

HONORING THE COEUR D'ALENE TRIBE

Protecting Lake Coeur d'Alene – Water is Life

HONORING THE TRIBE

In the homeland of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, nearly a century of hard-rock mining in the Coeur d'Alene Mining District led to release of massive mining and smelting wastes into streams and rivers. The extent of the pollution is truly staggering. There would be no real cleanup – no hope for protecting Lake Coeur d'Alene and the Spokane River from mining pollution – without the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The Tribe's work to protect and restore their homeland is historic, with enduring benefits for the Tribe and indeed for all life. (For background with the following summary, we wish to thank the Tribe.)

TRIBAL WORLD VIEW

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe were the original land managers in the Basin. For the Tribe, all things living are interconnected. Relationships with other life are based on kinship rather than human supremacy. Resources are always to be used in a respectful and sustainable manner. Decisions consider how Tribal descendants will be affected seven generations into the future.

HOMELAND AND NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW

- Historically 4 million acres: located in what is now the Idaho Panhandle from Montana to Washington, Lake Pend Oreille to the Clearwater breaks.
- Lands and waters were pristine until the advent of white settlement in the mid-1800s.

- Ecological conditions have changed drastically since then:
 - Logging practices have eliminated old growth forests, clear-cut hillsides, changed species diversity, created a highly concentrated network of roads, and displaced wildlife species;
 - Agriculture has greatly increased agricultural runoff of pesticides, herbicides and nutrients;
 - Mining has poured hundreds of millions of tons of tailings, liquid chemicals and airborne contaminants into the Basin.

All of these practices provided wealth for few and jobs for some, while leaving a legacy of harm to the Basin's waters for all.

In response, the Tribe took action and championed major efforts to address the many problems facing their natural resource base and the center of their culture.

EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN:

- **EPA-related work:** In the mid to late 1980's, EPA began Superfund work in the Silver Valley. The Tribe immediately became involved in the cleanup - at first informally but later through cooperative agreements with EPA. Local, regional, and State politics hoped the cleanup would be contained to a \$200-million cleanup within a small portion of the Basin (the 21-square-mile "Superfund box"). Through the Tribe's oversight and incessant urging of the EPA process, the original cleanup plan has been appropriately expanded to remedy the pollution. EPA has issued three Records

WINTER WATERS CELEBRATION

Honoring the Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Friday, March 10th
6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

WHERE: Spokane – historic Patsy Clark Mansion, 2208 W. 2nd Ave.

WHAT: Honoring our heroes – also music, desserts and other small foods, wines

TICKETS: \$35 per person

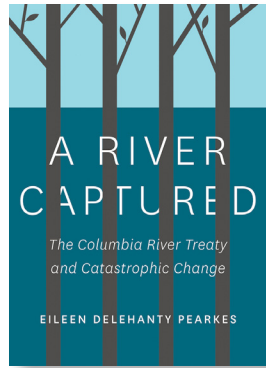
To RSVP, help sponsor the event or for more information, contact: John Osborn john@waterplanet.ws 509.939-1290 or Tom Soeldner waltsoe@gmail.com 509.270-6995



of Decisions (ROD's 1, 2, and 3).

To date EPA has spent over \$600 million and still has yet to determine agency clean-up actions for the lower 20 miles of the Coeur d'Alene River and associated lakes

EILEEN DELEHANTY PEARKES



A River Captured: The Columbia River Treaty and Catastrophic Change

Nelson, B.C. author Eileen Delehanty Pearkes will read from her new book “A River Captured: The Columbia River Treaty and Catastrophic Change” at Auntie’s Bookstore on Thursday, March 16 at 7:00 pm. Sierra Club members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Columbia River Treaty and its impact on our neighbors to the north.

Eileen’s book is a first-person account of travels through the upper Columbia River watershed, looking at the aftermath of dams built pursuant to the Columbia River Treaty, while exploring the history of the river before the dams. The book examines events leading up to the catastrophic changes wrought by the dams, which permanently drowned the river valleys and lake basins of the upper Columbia, forcing 2,300 people from their homes. Tens of thousands of acres of fish and wildlife ecosystems were damaged and destroyed.

A River Captured describes the lack of consultation by British Columbia and Canadian federal governments with those who were impacted, including the Sinixt (Arrow Lakes) First Nation, which called these waters home from time immemorial. Canada’s declaration that the Sinixt Nation was extinct in 1956 laid the foundation for the Treaty dams, adding to the diaspora of Sinixt people throughout the region. In telling the story of the physical consequences of the dams, the book

explains the residual anger of Columbia basin residents toward their governments, and expectations for Treaty renewal.

“B.C. Hydro called the process of forcing people to move against their will a ‘resettlement program.’ This euphemism masked the complexity and pain of the real human experience, and the devastating impacts to the landscape itself. The harm was – and still is, to a large extent – irreparable.”

