nooksack Indian who was a fluent speaker of the Tribe's original language, spent many of his final days dictating hundreds of hours of the ancient language. He died in 1977. His tape recordings, recordings made by another Tribal member dating back to the 1950s and field notes linguists made decades ago are all that's left to guide Nooksack teachers and students.

There are about 27,000 American Indian students in public schools statewide. With only a handful of Indian-language classes in the state's public schools and community colleges, Tribal members say it's hard to get Indian children to learn their Native languages.

"I see it as teaching the other half of the child," said 72-year-old Pauline Hillaire, a Lummi. "The kids are going to school all these generations and learning only to be white. But the whole child needs to be taught."

After the vote, Hillaire thanked the board five times and sang a song of gratitude in her Native language, adding, "I hope it echoes in your ears for a while."

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