

January 24, 1952

[Wanapum Land]

Bureau of Land Management, (Department of Interior)
Regional Administrator,
Swan Island Station, Portland, 18, Oregon.

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to previous correspondence, and to correspondence with the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (File 1664-43) I am communicating again at behest of the Wanapum Band of Indians at Priest Rapids, a non-treaty band.

This application and communication is being renewed in light of the legal notice of a public hearing in which the Grant County PUD District 2 is asking the Federal Power Commission to grant a permit for construction of a dam at Priest Rapids, a site occupied many years by the Wanapums, as their last place to turn.

The Wanapums, now numbering less than a dozen non-treaty people, are the remnants of the band identified by Lewis and Clark as the Sokulks in 1805 and estimated then at 3,000 persons.

They did not recognize Kamiakin, of part Yakima and part Palouse blood as their leader.

They were not invited to the Treaty of Walla Walla, June 9, 1855.

They retired to the solitude of Priest Rapids and were left alone there many years until gradual closing in by various branches of government and land settlement.

Finally, they find themselves with no place but Priest Rapids and that is now endangered.

Surely, with all the land holdings along the river, once held by the Wanapums, there is land that the Wanapums can have where they can finish out their years. They have asked and will continue to ask before taking other action:

- 1-Some land to range horses on as was long customary.
- 2 -Preservation of their graveyard near Priest Rapids.

3rd place where they can have their mat houses and continue their old customs and beliefs, in keeping with the government's policy to perpetuate customs to the final generation.

4th place where the artifacts and relics of the origin of their culture, now on the Island of P'na opposite the Priest Rapids Dam site, can be moved in event of construction; since these artifacts and relics are those of the Wanapums and cannot be claimed by government or branches of government, national, state or local without authorization of the people.

It occurs to the Wanapums that with the river development program now being pushed, it is time for the Land Management Branch of government to intervene for these people and secure for them home land. This can be done with support of congressmen and senators and local support; since the Priest Rapids people are known as a suffering, patient people, worthy of protection in their final years and more worthy of protection than certain birds and animals which the government has seen fit to protect and preserve by creation of reserves.

At the behest of Puck Hyah Toot, the head man, we are asking how we can go about getting land for these people in their home territory, securing it for them against any further white intrusion. We ask this because these people have not sued the government as have other peoples; because they are human beings and because they need your assistance, as a guardian of the government, to secure land for them.

In the not too distant future, these people will present their cause on a more extensive scale, but wish at this time to have your advice and guidance.

Please understand that the petition is being made by a white man the Wanapums call Now Tow Look and "brother," who is not paid nor will be paid in any way.

Sincerely

Click Relander

Now Tow Look

For Puck Hyah Toot

Route 3, box 146, Yakima.