EILEEN DELEHANTY PEARKES
A River Captured: The Columbia River Treaty and Catastrophic Change

Ultimately, *A River Captured* presents a voice of hope that, by reaching past this painful history and reconnecting with the waters of the upper Columbia River, it is possible for our region to gain strength, using the modernization of the Columbia River Treaty to right historic wrongs.

The Columbia River Treaty is a highly controversial agreement between the U.S. and Canada for joint management of the Columbia River. The Treaty came into force in 1964 and 4 dams were built: Keenleyside, Duncan and Mica dams in B.C. and Libby dam in Montana. The

UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP

Executive Committee

Fred Christ
fredchrist@msn.com

Kathy Dixon
sotiriabellou2014@gmail.com

Lydell Gorski
lydellgorski@gmail.com

Evita Krislock
evita@krislock.com

Carolyn Leon
lonestar4@aol.com

John Osborn
john@waterplanet.ws
509.939-1290

Tom Soeldner
waltsoe@gmail.com

Rachael Paschal Osborn
Spokane River Project

Washington State Chapter



twin purposes of the Treaty were to maximize power generation and flood control and, as a consequence, the Columbia River ecosystem has been heavily damaged. The Treaty is up for renewal in 2024, and citizens of the region are paying close attention to improving its terms to benefit the river’s environment. Sierra Club and CELP sponsor the Ethics and Treaty Project, advocating for the application of ethical principles of justice and stewardship to this international treaty.

UCRG: ANNUAL ELECTION

All Sierra Club members in our group are eligible to vote in this election. Vote for 4 positions on the Group Executive Committee (ExCom). Ballots must be received by March 6, 2017 by 5 p.m.

NOTE: Each member of a joint membership may vote, each using one of the two columns. Please tear off and mail this entire page to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 413, Spokane, WA 99210.

	FOR EXCOM (vote for 4)	VOTER 1	VOTER 2
	Fred Christ	/ /	/ /
	Carolyn Leon	/ /	/ /
	John Osborn	/ /	/ /
	Tom Soeldner	/ /	/ /
(write in)	_____	/ /	/ /
(write in)	_____	/ /	/ /
(write in)	_____	/ /	/ /

HONORING THE TRIBE *continued from cover*

and wetlands, or what to do with Coeur d’Alene Lake. The Tribe believes that several billion dollars of EPA cleanup is yet to come.

• **NRDA lawsuit and the Lake Case:** In 1991, the Tribe filed two major lawsuits: Tribe v. Idaho (the Lake Case) and the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) lawsuit (Tribe v. Gulf Resources et al). These two lawsuits set the stage for protracted litigation over years.

The NRD lawsuit sought \$3 billion dollars for injury to natural resources resulting from release of mining and smelting wastes and other hazardous pollutants into water and air. The Lake ownership case sought to reaffirm the Tribes ownership of the Lake so the Tribe could then proceed to address the myriad environmental problems left unchecked by the State of Idaho.

Ultimately the Tribe prevailed in both lawsuits. The Tribe has been and continues to be on the Trustee Council responsible for the development and implementation of the Restoration Plan to spend the \$140 million resulting from the Tribe’s legal action.

• **Lake Management Plan Development and Implementation:** The Lake is the center of the Tribe’s creation story. Their name translates to, “Those that are found here.” Although the Tribe would have

wanted EPA to undertake the protection of the Lake, politics has not yet allowed this.

Rather than have a Superfund cleanup for the Lake, the Tribe was left with little option but to agree to coordinate with the State of Idaho in developing and implementing a Lake Management Plan (LMP). The Lake Management Plan would, in essence, be the “non-Superfund” approach to manage massive lake-bed contamination from upstream mining and smelting.

After seven years of lackluster implementation (due to lack of funding and no political will to enact regulations) Tribal water quality data are indicating declining water quality for Coeur d’Alene Lake. This indicates the LMP is proving to be ineffective.

The Tribe has asked EPA to once again revisit their “deferred” decision of what they will do to protect the environment from future heavy-metals contamination.

• **Water Rights Litigation:** Ten years ago the Tribe was forced by the State of Idaho to be a part of the north Idaho water rights adjudication process. This has been a battle to develop Tribal water claims. The Tribe now faces a trial to prove entitlement to federally reserved water rights.

• **Avista Mitigation:** The Post Falls Dam now operated by Avista Corporation flooded tribal lands, resulting in years of

FRED CHRIST maintains the Group’s events record and allocation report as well as back-up Secretary. He has a special interest in community outreach (an intrepid volunteer for our annual Winter Waters event) and by helping to build our Outings program.

CAROLYN LEON chairs both the Group’s ExCom and the Outings Program, and represents us to our state chapter’s governing board. Carolyn’s love of outings comes from her father, Rich Leon, a much beloved leader of outings, author, and editor of our Sierra Club Trail Guides.

