

# The Upper Columbia River and the FCRPS

Fish and Wildlife Program  
Amendments:  
Upper Columbia United Tribes

This presentation is intended to educate new Council Members regarding the issues and concerns of the UCUT member tribes as well as educate all Council members with regard to the amendment recommendations submitted by UCUT

# Hydropower Development

**In 1936 the Region started to invest in Hydropower Development in the Upper Columbia River**

**By the 1970's all 4 federal Hydropower Projects were completed**

**More than 1/4 of all hydropower generated by the FCRPS is Generated in the Upper Columbia**

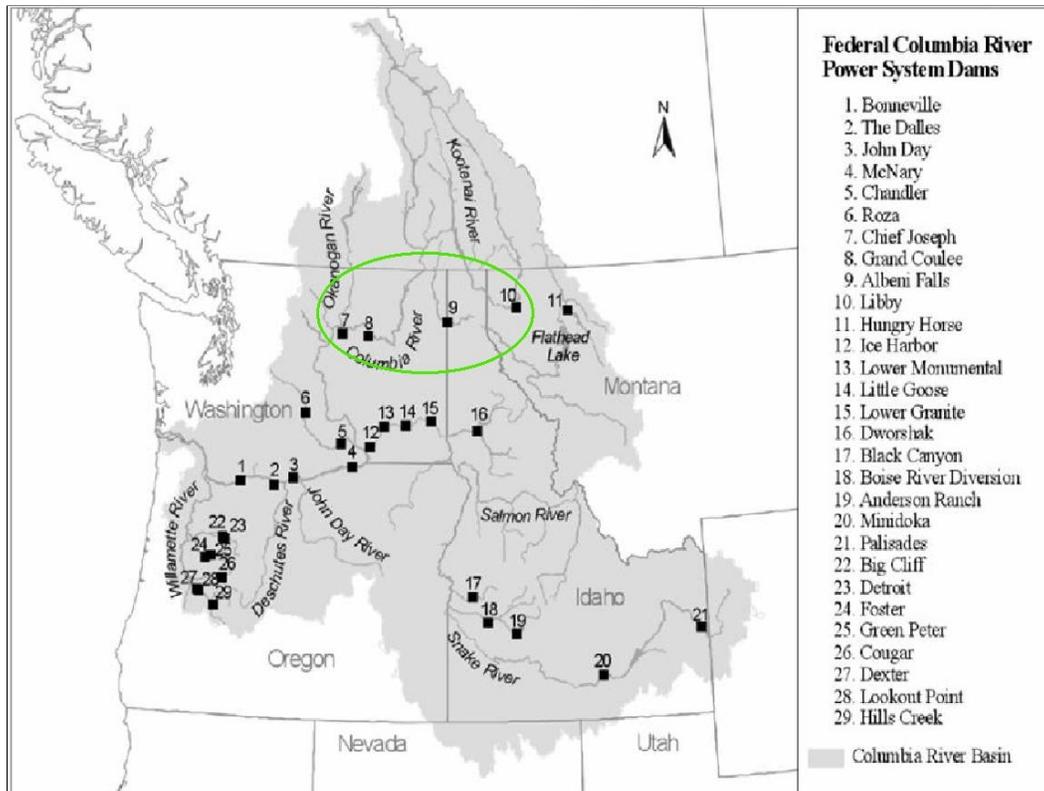
**Flood Control and salmon flows for the Majority of the entire Basin (2 of 4 major storage reservoirs)**

1930's photo of GC Dam in construction phase

GC conservatively generates about \$950 million annually

Our eco-region went without any mitigation for 50 years and since the Power Act in 1980, it has never been mitigated at levels commensurate to the impacts suffered.

The loss of salmon and steelhead has impacted the tribes in this area far beyond the simple lack of an anadromous fishery.



