

1212 N. 32nd Ave.  
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Nov. 8, 1954

Department of Justice,  
Room 2129 Department of Justice Building,  
Washington, 25, D.C.

Enclosures: 3 Clippings

Re: Yakima Claim No. 161 ILY

Dear Sir:

Of possible interest in connection with Yakima Claims No. 161, I present a "status" report on the Wanapum Band of Priest Rapids and the Priest Rapids Dam.

This quick development has delayed microfilm scanning, but one additional roll is being completed.

Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Washington, in years past filed an application with the Federal Power Commission for construction of a dam at Priest Rapids, Washington. This is known as Project 2112

Subsequently the State of Washington Power Commission filed for a like permit. Both were in anticipation of application for a construction license.

Subsequently an injunction was obtained by the Grant County PUD to restrain the Power Commission from interfering with dam exploration pending determination of the legal status of the State Power Commission.

A "peace agreement" was obtained, Oct. 21-22 last, and the Federal Power Commission granted a permit for sub-surface exploration to the PUD, subject to various terms and provisos.

Before the introduction of enabling legislation, two years ago, and when the Grant County PUD filed its original application, the Wanapum band, being without attorney and being poor people with no recognition of the United States Government, and Priest Rapids being their home and the home of their ancestors, made a written plea to the Federal Power Commission that their graveyards, burial places and historic relics on an island in a river be preserved and guarded against destruction; and that due consideration should be given to providing a home for the preservation of a historic group.

During subsequent filings by the Grant County PUD and the State of Washington for an exploratory permit, the Wanapums were advised by the Federal Power Commission that they could file "protests."

Their reply was always the same. They did not wish to object, protest, delay or retard progress of dam construction in any way. They had in mind no suit, but trusted to the fairness of those involved and pointed out again that Priest Rapids was their last foothold and home along the Columbia River.

When the Federal Power Commission issued its permit to the Grant County

PUD for exploration it included, p. 5, article 11, this proviso:

"Permittees shall during the course of its investigations under the preliminary ~~exam~~ permit provide for the adequate protection of "anapum Indian graves and historical relics."

The day this permit was granted the Grant County PUD, by long distance telephone call from Glenn Smothers, manager, at the Ephrata, headquarters office, requested a field conference at the dam site with the "anapums, before proceeding with execution of a \$207,050 core drilling contract.

While but one of the "anapums was present on such short notice, the rest being in Oregon or the Lower Valley gathering potatoes for winter subsistence, an amicable meeting was held with PUD and other officials [listed in clipping 2]

In less than two hours more Indian problems were resolved to the satisfaction of all than have been resolved in 10 years up and down the Columbia River.

The "anapums emphasized that they would ask for nothing unreasonable such as removal of large burial areas in the path of any crested lake.

It was determined that the "anapums were practical people and would cooperate in all ways along a practical line, asking for nothing that would be costly in the way of grave removals, etc. and being appreciative of anything done, since they recognized they had moral rights alone.

In event core drilling on the island connected with their genesis is necessary where it would affect any of the rocks, the drillers were to proceed, saving only those rocks that were not endangered.

The contractors will caution the r employees against "Sunday" and off hour grave searching and digging, since a rush of amateur diggers always accompanies any dam project. And they will comply with state laws relative to burials.

In event unknown graves are accidentally uncovered, the contents are to be placed in separate boxes for disposition on the hillside graveyard by the Indians.

While removal of burial areas down around "allula in course of constructing the McNary Dam cost the government from \$70,000 to \$100,000 as I recollect, there will be no removal of this nature necessary at Priest Rapids, excepting occasionally rip-rapping along the railroad tracks, in itself a part of the regular procedure. This would cover over graves that would be inundated and prevent them from washing away, and the bones being scattered.

So far as is known there is only one known grave of a relative of a "Wanapum" later enrolled as a Yakima. He is the father of George Schappy. George, meeting with the "anapums several years ago said it was his wish that his father, who was never to my knowledge enrolled, be left in situ.

Some of the other enrolled Yakimas, of mixed tribes--such as part Wenatchipum, Pshwanapum etc. have been informed through the Yakima Agent or councilmen that there is no need to worry, for any disrespect of burials. Moreover if they have a specific person in mind and know his specific burial place, this they may communicate to the "anapums if they wish the remains removed.

The general opinion seems to be that the situation is the same as elsewhere throughout the Northwest. Relatives are buried all over, but few exact locations are known. Around McNary, the Dalles, etc. they were mostly left where they were.

The chief engineer of the Grant County PUD and other officials of that agency have asked for another conference, this time at Yakima, the week of Nov. 16. This is for the purpose of discussing fencing of the graveyard and other normal precautionary measures and a review of the field trip notes now that they have conferred with their planners.

