

Yakima, Washington

Federal Power Commission

January 23, 1953

Washington, 25, D.C.

Mr. Leon M. Fuquay, Secretary

Dear Sir and Commissioners:

Relative to publication of legal notices concerning the application of Public Utility District No. 2, Grant County, Ephrata, Washington, for preliminary permit for a proposed hydroelectric project at Priest Rapids on the Columbia River, please accept this as a protest against granting any such permit.

This protest is made for, by and in behalf of the Wanapum Indians of Washington, a non-treaty remnant band of human beings.

This protest is made in written form, because the financial inability of these people prohibits them from appearing personally to protest. And, due to their financial inability, it is not possible for them to employ counsel.

These people have at numerous times applied to the Department of Interior, Department of Indian Affairs, for a grant of land that they may, as the last of a once-famous and historic tribe known to Lewis and Clark the explorers in 1805 as the Sokulk and numbered by them at 3,000 people, may secure the protection of the burial place of their ancestors, a part of their religion; a home where their ancient culture may be perpetuated to the final generation, a part of their religion; and land where they may roam a few head of horses as was their custom before the white man came.

The Indian faith they so strictly keep, which recognizes a Creator and Superior Being, was founded at their historic village at Priest Rapids and spread from there throughout all of Eastern Washington, northward into British Columbia, westward along the Columbia River, into Oregon, into Northern California; eastward into Idaho and Montana and southeastward to other peoples until 20,000 to 30,000 Indians embraced



it. It is now retained in its pure form at Priest Rapids, where the only tule mat house now used as a living place by Indians in Washington, is also located.

These people occupied the territory along the Columbia River from Vantage on the North to Pasco on the south and land adjoining each side of the river for unknown centuries (including Wahluke Slope) The white men, representing the government in treaty days, ignored and refused to treat with their leader, <sup>Si</sup>Mowhala, the Prophet of Priest Rapids, or other leaders.

These people did not sign a treaty with the government of the United States inasmuch as they never, like other tribes, had been at war with the government and Army records will show that during those Indian war days, they approached the army and pledged their loyalty to remaining peaceful. Moreover, signing a treaty would have violated their religious beliefs.

These people did not recognize the Yakima war chief, Kamiakin, of part Yakima and part Palouse blood as their leader and chief, whereas Kamiakin claimed land over which he had no control and people over whom he did not hold control. But the government accepted his claims as valid.

It is further known that these people speak a language that is different from that of the peoples included in the Walla Walla treaty of June 9, 1855, and that the Wanapums were never invited to participate in that treaty nor knew it was being negotiated- this, because of their seclusion at Priest Rapids.

For more than 25 years past these people have occupied certain ancient homes at Priest Rapids. Construction of a dam there would leave them no place to go to carry on their ancient culture, and it is recognized by the government that ancient Indian culture is to be preserved in all ways possible. Construction of a dam, moreover, would leave them no burial ground.

The island of Pina is located opposite the Priest Rapids Dam site.



This island is the origin of culture of these people and contains relics and artifacts that belong to these people and they desire guarantee that if any dam is constructed through permit of the Federal Power Commission or any other branch of government, that these artifacts, including stone carvings weighing as much as ten tons, be removed to safety and to places designated by the Wanapums. They wish a guarantee that no government or state agency or museum may claim these relics, which so far have been safe from looting because of the dangerous waters surrounding the island.

Be it also known that besides numerous grave sites up and down the river, many of which have been pillaged by the white man because the government gave no protection against vandalism, there is a grave of the last chief of the Wanapums and there is a tribal graveyard containing 200 or more burials of the people. This graveyard is close to the level of water that would be created by erection of a dam at Priest Rapids. Some of the individual graves are lower down and would be covered. This is directly opposed to the very old religious conviction of the Wanapums.

(The old prophets told these people, before the white men came, that the day would arrive when the Wanapum blood would be mixed and cease to be and when the waters of the river would cover the island of P'Na. This, they said, would be the end of the world.)

The main graveyard is now marked and it is the petition of the remnants of this tribe that the graveyard be preserved against inundation and that if construction crews or other workers appear in the area, that a term of permit to construct a dam be protection of the graveyard by erection of a suitable protective fence to prevent vandalism by workmen or incidental visitors.

The remnants of this tribe now number less than a dozen persons, another reason that petition is made that the government and agencies of government do what is humanely possible to preserve these historic



people from extinction and extermination.