4 of 29 Columbia River Federal Dams

40% of the available salmon and steelhead habitat exists above CJ and GC dams

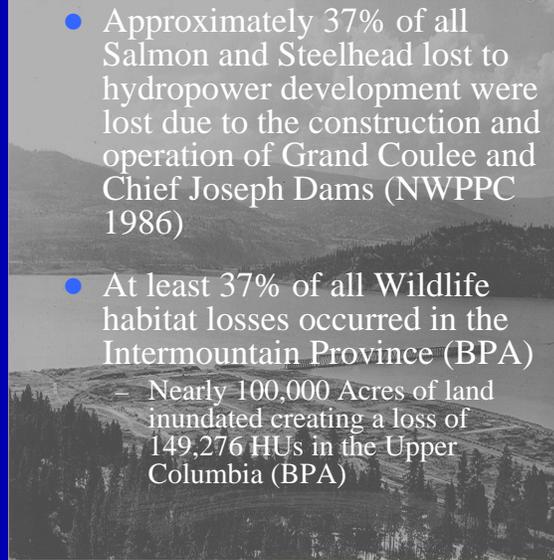
Libby, Albeni Falls, Grand Coulee, and Chief Joseph Dams impact fish and wildlife resources important to the UCUT Tribes

# Hydropower Impacts to Fish and Wildlife



Kettle Falls fishery before and after inundation by GC Dam

# Hydropower Impacts to Fish and Wildlife

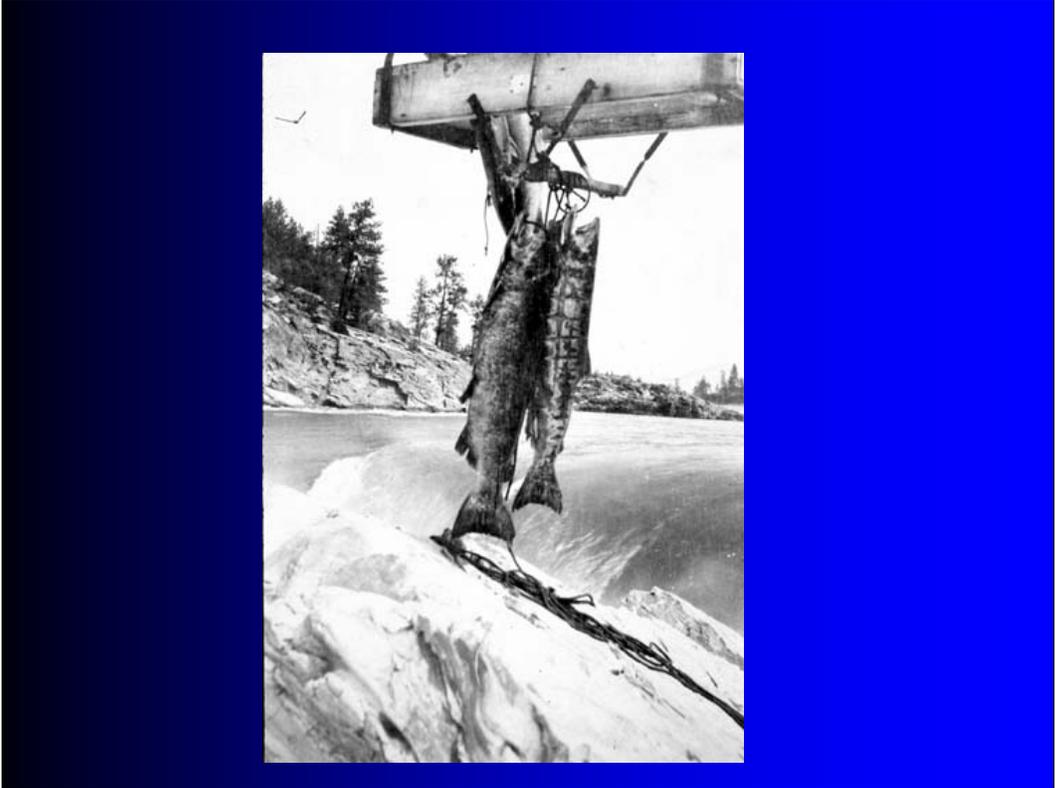


- Approximately 37% of all Salmon and Steelhead lost to hydropower development were lost due to the construction and operation of Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph Dams (NWPPC 1986)
- At least 37% of all Wildlife habitat losses occurred in the Intermountain Province (BPA)
  - Nearly 100,000 Acres of land inundated creating a loss of 149,276 HUs in the Upper Columbia (BPA)

Pictures of Kettle Falls Fishery pre-dam construction and Lake Roosevelt filling in the 1940's

