

Water across the Nations: A Field Course on the Columbia River Treaty

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Overview of Columbia River Treaty

- In force since 1964, but flood control provisions run out in 2024 w/o modernized agreement
- Two goals for 1964:
 - (1) Flood control
 - (2) Reliable and economical power source
- Modernization efforts since 2018
 - (1) A third goal added: ecosystem improvement
- Four Dams (15.5 million acre-feet of water storage in Canada, w/ resulting entitlement for Canada):
 - (1) Duncan, BC
 - (2) Arrow/Hugh Keenleyside, BC
 - (3) Mica, BC
 - (4) Libby, MT
- Two administrative/negotiation entities:
 - (1) US: Bonneville Power Authority & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - (2) Canada: BC Hydro
 - (3) No formal indigenous voice (15 Columbia Basin tribes in the U.S., in BC)

What Is Missing from the CRT?

“[N]otably absent from the original agreement are ecological considerations, specifically regarding salmon, and input from many tribes, First Nations, and local communities living in the Columbia Basin.” (*Border Policy Research Institute Brief*, Western Washington University, Spring 2017)

Role of Western Association of Canadian Studies (WACS)

- Formerly known as Pacific NW Canadian Studies Consortium
- Formed in 1986 to promote the study of Canada in the Cascadia region
- Approximately two dozen member colleges and universities, NGOs, and governments
- Annual general meetings—the 2017 meeting coincided with a CRT negotiating round at Northwest Indian College on the Lummi Reservation near Bellingham, Wash.

Biennial WACS Field Course

- First in 2015, then in 2018, disrupted by COVID-19, next in 2023
- Tour of the Canadian and U.S. sides of the Columbia River Basin
- For academics and interested community partners (e.g., BLM)
- Tour includes dam facilities, river excursions, campuses and NGOs
- One intent of the tour is to give indigenous voices more prominence in CRB affairs
- E.g. February 2017 CRT Symposium at Western Washington University and Northwest Indian College

Field Course Activities

COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY MODERNIZATION

SUMMER 2018 FIELD COURSE

June 18-27, 2018

Sponsors: PNWCSC, U of Washington Canadian Studies Center, UBC Okanagan

- 10 participants (from PNWCSC member institutions)
- Transportation, lodging 6/19-6/26, and entry fees provided
- \$35-75 registration fee
- Participants provide food and incidentals

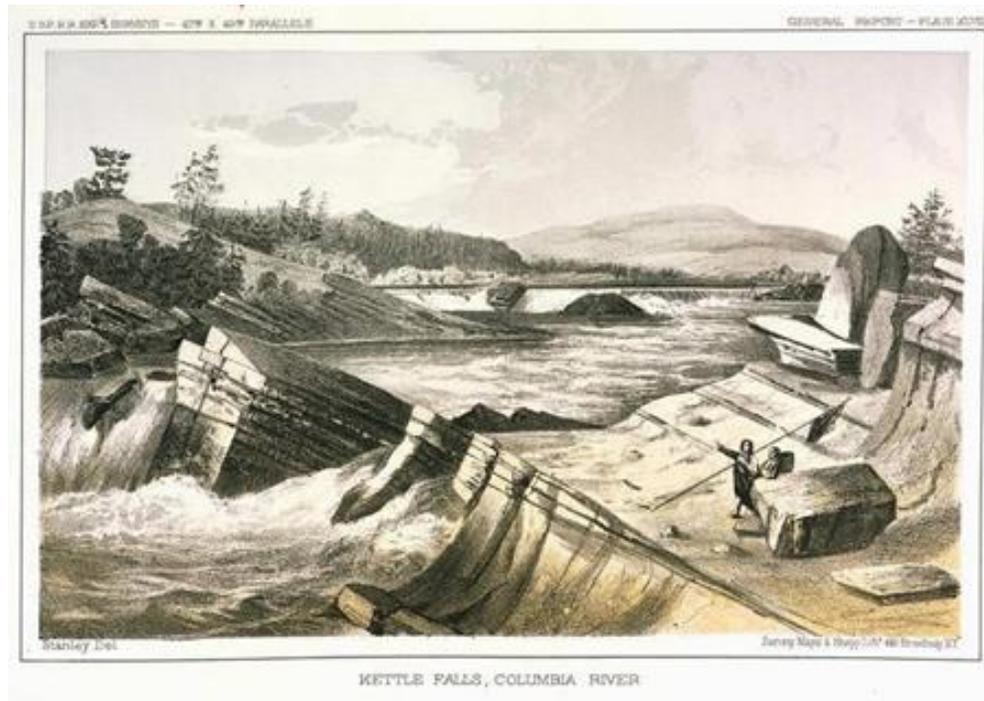
itinerary:

