

Columbia Basin tribes¹
 Common Views on the Future of the Columbia River Treaty
 February 25, 2010

The present Columbia River power and flood control system operations are negatively affecting tribal rights and cultural interests throughout the Columbia Basin. The Columbia River Treaty is foundational to these operations.

The Columbia River Treaty –

- Was negotiated and continues to be implemented without regard to the tribes' unique legal and political relationship with the federal government.
- Is narrowly designed for the benefit of power and flood control.
- Does not include ecological considerations for critical tribal natural resources.
- Does not include considerations of critical tribal cultural resources.
- Created a power and flood control system that degraded rivers, First Foods, natural resources, and tribal customs and identities.
- Significantly affects tribal economies.
- Excludes tribal participation in its governance and implementation.
- Limits what can be accomplished with non-Treaty agreements to meet tribal resource priorities.

The Columbia River Treaty is under review by the U.S. and Canadian governments for reconsideration in 2014. Reconsideration of the Treaty provides an opportunity for the tribes to seek benefits not realized in 50 years of Treaty implementation.

The Columbia Basin tribes' interests must be represented in the implementation and reconsideration of the Columbia River Treaty. The Columbia River must be managed for multiple purposes, including -

- Respect for the sovereignty of each tribal government - each tribe has a voice in governance and implementation of the Columbia River Treaty.
- Tribal cultural and natural resources must be included in river management to protect and promote ecological processes – healthy and useable fish, wildlife, and plant communities.
- Integrate the tribes' expertise of cultural and natural resources in river management.
- Equitable benefits to each Tribe in priority to other sovereign parties in Columbia River management.
- Respecting and preserving the benefits of settlement agreements with tribes.
- Recognize tribal flood control benefits.
- Protecting tribal reserved rights to current and future beneficial uses, in a manner consistent with ecosystem-based management.

In order to realize these principles, the tribes' collective voices must be included in the implementation and reconsideration of the Columbia River Treaty.

¹ The Burns Paiute Tribe, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Fort McDermitt Paiute Shoshone Tribes, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation, the Shoshone Paiute Tribe of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians, with support from the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Upper Columbia United Tribes, and the Upper Snake River Tribes tribal organizations have been working together to consider the effects and alternatives related to the Columbia River Treaty.