

January 24, 1953

Mr. F. William Arlt,  
President, Grant County PUD, (No. 2)  
Wilson Creek, Washington.

Dear Mr. Arlt:

In view of the Grant County PUD's application for a permit to construct a dam at Priest Rapids, I am writing in behalf and at the request of the Wanapum band of non-treaty Indians of Priest Rapids.

We want it understood that we are not interested nor involved in any political matters of water and power policy. In months past we have written the Grant County PUD District No. 2, without receiving reply. Now we believe we should have a reply.

The Wanapum Indians held the Columbia River from Vantage on the north to Pasco on the south, and adjoining sides of the river, when Lewis and Clark, the explorers came through in 1805. They identified them as the Sokulks, estimated at 3,000 persons.

Now there are less than one dozen of these Wanapums left. Their home is and has been for many years, Priest Rapids. There they have maintained their religion, their culture and their graveyard. Now these are faced with extinction, along with the last of the race.

Since these people did not war with the United States Government, they signed no treaty. They did not recognize Kamiakin, the Yakima War chief, as their leader or chief. He was of part Yakima and part Palouse blood. They speak a different language than the 14 tribes that signed the Treaty of Walla Walla, June 9, 1855. They were not invited to that treaty.

The origin of their culture is on the island of P'Na across from the Priest Rapids dam site. It contains many large rock carvings. We are asking that we receive assurance that these be preserved in event of any construction.

Their home is at Priest Rapids. The Wanapums ask that in event of

evacuation, they be given land in their home range on which to locate their mat houses, hold their ceremonies and pasture their horses.

Their graveyard is near the Priest Rapids dam site. They ask protection for this graveyard against looting by any construction crews or persons drawn to the scene.

Graves of some of the people, including the last chief of the Wanapums are located near the river, upstream from the dam site. They ask protection of these burial places of the dead.

The requests are made at the behest of the leader and other head men of the last Wanapums, Luck Hyah Toot, who points out that while others have sued the government, these people have never resorted to suit to gain that which, by the white man's own laws, is rightfully theirs.

We sincerely ask that you will give the Wanapums every consideration and recognition in your application, to provide for their well being and to protect them.

Sincerely

Now Tow Look

(Click Relander, a white man)

Route 3, box 146  
Yakima, Washington.