The Wanapums are now back. They were pleased with the results of the proviso and first conference, concurring that prompt action be permitted the PUD or any other agency empowered to construct the dam.

It is also indicated that some of the Yakima tribal councilmen have waited on them for the 17th time and told them to protest or something in like terms. But the Wanapums do not care to do that. They know the burial places of their own people, who they were, etc. And they are happy that inasmuch as a dam will eventually be built, they are shown courtesy and assistance in contrast to years past. Moreover details of any discussions they have with Yakimas are not topics of conversation.

Separately it is deduced that one of the Wanapums may subsequently enroll. This is the situation:

A "stepbrother" living up by Ellensburg, homesteaded or obtained title to land far from the Yakima Reservation in years past. He died but because he was enrolled and through bylaws of the Reservation or tribe that I am not familiar with, this land reverts to the tribe unless a heir-relative is enrolled. This involves a fairly nice farm and it is probable the decision of the Wanapum will be to enroll so he may claim the land. He did not ask for advice nor was he given any. But if that is the case and he had asked advice, he would have been told to do as he wished, that I do not tell them what to do, I only do what I can to help them in their problems.

Moreover it is increasingly indicated that as per capita payments have been inaugurated upon the Yakima Reservation, \$100 the first year, and rumors it will be \$125 next year and then build up to \$300 to \$400 a year, there is every logical reason to conclude that in time, as enrollment stays open, more Wanapums will enroll. Such things as the possibility of a home at Priest Rapids will avert this for a time, but not for always. And if the Yakima tribe were to vote to close all enrollments after a certain date, that would force the issue, if an issue ~~there exists~~ exists. A "secret" two-day meeting has been called by the enrollment committee and publicly announced. Were a deadline to be set, it is expected that all but perhaps three Wanapums would eventually enroll.

It is additionally noted that a trip to substantiate a belief was made to the Dalles as a last weekend, that the University of Washington has completed a two-year archaeological study of the Wakemap Mound on the north or Washington shore at Wishram. Although not on Indian land, this was carried out with the approval of the Yakima Nation, authorized some three years ago.

This is a mound some 30 feet high and covering over an acre. It is on the right shore, midway between Celilo Falls Fishery and the Dalles Dam site, which are on the opposite shore.

I assume that the findings will be later made available, although it

usually requires several years to achieve publication.

At present the work has been discontinued and "rock hounds" are busy sifting the dig. They tell me that the way has been left open to them. My personal examination of numerous artifacts recovered there in a one-day dig is that the artifacts are of Salish, not Shahaptian origin. And this I believe is a general opinion of professionals based on past test exploration. This may eventually become valuable to the Department, if firm enough conclusions are made by the University whose project was carried through under direction of Dr. Osborne.

It is also noted that in past years and more recently the Yakimas have mentioned that the rocks islands in Celilo Falls contain the Ten Commandments of the people, markings and sacred relics known to them, but so far as I know, they have taken no one onto the islands, the fisheries, nor made a request for removal by the contractors, of such relics.

I speculate that Chief Tommy Thompson's wife will interview him closely, drawing a map and marking the sacred place and gathering information as he knew it, and that she will date this, witness it by a trusted friend and preserve it in the event it is ever needed. The chief's own fishery was on these rocks. The chief is very happy that protection has been secured the Wanapum graves. He has given me a name he has used until recently "La Wot" to be used after his death, which he said he did because I was as a brother and although I came from Yakima, I didn't act like it. There has been no discussion of his situation nor of any of his or other negotiations, just some remarks by him and a suggestion by me of Flora, his wife, to get the information and put it away for me in future years when I could use it in my stories.

The above "status" report is submitted because of its possible interest. And it might be added, if the PUD desires to provide a home near the Priest Rapids Dam, eventually for the Wanapums, the stipulation will be requested that the title become automatically extinguished should they cease to become Wanapums.

Congressman Hal Holmes wishes to confer with me after resting up from his successful campaign. This is to explore the possibility of securing a home for the last Wanapums. He introduced and processed the enabling legislation for the Priest Rapids Dam.

Since the Wanapums have a cooperative record and wish to prove that they are different and unusual people when matters like the PUD preliminary permit arise, there is no reason to believe that he will not lend his good influence to Congressional legislation or a Presidential Proclamation in due time. I believe I will suggest to him to wait and see if the Dam Builders show as sincere and honest an approach to the humane subject at hand, before sponsoring legislation. And in any respect, I shall suggest he contact the Department so there be no conflict with pending claims.

The foregoing, plus numerous other problems, registration for draft of one of the Last Wanapums, fisheries problems with the State Fisheries Dept. of Fisheries, etc. should indicate that I have cut myself out a man-sized job. The Wanapums are happy that progress, the first they have ever known in some 100 years of appeals, is being made.

Sincerely

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