

# 'It was a very historic day'

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with a limit of no more than 15 fish taken per year by Tribal members.

Only hatchery-origin fish will be allowed to be taken. Wild fish will be released unharmed back into the Willamette River.

"I think it was an historic day for the Tribe to recover our fishing rights up at Willamette Falls on a platform," said Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno, who drove four hours to Bandon to testify. "I think it will mean a lot to our people to recover our ceremonial fishing rights. Those rights were a piece of our sovereignty that was taken away from us and I am very proud to get a piece of that back. Sovereignty is something we try to recover on a daily basis. I was very proud to testify for the Tribe."

Tribal Attorney Rob Greene said he agrees that the vote was an important moment in Tribal history.

"It was a very historic day," said Greene. "It was part of a process that we have engaged in for many years to recover the Tribe's rights on its historic lands."

The Tribe harvested one spring Chinook salmon at Willamette Falls in May 2013 from the fish ladder for use during the First Salmon Ceremony held at the McLean House in West Linn. The authori-

zation was through an amendment to the Tribe's Oregon Scientific Taking Permit. The process was repeated in 2014 and '15.

In January 2015, Leno sent a letter to the Department of Fish and Wildlife requesting that state employees assist Tribal staff in formally establishing a seasonal platform fishery at Willamette Falls for the Tribe's annual First Salmon Ceremony, which will be held this year on Friday, May 6.

### Archuleta's idea

Leno credited Tribal member Greg Archuleta with the idea. He said it was Archuleta who asked the simple question, "Why can't we have our own platform at Willamette Falls?" and that Tribal leaders and staff took it from there.

"This is a great day for all our Grand Ronde Tribal members. It's great to hear about the restoration of the Tribe's fishing by traditional methods at Tumwater (Willamette Falls)," said Archuleta via e-mail.

"This is a continuation of our work with ODFW when we got our ceremonial hunting and our own management plan on the Reservation," said Leno. "We have a great working relationship with ODFW so we posed the question to them."

"We've been fortunate, I think, to recover some of our ceremonial hunting rights and now some of

our ceremonial fishing rights. I think that's a good thing. The commissioners seemed humbled by us coming and asking for something that should have been our right to do in the first place. They (the commissioners) even asked us if we wanted more fish."

The relationship between the Tribe and the state hasn't always been so amicable. In the mid-1980s when the Tribe was restored, meetings about hunting and fishing had a much different tone. Sport fishing organizations in Oregon were not only in attendance, but their members also were very vocal and demonstrative in efforts to fight any harvesting and gathering rights the Tribe sought to regain.

Tribal Council Secretary Cheryl A. Kennedy, who served on early Tribal Councils in the 1980s, said it was a "terrible time" for the Tribe and that Tribal Council members felt like they were being held hostage choosing between hunting and fishing rights or getting support for a Reservation Plan that would re-establish a land base for the Tribe.

Leno said the key to the good relationship now has been the Grand Ronde Tribe's willingness to stay the course and remain respectful.

"I think it's about patience and the idea that we have been here forever and we are going to be here for-

ever," said Leno. "In my testimony, I stated that hunting and fishing is a way of life for Native Americans. It's not a sport. In 32 years of Restoration they now understand that we are a Tribe ... we are a sovereign nation. That's the difference today is that they understand that we are a Tribe and once they understand that we are sovereign it changes the whole deal."

The commission's vote was the culmination of a long-term Tribal Council and Tribal staff collaborative effort.

"This is a process that has been ongoing for many, many years," said Tribal Council Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr. "We attended many meetings to make this small portion of our sovereignty return to the Tribe. It's an historic day; it's a day that you can feel good about returning historical treaty rights to the Tribe. It's just a great day when you accomplish something that many current and past council worked very hard on and attended many meetings to make happen."

### No effect on fisheries

According to the commission's Agenda Item Summary, the new rules "preclude the potential for the harvest to have any biological

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## 2016 FISH & WILDLIFE COMMITTEE ELDERS FISHING TRIP

**MAY 12, 2016**  
**9 A.M. - 5 P.M.**

The F & W Committee extends an invitation to ALL ELDERS to join in for a day filled with fun and fishing! Event held at Hebo Lake.

YOUR TRIBAL FISHING LICENSE IS REQUIRED!

No state fishing license is needed, but you will need a Tribal fishing license to fish  
No fee to attend and the opportunity to fish from both land and boat will be available

NEED YOUR TRIBAL FISHING LICENSE?  
Contact: Natural Resources Division 503-879-2424

RAIN OR SHINE EVENT! DRESS APPROPRIATELY

A picnic lunch will be provided by the committee

- The trip is limited to the first 25 Tribal Elders and spouses who sign up at the Elders Activity Center or by calling 503-879-2233
- We encourage those riding in the vans to please arrive by 7:45 a.m. to load the vans and leave at 8 a.m.
- Join us even if you don't fish but would like to attend to enjoy the view and outing.

Sign up sheet at the Elder Activity Center 503-879-2233