JOHN OSBORN serves both as the UCR Group’s Conservation Chair and on the state chapter’s Water & Salmon Committee. John is active with Spokane River restoration, protection of the Aquifer, and the continuing development of an international alliance to modernize the Columbia River Treaty.

TOM SOELDNER serves as the Group’s Treasurer and chairs its Political Committee. His special interest is the unique relationship between humans and the natural world. He is active in connecting the faith community with environmental stewardship and works with the Columbia River Treaty and the Spokane River Projects.

“water trespass.” After the most recent federal (FERC) dam relicensing process that ended in 2011, the Tribe received \$100 million to conduct natural resource restoration efforts to mitigate for losses to Tribal resources.

Tribal investments include aquatic weed (milfoil) management, wetlands enhancement, cultural resources protection, and water quality monitoring.

• **Capacity Building:** During the last 25 years the Tribe has continued to build internal technical capacity to tackle complex and daunting environmental challenges in the Basin. The Coeur d’Alene Tribe has both a Natural Resources Department and a Lake Management Department numbering about 75 people.

During the last quarter century the Coeur d’Alene Tribe has emerged as steward of their homeland. In order to protect and restore waters and lands, the Tribe has engaged in a spectrum of efforts from litigation to cooperative agreements. The Tribe’s unwavering dedication to stewardship responsibilities stems from the creators’ gift of their Land and surrounding homeland.

The work of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe to protect and restore Coeur d’Alene Lake and the waters of the Basin benefit all life, now into the future. Please join us on March 10 at the Patsy Clark Mansion in honoring the Coeur d’Alene Tribe.



UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER GROUP

P.O. Box 413
Spokane, WA 99210

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Spokane, WA
Permit No. 4

Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet.

CITIZEN FOREST WATCH NEEDED

A natural undisturbed forest cycles nutrients, regulates climate, stabilizes soil, treats waste, provides habitat, helps to regulate local and regional rainfall, and provides habitat for a multitude of wildlife including many iconic creatures. It is also a source of food, medicine, clean drinking water, and a host of recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits for human communities.

U.S. National Forests are designated in order to maximize such benefits for all citizens and are one of our country's great treasures. In eastern Washington, Idaho,

and Montana there are eighteen National Forests. But our National Forests are in crisis, because they are too often managed for the sake of large corporate or local political and economic interests. John Muir, Sierra

Club's founder, said, "God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand tempests and floods. But he cannot save them from fools."

Jeff Juel is the National Forest Chair for the UCR Group. Having grown up and completed his university and graduate

degrees in the Midwest, Jeff moved to Montana and spent five years as a psychologist on the Blackfeet Reservation in northwestern Montana schools. During that time he developed an interest in environmental issues and became involved in opposing oil and gas leases granted by the government in the Badger-Two Medicine region <http://www.badger-twomedicine.org/>. In the early 90s, Jeff moved to Missoula and began networking with local environmental groups and forest defenders in the Northern Rockies.

By the mid-1990s Jeff was doing volunteer work with Alliance for the Wild Rockies and working part-time for a local forest watch organization. Eventually he was engaged by the Inland Empire Public Lands Council, first as a part-time field representative in Montana, and then from 2008 until 2013 providing full time oversight from Spokane for the Lands Council's work in protecting National Forests. Since then Jeff has continued northwest forest watch work part-time or as a volunteer with a number of environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club.

The U.S. Forest Service gives lip service to forest health and sustainability. However, in a time of shrinking federal budgets, the bottom line more often seems to be profitability via leases for livestock grazing or for resource extraction (oil, gas, metals, trees/logging, water, etc.). Forests are seen as board feet and political currency. More

WINTER WATERS CELEBRATION

*Honoring the
Coeur d'Alene Tribe*

**Friday, March 10th
6:30 - 9:30 p.m.**

areas designated for "industrial" recreation, motorized vehicles, and the attendant road-building, all make for less truly natural, healthy, and sustainable forests. Desire for cordial local and regional relations finds the Forest Service inclined to bow to "collaboration" with monied interests as "stakeholders." In the face of local political and financial pressures, local environmental interests increasingly turn from vigorous advocacy to accommodation, from standing forests to stumps, and from holding the U.S. Forest Service accountable.

Despite the many National Forests in our area, Sierra Club must rely on volunteers to do the forest watch work that is so necessary in the Inland Northwest. Jeff Juel has taken up that challenge for our local UCR Group. But given the enormity of the task, much greater capacity is needed. During this time of climate change with Donald Trump in the White House, our local group is looking for good people to join Jeff in this important work for what time and energy they are willing to commit. We ask you to become part of a "Forest Watch" group! Contact Jeff jeffjuel@wildrockies.org or John Osborn john@waterplanet.ws or Tom Soeldner waltsoe@gmail.com.