The Wanapum are not concerned with any matter of hydroelectric policy or control of power by any agency or faction of government, local, state or national.

These people, through enterprise, have managed to maintain themselves as working people, fitting remarkably well into the new civilization that has come within the past century; this in marked contrast to many Indians still under government control. And, since they have done this to partially rehabilitate themselves, it would seem just that the government, long free of the expense of helping these people, now grant that which is in the power of the government to grant at no especial or particular cost to itself;—land from vast holdings along the Columbia River. (This could be possible under 100-year lease, title to pass with the final passing of the race.)

The petition that no permit for construction of a dam be granted unless the guarantee is made that ~~the~~ protection and haven be provided these people, who <sup>excepting for</sup> ~~without~~ the aid of intervening friends, are without means of protection.

This petition is drawn at the request of the Wanapum head man, Puck Hyah Toot, known as Johnny Buck and his men, and upon authorization of Puck Hyah Toot to a white man he calls Now Tow Look and brother, (Click Relander), who does so without pay or promise of pay.

Note:

(Various paragraphs and remarks inserted in letter to give you a background of these people.) CCR\*



Federal Power Commission,  
Washington, 25, D.C.

Yakima, Washington,  
January 23, 1958

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Leon M. Fuquay, secretary.

Dear Sir:

Relative to publication of legal notice<sup>S</sup> concerning the application of Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Ephrata ~~advised~~ for preliminary permit for a proposed hydroelectric project at Priest Rapids, Washington, please consider this as a protest against granting any such permit.

This protest is made for, ~~and~~ by and in behalf of the Wanapum Indians of Washington, a non-treaty band, *of human beings.*

This protest is made in written form because, due to the financial inability of these people, it will not be possible for them to appear to protest this. And, due to their financial inability, it is *NOT* possible for them to employ counsel.

Be it known that these people have at numerous times applied to the Department of Interior for a grant of land that they, as the last of a once famous tribe known to Lewis and Clark, the Explorers as *Sokulk* and numbered at 3,000 people, may secure the protection of the burial places of their ancestors, a home where their ancient culture may be perpetuated to the final generation and *land* where they may roam a few head of horses as was their custom before the white man came.

Be it known that these people have occupied ~~territory~~ territory along the Columbia River, from Vantage on the North to Pasco on the South for generations; that the white men representing the government ignored and refused to treat with their leader, Smowhala, the Prophet of Priest Rapids.

Be it known that these people ~~would~~ did not sign a treaty with the United States Government because they had never, like other tribes, been at war with the government.

And be it known too that these people did not recognize the Yakima War chief, Kamiakin, of part Yakima and part Palouse blood, as their leader or chief.

It is further known that these people speak a language that is different ~~than~~ <sup>from</sup> that of the peoples included in the Walla Walla Treaty of June 9, 1855 and that they were never invited to participate in that treaty.

For more than 25 years past, these peoples have occupied ancient homes at Priest Rapids. ~~That~~ Construction of a dam there would leave them no place to go to carry on their ancient culture. And, it is recognized by the government that ancient Indian culture is to be preserved ~~in all~~ <sup>in all</sup> ~~ways possible.~~ <sup>ways possible.</sup>

Be it also known that the Island of P'Na, ~~also~~ opposite the Priest Rapids Dam site is the origin of culture for these people and that it contains relics and artifacts that belong to these people and they desire ~~assurances~~ <sup>guarantee</sup> that if any dam is ever constructed through permit of the Federal Power Commission, these artifacts, including stone carvings weighing as much as ten tons, ~~must~~ be removed to safety, and to places ~~designated~~ <sup>designated</sup> by the Wanapum head men. These artifacts have so far been safe because of the dangerous waters surrounding the island.

Be it also known that besides numerous individual grave sites up and down the river ~~are located~~ in the Priest Rapids area, including the grave of the last chief of the Wanapums, there is a ~~buried~~ <sup>buried</sup> tribal graveyard containing 200 or more burials of the people. This graveyard is close to the level of water that would be created by erection of a dam.



This graveyard is now marked and it is the petition of the remnants of this tribe that the graveyard be preserved against inundation, and that if construction crews or other workers appear in the area, that a term of permit to construct a dam be protection of the graveyard by erection of a protective fence, to prevent vandalism by workmen.

The remnants of this tribe now number less than a dozen people, ~~and it is the request of~~ another reason that petition is made that the government and agencies of government do what is humanely possible to preserve these ~~people~~ historic people from complete extinction.