The area impacted by these dams exceeds 40% of the total available and potential habitat for anadromous fish in the entire Columbia River System

The dams have led to a direct elimination of at least 1.1 to 1.9 million salmon and steelhead and their habitat as well as over 149,000 acres of high quality riverine, riparian, wetland, and upland terrestrial habitats. With a large portion of those losses occurring directly upon several of the existing UCUT Indian Reservations



Fish hanging from a platform off of Kettle Falls



**Chinook salmon caught below Little Falls Dam  
on the Spokane River in 1939. Caught by Christina LeBrett's father.**

Salmon from the Spokane River



**Salmon from the Spokane River,  
five miles below Spokane.**

More large "June Hogs" from the Spokane River

## Loss of Resources Means A Loss of Culture



Blockage by Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams meant that the Five UCUT members lost access to salmon resources and several other fisheries

Chief Joe Dam spilling water (current)

Each of the five UCUT member tribes lost the ability to harvest anadromous fish with the completion of these federal dams. This loss extended beyond the ability to catch salmon, it meant a loss of culture and spirituality.

## Blockage and Inundation Mean Change



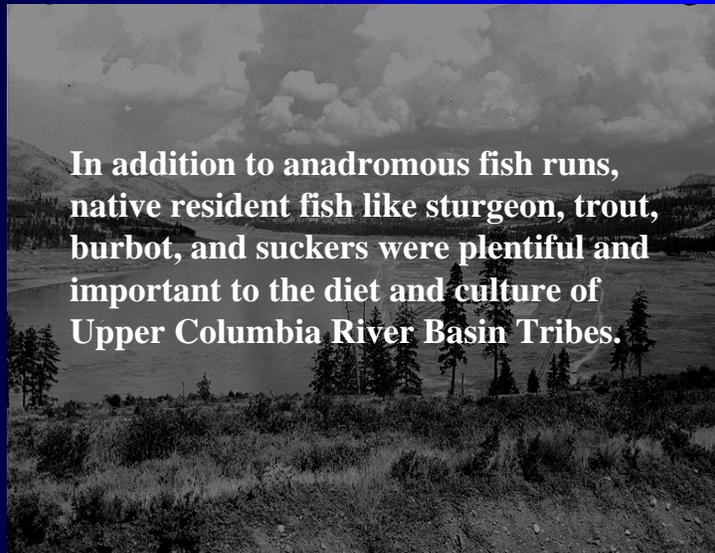
Columbia River near Marcus, WA Pre clearing and pre filling of Lake Roosevelt

## Blockage and Inundation Mean Change



CR filling near Marcus, WA – note the cleared lands in anticipation of the new reservoir.

## Blockage and Inundation Mean Change



**In addition to anadromous fish runs, native resident fish like sturgeon, trout, burbot, and suckers were plentiful and important to the diet and culture of Upper Columbia River Basin Tribes.**

Not only did these five tribes lose their largest and most significant fishery, they also saw extreme changes to their ecosystems and impacts to the remaining fish and wildlife resources that linger today. In addition to a shift in resource procurement that impacted resident populations of fish and wildlife, the ecosystem changes placed even more pressure on them, causing impacts to resources and their availability to the tribes that is unprecedented.

## Blockage and Inundation Mean Change



Spokane confluence during Lake Roosevelt filling (1937ish)