- June 18: Gather in Bellingham (meet Richard Paisley of UBC)
- June 19: Bellingham to Bridgeport (Chief Joseph Dam/fish hatchery)
- June 20: Bridgeport to Castlegar (Grand Coulee Dam, Kettle Falls)
- June 21: Castlegar/ Keensleyside Dam (Eileen Delehanty Pearkes)
- June 22: Day 4--Castlegar to Revelstoke (Along Arrow Lakes)
- June 23: Revelstoke to Mica Dam (day trip)
- June 24: Revelstoke to Kelowna/UBC Okanagan
- June 25: Penticton (Okanagan Nation Alliance Fish hatchery, En'Owkin Centre)
- June 26: (UBCO, meet scholars, review, writing together—swim in the lake)
- June 27: Kelowna to Bellingham

Above the Grand Coulee Dam



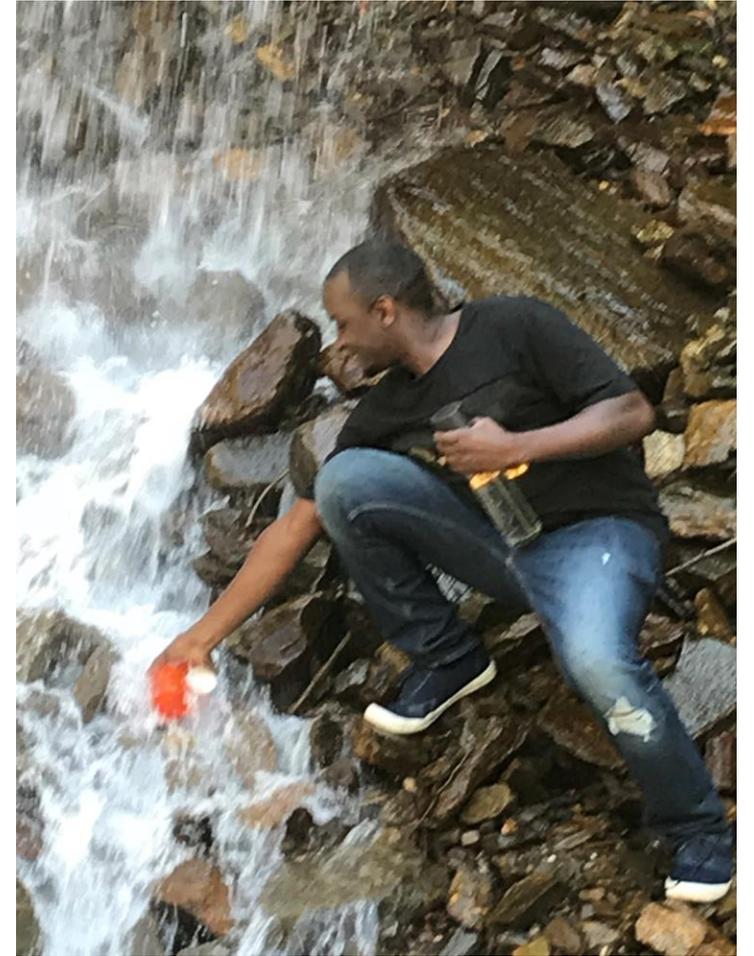
Kettle Falls: 1859 & 2015



Okanagan Nation Alliance Fish Hatchery and Salmon Harvest



Mica Dam, BC



Indigenous Voices

Coyote Revisits the Columbia

The great river he once knew (wild, majestic, compelling) – transformed;

reduced to a series of placid, controlled, “false” lakes.

The ones he led upstream long ago (abundant, free-roaming, life-giving) – exiled;

imprisoned by repetitive, towering, sterile concrete walls.

The people who proudly honored him (vibrant, spiritual, whole) – obscured;

marginalized by the disregard of foreign politics and economies.

