Living in Celilo

A Storypath Exploring the Lasting Legacy of Celilo Falls

by Shana Brown

Office of Native Education
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
Washington State

Trillium Publishing, Inc.

Acknowledgements

Shana Brown would like to thank:

Carol Craig, *Yakama* Elder, writer, and historian, for her photos of Celilo as well as her expertise and her children's story "I Wish I Had Seen the Falls." Chucky is really her first grandson (and my cousin!).

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission for providing information about their organization and granting permission to use articles, including a piece from their magazine *Wana Chinook Tymoo*.

HistoryLink.org for granting permission to use the article "Dorothea Nordstrand Recalls Old Celilo Falls."

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council for granting permission to use an excerpt from the article "Celilo Falls."

Ritchie Graves, Chief of the NW Region Hydropower Division's FCRPS Branch, NOAA Fisheries, for providing information on survival rates of salmon through the dams on the Columbia River system.

Sally Thompson, PhD., for granting permission to use her articles.

Se-Ah-Dom Edmo, *Shoshone-Bannock/Nez Perce/Yakama*, Coordinator of the Indigenous Ways of Knowing Program at Lewis & Clark College, Columbia River Board Member, and Vice President of the Oregon Indian Education Association, for providing invaluable feedback and guidance as well as copies of the actual notes and letters from the Celilo Falls Community Club.

The Oregon Historical Society for granting permission to use articles from the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*.

The Oregon Historical Society Research Library Moving Image Collections for granting permission to use video material.

Contents

Introduction to Storypath

About Storypath: Philosophy and Aims

"I am grateful to Margit E. McGuire, author of the Storypath Program, Social Studies School Services, and Professor of Education at Seattle University, for permission to use the Storypath approach as a structure for Celilo Falls Storypath."
–Shana Brown, writer

Storypath is a constructivist simulation in which students create their own communities and stories based on a historical events. This storypath design relies on the imagination and creativity of the students and gives them an opportunity to blend their imagination with the historical record.

For example, one of the tasks is that students will build a model of Celilo Village. The goal is not to get the model exactly as Celilo Village was before the falls' inundation. Rather, the goal is to have students become personally invested in the story they are about to tell, understand the significance of the village, and become emotionally involved in the telling of their story. This is when the real learning begins.

Storypath's goal is not to memorize names and dates; its intended focus is on concepts and emotions. Thus, this Storypath is designed to give students a deep understanding and empathy of what it might have been like to be a Northwest stakeholder during this tumultuous and heartbreaking time.

For more information about the Storypath approach, see http://fac-staff.seattleu.edu/mmcguire/web/.

The unit contains the essential elements of all Storypaths—the creation of the frieze (showing the setting of the story), characters that the students create for themselves, the building of a social context, and critical incidents. Critical incidents are introduced in this unit through videos, articles, and oral history.

Program Overview

This Storypath consists of seven episodes that explore the story of Celilo Falls. Depending on the reading and learning levels of your students, each episode should take about a week. In Episodes 1–3, students create the setting, characters, and context. Students then respond to and create stories surrounding the historical events that lead up to the inundation of Celilo Falls. Finally, students reflect on the effects of the damming, not only for tribal people, but for all stakeholders: commercial non-tribal fisheries, farmers, and non-tribal citizens. Students will bear witness to the legacy of Celilo and its importance to tribal people, even 50 years after its death.

Essential Questions for the Legacy of Celilo Falls

1. What is the legal status of the tribes who negotiated settlement for compensation for the loss of Celilo as sovereign nations with respect to the United States government?

   a. Only federally recognized tribes with nation-to-nation sovereignty were involved in Celilo negotiations between the Indians and the U.S. government:

      - Yakama (then spelled "Yakima")
      - Umatilla (OR)
      - Nez Perce (ID)
      - Warm Springs (OR)

   b. The U.S. government deals with tribes on a nation-to-nation basis. Though these Indian nations exist within the boundaries of the United States, which has a trust responsibility to those tribes, in general the United States deals with tribal governments just as it would any other country.

2. What are the ways in which these tribes responded to the damming of Celilo, which threatened to extinguish their cultures and independence?

   a. Tribes formed organizations such as the Celilo Fish Committee and the Celilo Community Club to fight the damming of Celilo Falls.

   b. They negotiated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

c. The tribes received non-Indian support from groups such as the League of Women voters.

d. Tribal fishers found other occupations within their tribes or through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

e. Many became and remained unemployed.

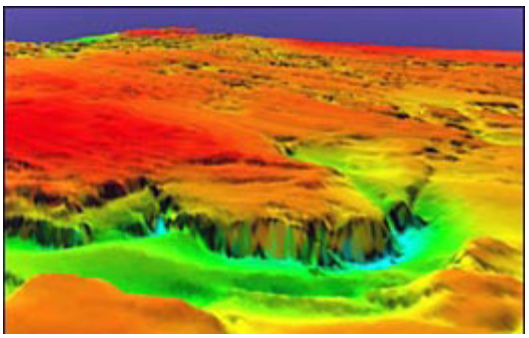
f. All continue to mourn the loss of Celilo Falls.

