

1212 N. 32nd Ave.

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Mr. W.A. Galbraith, director,
Department of Conservation and Development,
Transportation Building, Olympia.

Jan. 13, 1955

Dear Mr. Galbraith:

Last July 1 you communicated with me in response to a communication addressed to the Hon. Arthur B. Langlie regarding the non-treaty Wanapum Indians of Priest Rapids, a remnant band.

I am writing to you with the humble request that your intercede in the plight of the Wanapums with the governor so that their fishery deprived by the State Division of Fisheries may be restored to them.

I am pursuing my request with the State Division of Fisheries that this be done, and it is possible through directive of the director, before it leads into extensive discussion.

The fishery involved is on the Yakima River, about 10 miles from the confluence of that stream with the Columbia. It is the traditional, or rather one of several traditional fisheries of the Wanapums. Since they are non treaty people, their title has never legally been extinguished by the Government of the United States, and there is precedent to that statement.

The State Division of Fisheries a year ago enforced non-fishing at the site involved, but the Yakimas, a treaty tribe were permitted to fish at Prosser, 10 miles further upstream. Since there have been only a half dozen men using the Wanapum fishery, and since they depend upon it for the salmon for the religious portion that corresponds to the Mass of the Catholics and the Holy Communion of the Protestants, and for subsistence of some 80 salmon a year, it was believed perfectly permissible from the Wanapums viewpoint that they be permitted to continue to fish at Wanawish.

Mr. Robert J. Schoettler, director and staff are coming to Yakima on Jan. 27 and I am writing them for an interview on this subject at that time, hopeful that a directive may be issued by the director to permit the Wanapums to resume their fishing in season. They do not abuse their right. And since enforcement men approached them, they have not attempted to fish at Wanawish, the fishery involved.

Action is desired at this time to assure no delay in the spring season.

The action and conduct of the Wanapums in regard to the Priest Rapids Dam site and the manner they have acted to expedite dam construction for any agency desiring to build a dam there, is their best recommendation.

If the State Division of Fisheries insists that the Wanapums not be permitted to fish at Wanawish, then it is their request that they be compensated for the loss of that fishery which was possessed by them before

white men came to the Pacific Northwest. And I have offered to provide documentary evidence to that effect to avert prolonged negotiations on the matter or the use of legal counsel.

The Wanapums, contrary to treaty Indians, did not employ legal counsel in regards the Priest Rapids Dam site because they are poor people and believe the matter can be adjusted otherwise.

One of the sons, a boy of seven, since last July, has been confined to a tubercular hospital and the causes of tuberculosis are well known. Another of the older men has been ill now for several months. Depriving people who have always depended upon salmon cannot be compensated for by the human system abruptly.

But the major concern as to the loss of the fishery is that it deprives the Wanapums of fish for their religious ceremonies, which existed before the advent of the white men.

I will admit that the letter may sound "crackpot," but I will assure you of our sincerity.

I have just completed a series of some 17 addresses, made at the invitation of various groups wishing to know about these people. The addresses have been mostly historical. And I have declined, for the time being, a dozen other invitations extending over an area 150 by 150 miles in this state.

It is for reasons of this that I am asking you to personally intercede with the governor.

The enclosed clipping will outline the Wanapums' plight and will show their progressive retrenchment by compulsion.

Most Sincerely

Click Relander

For the remnant "anapum band
(Less than eight Indians now)