For these, and other reasons, the petition is made that no permit for construction of a dam be granted, unless the ~~assurance~~ <sup>guarantee</sup> is given that protection and haven be provided these people, who, excepting for ~~some~~ <sup>and</sup> intervening friends, have no other means of protesting than have the ground squirrels, snakes and small life at the Priest Rapids dam site that would be drowned out by the erection of a dam.

This petition is drawn at the request of the Wanapum head man, Puck Hyah Toot and his men and upon authorization of the head man to his brother, ~~now~~ Now Tow Look, a white man who ~~does~~ <sup>does</sup> so without pay ~~or~~ or promise of pay.

Sincerely requested

Click Relander

(Now Tow Look)

Route 3, Box 146

Yakima, Washington.

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January 23, 1953

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Washington, 25, D. C.

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Be it known that these people have at numerous times applied to the Department of the Interior for a grant of land that they, as the last of a once-famous tribe known to Lewis and Clark, the explorers in 1805 as the Solalk and numbered at 3,000 people, may secure the protection of the burial places of their ancestors, a part of their religion; a home where their ancient culture may be perpetuated to the final generation, a part of their religion; and land where they may roam a few head of horses as was their custom before the white men came.

Be it known that these people have occupied territory along the Columbia River from Vantage on the north to Pasco on the south, and land adjoining on each side of the river, for unknown centuries; that the white men representing the government ignored and refused to treat with their leader, Snowhala, the Prophet of Priest Rapids, or other leaders.

Be it known that these people did not sign a treaty with the Government of the United States inasmuch as they never, like other tribes, had been at war with the government and that such a treaty, if it had been offered, would have violated their religious beliefs.



And be it known too, that these people did not recognize the Yakima war chief, Kamiakin, of part Yakima and part Palouse blood as their leader and chief, whereas, Kamiakin claimed land over which he had no control and people over whom he did not hold control.

It is further known that these people speak a language that is different from that of the peoples included in the Walla Walla treaty of June 9, 1855 and that the Wanapums were never invited to participate in that treaty, nor knew it was being negotiated, this because of their remoteness at Priest Rapids.

For more than 25 years past, these people have occupied certain ancient homes at Priest Rapids. Construction of a dam there would leave them no place to go to carry on their ancient culture. And it is recognized by the government that ancient Indian culture is to be preserved in all ways possible. Construction of a dam would leave them no burial ground.

Be it also known that the Island of P'na, opposite the Priest Rapids Dam site, is the origin of culture of these people and that the island contains relics and artifacts that belong to these people and they desire guarantee that if any dam is ever constructed through permit of the Federal Power Commission, these artifacts, including stone carvings weighing as much as ten tons, be removed to safety and to places designated by the Wanapum head men. They wish a guarantee that no government or state agency or museum may claim these relics, which have so far been safe because of the dangerous waters surrounding the island.

Be it also known that besides numerous grave sites up and down the river, many of which have been pillaged by the white man because the government gave no protection against vandalism, there is the grave of the last chief of the Wanapums and there is a tribal graveyard containing 200 or more burials of the people. This graveyard is close to the level of water that would be created by erection of a dam at Priest Rapids.



This graveyard is now marked and it is the petition of the remnants of this tribe that the graveyard be preserved against inundation, and that if construction crews or other workers appear in the odd area, that a term of permit to construct a dam, be protection of the graveyard by erection of a suitable, protective fence to prevent vandalism by workmen or incidental visitors.

The remnants of this tribe now number less than a dozen persons, another reason that petition is made that the government and agencies of government, do what is humanely possible to do, to preserve these historic people from complete extinction and extermination.

Be it known that the Wanapum are not concerned with any matter of hydroelectric policy or control of power by any agency or faction of government, local, state or national.

For these, and other reasons, the petition is made that no permit for construction of a dam be granted, unless the guarantee is made that protection and haven be provided these people, who excepting for intervening friends, are without means of protection and protecting--no more so than have the ground squirrels, snakes and small life at Priest Rapids dam site--and would be drowned out by the erection of a dam.

This petition is drawn at the request of the Wanapum head man, Puck Hyah Toot, known as Johnny Buck, and his men, and upon authorization of such men to Puck Hyah Toot's brother, Now Tow Look, a white man, who does so without pay or promise of pay.

Sincerely requested

Puck Hyah Toot

His mark

Now Tow Look

(Click Relander, Route 3, box 146, Yakima, Washington.