



Hanford Update

Native Americans

Historical significance of Hanford lands

As late as the early 1940s, the land comprising the Hanford Site was occupied and used by Native American people. Archeological records indicate that use and occupation of parts of the Site may extend as far back as 11,000 years ago.

There are over 150 recorded archaeological sites within Hanford's boundaries. These include the remains of villages, fishing camps, game traps, cemeteries and other sites of religious importance. Plants of medicinal and food value to Native Americans can still be found on the Site.

Tribal rights

The Hanford Site is on land ceded by the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Indian Nation and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to the United States in the Treaties of 1855. The Nez Perce tribe, by virtue of another treaty, also retains fishing rights on the Columbia River.

There are other Indian tribes in the area whose ceded lands did not include any portion of the Hanford Site. These tribes may have cultural ties to Hanford Site land or may be affected by transportation of wastes.

Reservations were established by the Federal government for the exclusive use of the Yakima Indian Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Nez Perce. These tribes also have rights in the ceded lands, including the right to take fish in all streams within or adjacent to the Territory and at all usual and accustomed places; erect temporary buildings for curing fish; hunt and gather roots and berries; and graze their horses and cattle on open unclaimed land.

Treaty rights create a trust responsibility for Federal agencies toward the tribes and their resources. They also serve as a basis for tribal participation in Hanford Site plans.

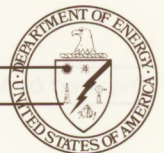


This Wanapum woman is budding reeds at an area the Indians called "Tacht," near what today is the site of Hanford's shutdown 100 H Reactor. The reeds were made into mats used for housing.

The Department of Energy's American Indian policy

In 1991, the Department of Energy announced a seven-point American Indian Policy formalizing a government-to-government relationship between the U.S. Department of Energy and the 510 federally-recognized tribal entities in the nation.

The goal of this policy is to establish and maintain effective working relationships with American Indian tribal governments by taking steps to ensure that tribal





Wanapum leaders Puck-hyah-toot and Tamahl-wash with Colonial Mathias and an unidentified man. This handshake signifies the agreement of the Wanapum tribe to move from Hanford lands to Priest Rapids to fulfill what they believed was their patriotic duty.

rights and concerns are considered before DOE makes decisions or implements programs that may affect tribes.

Cultural Resource Laws

Since the Hanford Site was once inhabited by tribes, the land has many cultural sites. There are four primary cultural resource laws that require consultation with tribes. These are the National Historic Preservation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act. Today, there are many sites of historical and religious significance which remain untouched.

Tribal involvement in Hanford issues

The DOE's Richland Field Office established the Indian Nation's Program because of the increasing number of issues with potential to affect tribal interests at Hanford. The program also supports the national DOE American Indian Policy. Tribal participation in Hanford's Five-Year Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Plan is an important part of this program. Tribal participation in the Hanford Five-Year Plan is supported through grants.

Tribes also participate in Hanford activities through the Future Site-Use Working Group, emergency response training, the Native American Employment Program, cultural sensitivity training and the Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction Project.

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