# Blockage and Inundation Mean Change

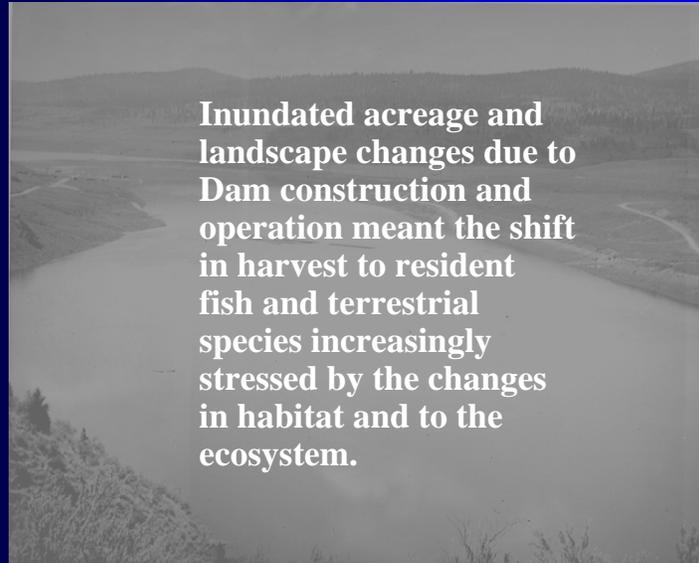


## Blockage and Inundation Mean Change



Not full pool – add 70 feet of water over bridge – The Spokane River and other major tributaries to the Columbia River were forever changed by the FCRPS and can never be restored or enhanced to provide the quantity and quality of resources they once did.

## Blockage and Inundation Mean Change



These changed ecosystems are where these tribes mitigate for the impacts. With species selected or not, we work within the systems as they remain to provide for the rights of each and every tribal member to exercise as legally reserved by federal law. Each of these species, habitats, etc.. are managed as part of plans developed by each of the five UCUT member tribes.

# UCUT Needs and the NWPCC F&W Program



Albeni Falls Dam 1955

## UCUT Needs and the NWPCC F&W Program

- **Resident Fish Substitution Policy – 1987**
  - Allowed for UCUT to substitute Salmon losses with Resident Fish communities
- **Reaffirmed and prioritized in the 1994/95 and 2000 programs**
  - "Because these losses have endured mostly unmitigated for more than 50 Years [as of 1994 Program], and because in-kind mitigation cannot occur, the Council intends that in any project ranking and selection process, projects satisfying these priorities be clearly distinguished from other projects."
  - 2000 Program identified other mitigation needs exist beyond Resident Fish

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One way the Council assisted the UCUTs was to adopt a set of policies that would allow the Tribes to mitigate for these tremendous losses with existing and new resources that their memberships can access and use today and into the future.

# UCUT Needs and the NWPCC F&W Program

- Wildlife Plan adopted in the 1987 Program
  - Identified habitat losses by Hydroelectric Project Construction and Inundation
  - Mitigation in the Intermountain is ongoing
    - Two of the Dams are mitigated at less than 50%
    - 2000 Program Policy requires a shift in focus and priorities to areas under mitigated



Mouth of Colville River before Lake Roosevelt filling

In 2000 the NPCC gave priority emphasis upon under mitigated areas in the basin, the upper Columbia had one of the largest gaps between lost wildlife habitat and mitigated gains.

# UCUT Proposal

- Focuses on BPA hydropower obligations
  - Dam Hydropower Allocations
  - Regional benefits
  - Proportional impacts
- UCUT has submitted completed 10 year plans, measures, and a regional allocation proposal
- UCUT prepared to enter 10 year funding agreements in 2009

We want the Council and BPA to set policies and guidelines to focus efforts for mitigation in areas of the Basin that have huge unmitigated hydropower obligations. This includes allocation, 10 year planning horizons, and 10 year funding levels

## UCUT Proposal

- Diligently implement the Fish and Wildlife Program consistent with the Power Act
- Fund Upper Columbia Eco-region (Intermountain Province, Okanogan and Kootenai subbasins) at levels equitable with past impacts and current benefits
- Shift R,M, & E focus to Provincial scale for consistency and comparability at similar geographic scales
  - Implement BEF like standards for M&E at the watershed scale in 10 year timelines
  - Implement UCUT Wildlife Monitoring and Evaluation project as a pilot for regional consideration

The Power act gives deference to the agencies and tribes, calls for mitigating the FCRPS obligations; and there is no clearer area to increase emphasis and effort than the Upper Columbia Eco-region.

Impacts to this area exceeded 35%, yet funding for mitigation in these areas has never come close to the 10% mark. All we ask is that the Council consider a more equitable share of the funding be attributed to this important area.

We ask that you shift the current M&E and data management strategies from regional to Provincial in scale and make sure that we have an adequately funded and robust set of M&E measures so we may continue to show our successes and advances for fish and wildlife resources in the UC eco-region. There are existing strategies and programs that can be used and built from in order to do this in a cost effective manner.

## UCUT Proposal

- Retain resident Fish Substitution Language
- Remain consistent with UCUT Wildlife O&M recommendations
- Maintain consistency with UCUT flow and spill recommendations
- Maintain Program consistency with UCUT In-lieu recommendation.

