

1212 N. 32nd Ave.
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Director Robert J. Schoettler,
Department of Fisheries,
State of Washington.

March 17, 1955

Dear Director:

Your kind letter of March 11 was translated to the Wanapum remnant band of non-treaty Indians at their village at Priest Rapids on the Columbia River yesterday. And they were grateful.

It is the estimate of the leader, Puck Hyah Toot or Johnny Buck, that the fishing would start April 9, with the possibility that it would be a few days later and that the feast would be April 16.

They have been at Priest Rapids preparing the long house while the old women have been making mats, since many are weather worn. The leader has been examining the roots, but he cannot yet set a definite date for the feast. He will let me know when that is possible, and that --the condition of the roots--will determine the feast date and fishing.

He understands that the favor is for the taking of fish for the religious ceremonies only for that date (the impending "ashat") and that none of the fish are to be sold. The Wanapums have never made it a practice to sell fish, having used them only for the ceremonies and subsistence.

I have contacted Mr. E.D. Hemstreet of the Department of Fish and Game.

The men listed by the leader who would participate in the taking of fish would be the following only:

1-Puck Hyah Toot or Johnny Buck; 2, Frank Buck; 3, Rex Buck; 4, Bobby Tomalawash, 5, Harry Tomalawash, 6, Johnny Tomalawash; 7, Harry "yinn.

Two of those mentioned, Harry Tomalawash and Johnny Tomalawash, members of the family and dance leaders at Priest Rapids, have according to my understanding, been enrolled by the Yakima Nation recently. If there is doubt on our part that they should not fish they will be informed through the leader. Then two of the younger men may not be there to fish as they have lately become employed and take advantage of every bit of seasonal employment. For that matter the leader, being born in 1878, is "not the man he once was" when it comes to fishing.

Puck Hyah Toot extends to you or your representative an invitation to attend and observe the feast and I shall be there to do my best to explain it to you. The location is 65 miles from Yakima, via the Moxee-Hanford highway to Vernita, then 10 miles further up the right bank of the Columbia, and I shall let you know the date as soon as it is set. Preparations start Friday but the ceremony itself does not begin until around 10 o'clock Sunday morning and the actual feast at high noon.

I am sure the Wanapums have not changed from the old days and will strictly abide by any desire covering fishing.

And I am personally grateful for your interest.

Sincerely
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