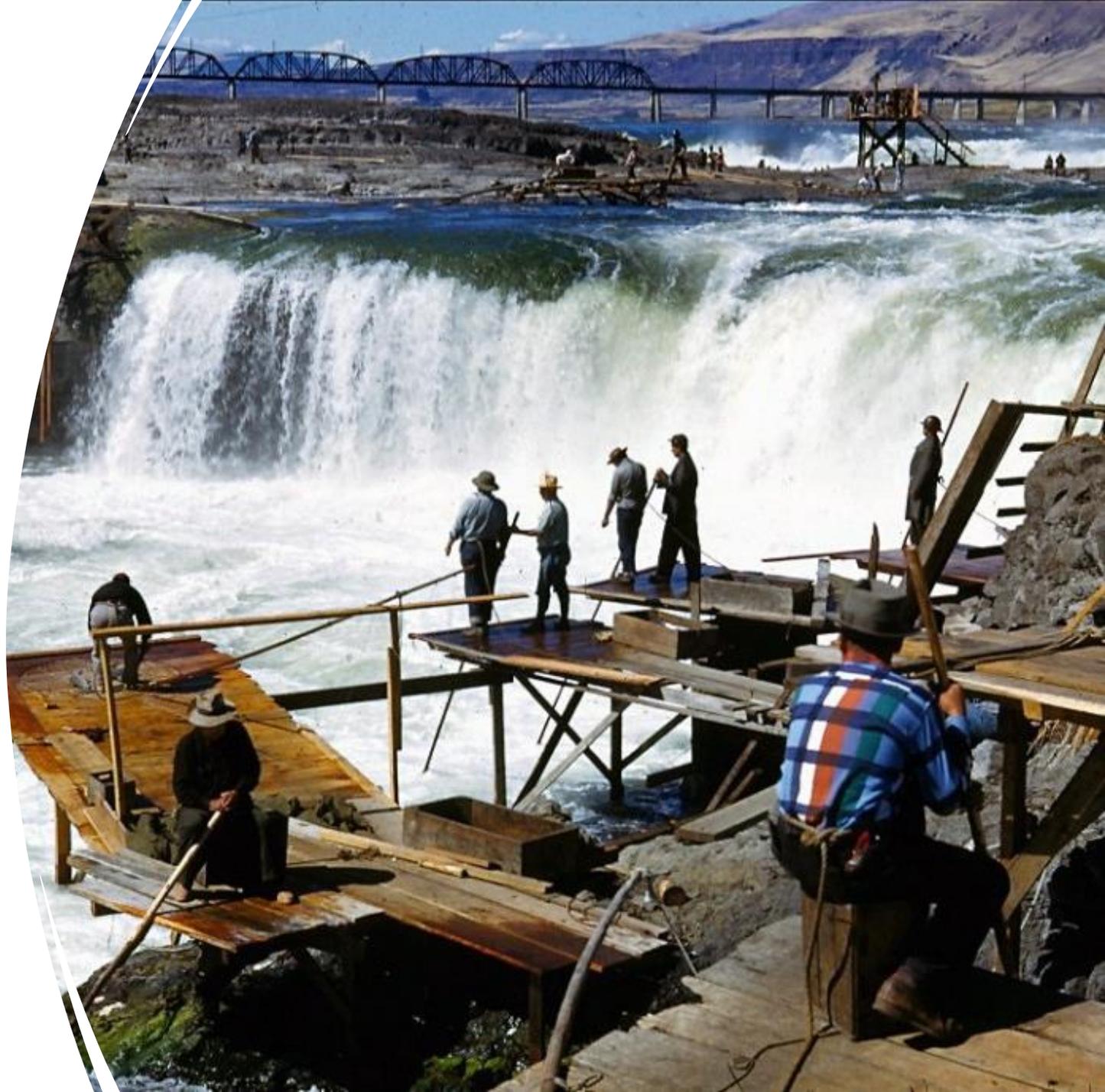
The richly named riverine landscape (iconic, memorable, storied) – muted;

erased by immense, suffocating tombs of water.

The fabled dog, himself (wise, intrepid, capable) – disoriented;

stunned by the unimaginable cruelty of an alien trickster.

Ken Pratt, field course participant 2015



Next Field Course: Mica Dam to Astoria

June 16 - July 2, 2023

- 2022-2023 academic year course work: Western Washington University, University of Washington, University of British Columbia, Okanagan
- Participants from the river's basin
- Two weekend symposia (Kettle Falls or Kelowna & Astoria), then travel and meet with indigenous and settler representatives along the river for two weeks between the symposia
- 15 participants along the river
- 15 additional for symposia

Thank you!

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