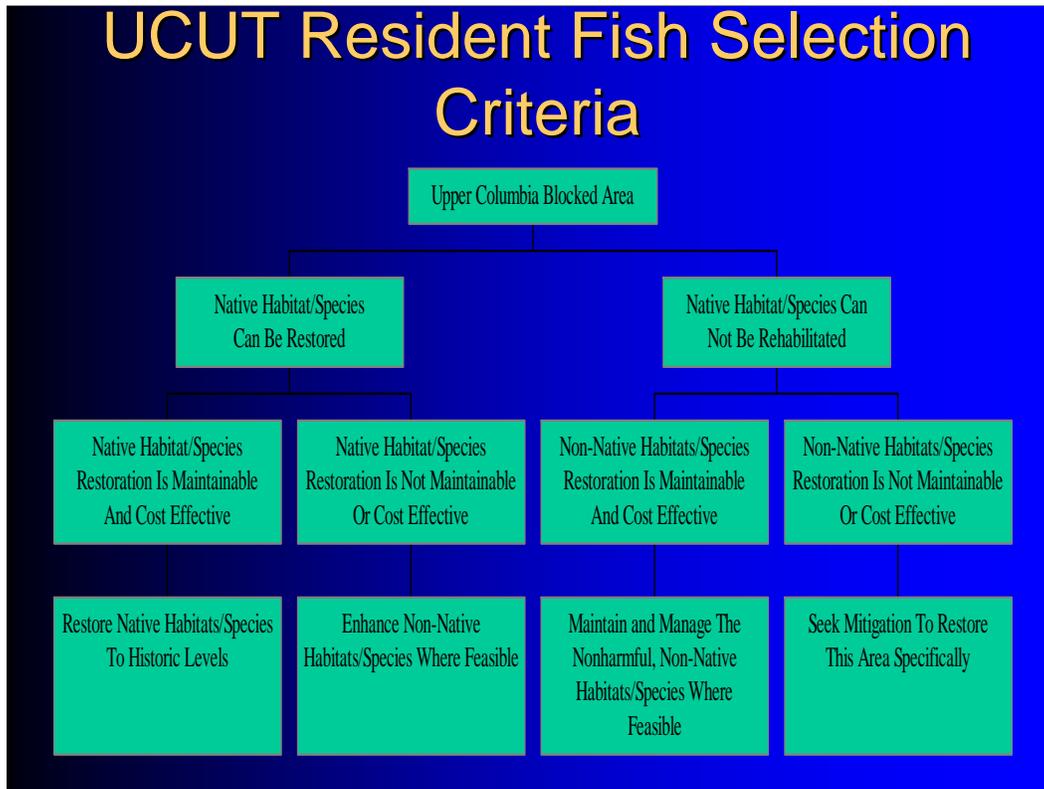
We ask that you retain important policies currently within the Program; policies supported by previous Councils for over 20 years.

Implement the UCUT wildlife O&M recommendations as they are well thought out and fair to the program, its funding for those projects and the implementation partners within the Basin.

We ask that you carefully review and integrate all information and requests as they relate to Flow and Spill in the Upper Columbia and recognize that changes in operations have significant effects upon the remaining resources we are mitigating with.

Provide for a Program that deals with in-lieu in a manner consistent with our recommendations.

# UCUT Resident Fish Selection Criteria



We have commented on the ISAB’s draft criteria for using non-native fish. We have provided you with our own criteria and we feel that our criteria are far more reasonable and implementable as we have been using them for nearly 15 years. We feel that any criteria for assessing risk should be focused upon all resources within the basin that have the potential to cause harm to native and listed fish species and not just resident fish substitution projects in the upper columbia.

## Conclusion

- Consider the disparity: magnitude of the losses (F&W) and gains (aMW and salmon flows) due to dams vs. mitigation contributions
- Mitigation and compensation is required under NWPA.
- UCUT Recommendations support the Program and its policies that continue Tribal mitigation compensation in the Upper Columbia Ecoregion.

Please consider the information provided to you here and the amendment recommendations submitted by the Tribes as they can help shape a Program that is responsive to the resource needs of the Basin in a fair and equitable manner.  
Thanks. Questions