

Dept. of Justice, Lands Division,
Room 512 Miller Building,
Yakima, Wash.

June 19, 1953

Dear Mr. Ramsay:

I trust you will forgive my negligence in obtaining your full name, etc.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter and sketch. I hope it meets with your approval.

My reason for writing Congressman Holmes is to inform him that something is being done at this end, and in Washington. If he knows of a more speedier way that will require less detailed work on the part of government, I am sure he will suggest it.

It has taken me years to unravel all the various threads connected with the Nanapums. I believe it would take ethnologists and attorneys weeks to run down the various citations I can make and suggest conclusions these citations and various references to interviews would indicate.

I am sorry indeed that matters moved so slowly this afternoon. Had I been able to have obtained a competent interpreter, I would have employed him and paid him. But I could locate no one on such short time.

I will have the notes and sketch typed, with carbon copy, by an expert on a good typewriter so it will be easier to peruse.

Please feel free to call on me any time my historical reference material would be of interest to you.

Sincerely

Congressman Hal Holmes, 4th District, Washington, D.C.

June 19, 1953

House of Representatives

Dear Congressman Hal:

I think you will be interested in the following report on the Wanapum or Priest Rapids band of Indians, Columbia River, Wash.

Mr. Ramsey of Yakima, who handles land matters for the Department of Justice wished to contact Johnny Buck (Puck-Hyah-Foot) and other Wanapum. A contact was arranged.

It is my understanding that the preliminary interview was in view of the proposed visit of a commissioner, possibly a Mr. Kest, to the Yakima Valley in July and the taking of statements regarding the claims.

Since securing asylum for these people has long interested and occupied me, and since I have spent much time in research, I have volunteered to provide a sketch of these people (narrative) and other material that would support their claim.

I realize that the commissioner will be occupied with many investigations and perhaps references I cite will facilitate the time necessary for investigating the very complicated Wanapum case, which appears to me to need considerable ethnological study.

I believe I am handicapped only by lack of complete archive material dealing with the period, 1880-1885. But some of that may show up in microfilm now on order.

Attached is an outline of the material I will prepare and place with Mr. Ramsey, offering also my further services in this humane matter. The Wanapum and I again thank you for your interest.

Sincerely

June 19, 1953

Outline of material being prepared, as a volunteer matter, to be left with Mr. Ramsay, Department of Justice, lands department representative at Yakima, Washington, for survey of the Wanapum or Priest Rapids Indian case.

1-Prehistoric, covering legendary and heresay, (narrative)

a-Genesis of the Wanapums

2-Occupancy and use, large map of Eastern Washington will be marked for general reference, narrative will include place names, Area will show where they ranged, where they lived, where they obtained various foods.

3-Moral and other rights, This will include (phonetic) dictionary in brief, showing comparison of the dialect with language of other Shapshian speaking peoples, including the Yakimas.

4-Present Wanapums (unallotted) listing the individual by commonly called name, Indian name and approximate age. This I consider vital. It would assure that these would be the only recognized people and that others, allotted, would not, in event a grant of land were given, in time move in and occupy it as has been the case in some grants made in past situations, similar to this but perhaps without parallel to this case.

a-Their dire need confronted by losing their last foothold on the ~~Yakima~~ Columbia River, the contemplated welfare of the few young ones; the religious explanation of why they must continue to cling to the old Wanapum territory along the Columbia River.

5-And, if requested, a notarized statement that I profit in no way in this matter aside from my friendship with the people, and that I profit in no way in the future.

6-Photos as necessary, for file purposes.

Click Relander, Rt. 3, box 146, Yakima, Wash.

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