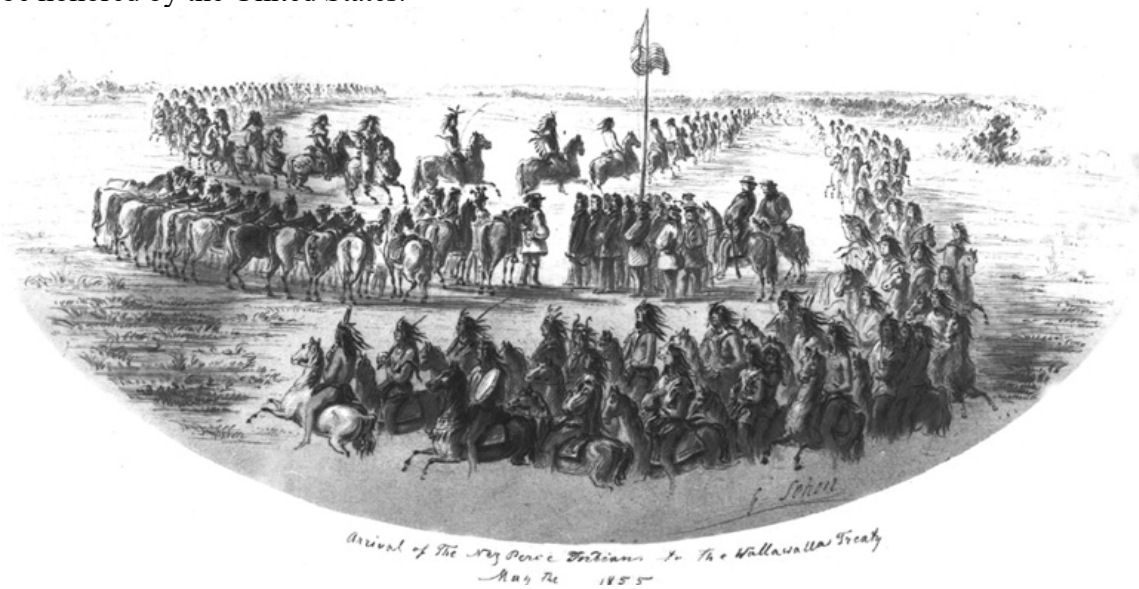


**TESTIMONY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES
BEFORE PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

April 12, 2026, Portland, OR

Good day members of the Council. My name is Wilbur Slockish Jr. I am a member of the Yakama Nation and a Commissioner with the Columbia River Inter Tribal Fish Commission and am here with Bruce Jim, Sr. from Warm Springs, and Judy Oatman from the Nez Perce Tribe. I am here to provide testimony on behalf of the four Columbia River treaty nations: the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Nez Perce Tribes.

Prior to the 1850's our tribal nations controlled much of the interior Columbia Basin and fished and hunted and traded from west of the Cascades to the Rockies. In the 1850's our tribes met with and negotiated treaties with the United States. The image below shows the Nez Perce arriving at the Walla Walla Treaty Council in 1855. We gave up most of our land to the United States, which in turn gave land to create the states. But we retained our existing rights to access our natural resources including fish throughout our usual and accustomed lands. These treaties are still in effect and must be honored by the United States.



*Arrival of the Nez Perce Warriors to the Walla Walla Treaty
May 26 1855*

We have names for all types of fish in the Columbia River and its tributaries as well as names for all the mountains and rivers. This is a demonstration that we have always used these fish and always lived in these places. We depend on our elders to teach us our history. We are people of the land where we come from. We were created here and we will return to the land when we die. Our relationship with our land and reverence with its resources endures always. We have included some photos at the end of this statement. Some of these photos show villages and fishing sites that were flooded as the dams were built. The tribes bear an enormous burden due to the losses of our salmon from the development of the basin.

As the Council finalizes the package of 2026 ocean salmon fishing regulations, we have a few additional comments.

One of the main reasons we are here is to track and monitor the planning of these fisheries to ensure that the fisheries comply with the requirements of the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement and Case law. Currently our calculations do show that impacts to upper Columbia River summer chinook and upriver fall chinook are meeting the minimum requirements. Impacts to upriver coho also meet the requirements of the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement. However, even though the fisheries are meeting the minimum legal requirements, our tribes still face an unfair conservation burden due to the status of various ESA listed stocks which prevent us from harvesting the full 50% of the harvestable number of fish that we are entitled to. Worsening environmental conditions with warm water, siltation, aquatic vegetation, and out of control predators also add to the conservation burden we face.

There is still an enormous amount of work that we all need to do to recover these fish to full harvestable levels. This work includes improving habitat and passage through the hydro-system as well as reducing predation. We need to appropriately use hatcheries to supplement and rebuild these runs. We also need to improve water quality.

This concludes the tribal statement.



Salmon and Lamprey Cooking



Traditional Roots



Drying Salmon



Celilo Falls



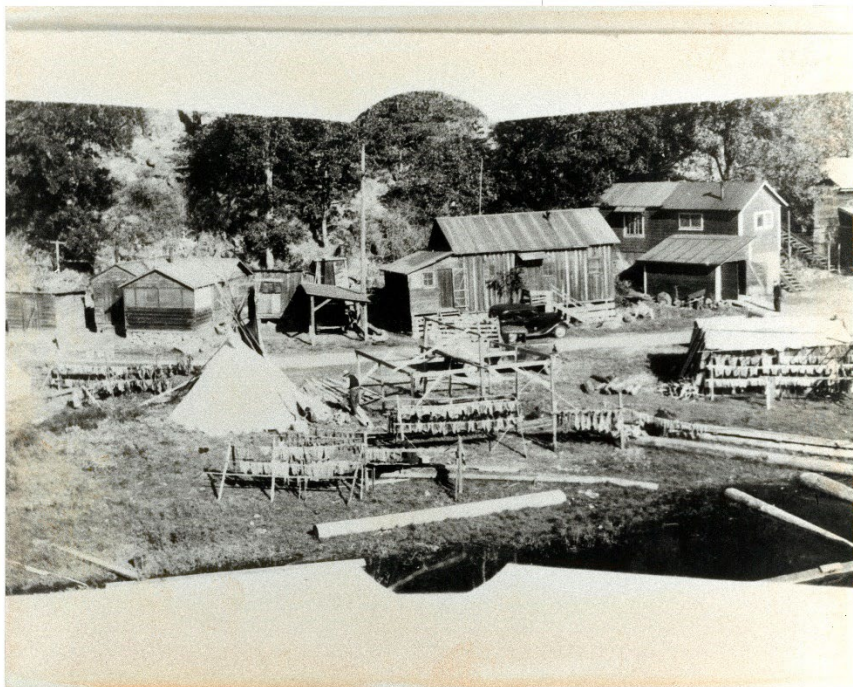
Cooking Salmon



Fall chinook at Celilo Falls



Umatilla Camp



Underwood (at mouth of White Salmon River)



Underwood (at mouth of White Salmon River) with drying salmon