

1212 N, 32nd Ave.

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The Governor's Office,
Olympia,
Washington.

June 22, 1954

Dear Sir:

I am writing at the request of the non-treaty band of Wanapum Indians, with the request that this letter be forwarded to the State Power Commission for its files in connection with Priest Rapids.

This is being done because the Wanapums, who have always had their home at Priest Rapids, are preterbed over the Governor's announcement in the press several weeks ago, that the State would explore the feasibility of constructing a dam at the Priest Rapids side.

I will be glad at any time to go fully into the condition and situation of these non-treaty people, a remnant group of less than a dozen people, in event the state pursues its investigation of constructing a dam at Priest Rapids.

And the Wanapums wish it understood at this time that they have always lived at Priest Rapids, but do not believe in resorting to an attorney to gain them relief.

They have moral rights, and undoubted legal rights at Priest Rapids, but are interested only in acquiring a home, along the river in the home of their ancestors, and protection of their graveyard. This matter has been presented to Congressmen and Senators and legislative action, in behalf of the Wanapum has been indicated in event the government has a principal interest there.

The Wanapums believe it pertinent at this time to inquire what cooperative steps can be taken with the State, and with what division of State Government, in event the State acquires a construction permit.

The Wanapums also wish it understood that they interpose no objections to construction like other Treaty Indians up and down the river that has resulted in costly negotiations.

There are many friends of the Wanapums throughout Eastern Washington, and elsewhere in the state, who

join in asking that the humane adjustment of these people be taken into consideration along with the other plans, thus setting a new standard in moral government.

I myself have testified for the Department of Justice before a federal commissioner, that I have no financial interest in these people, but act as their friend and brother.

No Department of National Government recognizes these people, hence relief for them on that score must come through legislative act or Presidential Proclamation. Both the United States Government and State own extensive acreage in the once vast land holdings of the Wanapums which they could not possess in land settlement days because of their religious belief. Now their last home has narrowed down to Priest Rapids, and with that being threatened, they are compelled to press their case, asking not money as the other Indians, but allocation of land. This probably doesn't concern the state at the present time, but in event of Congressional action relinquishing controls over Indians, various legal changes in Indian laws etc. moving from federal to state level, there are numerous points raised.

Please believe us when we say that the Wanapums will cooperate in every manner possible, and will appreciate any cooperation in adjusting their problems eventually, because they are a historic people. They were known by Lewis and Clark as the Solkuks and their number was estimated at 2,000 to 3,000. Now there are less than a dozen true Wanapums left, and it is a matter humane that they be permitted to continue their ancient culture at their old home. Especially is this true when they display the attitude they do toward progress and development of the Columbia River.

Sincerely

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