3. How have the tribes affected by the loss of Celilo Falls met the challenges of reservation life? What have these tribes, as sovereign nations, done to meet the economic and cultural needs of their tribal communities?

   a. Celilo Village has survived and is beginning to recover. The Celilo Village Redevelopment Project recently improved the living conditions at Celilo Village by installing new water systems and improving housing and cultural facilities. However, more than 40 percent of families living in Celilo live below the poverty level.

   b. As part of the Confluence Project, a sculpture created by famous artist Maya Lin will commemorate Celilo Falls.

   c. See the following information about Celilo today from HistoryLink.org: *In recent years of greater environmental awareness, a movement advocating the removal of certain dams in the Northwest has gathered momentum and seen some success. Perhaps in response to this, a rumor that the Corps of Engineers had actually dynamited Celilo Falls to rubble during the construction of The Dalles Dam gained some currency. In fact, Indians living near the falls reported hearing blasting at the site, but were not close enough to see exactly what was being blown up. In 2008 the Corps of Engineers performed sonar mapping to picture the contours of the land submerged by Celilo Lake, and the results were a pleasant surprise. Clearly visible on the sonar are the basalt cliffs over which Celilo Falls fell, resting virtually intact under the lake's surface. Although it may be unlikely that The Dalles Dam will ever be removed and the falls restored, the very fact that they endure gives some hope that the way of life they represented will not be forgotten.*



The Episodes

Episode 1: *Creating the Setting*

CELILO FALLS AND CELILO VILLAGE

Students create a frieze of the geological environment and then a three-dimensional village as it appeared in 1949.

CCSS addressed:

RI.5.1–4; W.5.3; SL.5.1; L.5.3–4 RI.6.1–4; W.6.3, SL.6.1; L.6.3–4

Episode 2: *Creating the Characters*

THE FISHERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Students create family characters who live and work in Old Celilo Village. They create their own First Salmon Ceremony.

CCSS addressed:

RI.5.1–3, 5.6–7; SL.5.1–2; L.5.3 RI.6.1–3, 6.7; SL.6.1–2; L.6.3

Episode 3: *Building Context*

HISTORICAL EVENTS OF THE TIME

Students research historical events and the people of the time period. They build a social context and create a tribal museum with artifacts they have created or located about Celilo Falls.

CCSS addressed:

RI.5.1–3, 5.7; W.5.3–4, 5.7; SL.5.1; L.5.3–4
RI.6.1–3, 6.7; W.6.3–4, 6.7; SL.6.1; L.6.3–4

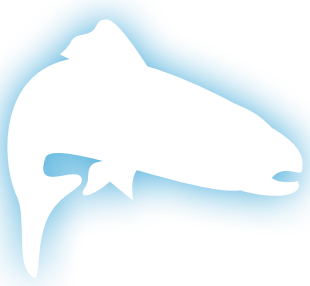
Episode 4: *Authorizing the Dam*

CONGRESS AUTHORIZES THE BUILDING OF THE DAM WITH THE 1950 RIVERS AND HARBORS ACT

Students research the provisions of the Act and tribal and non-tribal responses to the Act. Following their research, they will debate the construction of the dam from different points of view.

CCSS addressed:

RI.5.1–4, 5.6–7, 5.9; W.5.2, 5.4, 5.7–8; SL.5.1–4; L.5.3–4
RI.6.1–4, 6.7–8; W.6.2, 6.4, 6.7, 6.9; SL.6.1, 6.3–4; L.6.3–4



Episode 5: *Negotiations*

TRIBES AND THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS "NEGOTIATE" A SETTLEMENT FOR THE LOSS OF CELILO FALLS

Students appreciate the unfairness of negotiating a settlement that will never fairly or adequately compensate for the loss of Celilo Falls. They will demonstrate their understanding through a role-play.

CCSS addressed:
RI.5.1–4, 5.6, 5.8; W.5.2, 5.4; SL.5.1, 5.3; L.5.3–4
RI.6.1–4, 6.6, 6.9; W.6.2, 6.4; SL.6.1, 6.3; L.6.3–4

Episode 6: *Broken Promises*

THE GOVERNMENT BREAKS ITS PROMISE TO THE PEOPLE OF CELILO

Students learn of the U.S. government's lack of effort to provide homes for the families forced to move. They will also discover the fate of non-tribal commerce that relied on Celilo Falls.

Students learn that the U.S. government did not keep its promise to provide alternative fishing sites. By 2004, the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) had only provided six of the sixty in lieu fishing sites promised in 1955–56. In fact, it was only in 2005 that the homes at Celilo Village were properly equipped with electricity and adequate plumbing.

CCSS addressed:
RI.5.1–4; W.5.3–4; SL.5.1–2, 5.4; L.5.3–4 RI.6.1–4; W.6.3–4; SL.6.1–2; L.6.3–4

Episode 7: *The Inundation*

EULOGY TO CELILO: IF THE FALLS COULD TALK

Students witness the destruction of Celilo Falls and Celilo Village. They witness the government (role-played by teacher or administrator) physically destroy their frieze and all of their work. Since this is a potentially volatile Episode, teachers need to decide whether the destruction will be physical or if they will project a time-lapse video of the inundation from March 15, 1957 over the frieze. The destruction is therefore simulated. While this might be more palatable to teachers, it does not have the same emotional impact as the physical destruction. Students will then watch the video footage of the ceremony and inundation and compare their experience to the tribal people in 1957.

Students create a commemoration to Celilo Falls and its people. This can be in the form of a collection of student-written eulogies, actual sculptures or monuments, or other creative projects.

CCSS addressed:
RI.5.1–3, 5.9; SL.5.1–2; L.5.3 RI.6.1–3, 6.9; SL.6.1–2; L.6.3

Classroom-Based Assessment

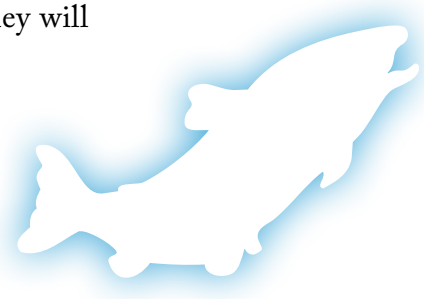
Teachers can choose between the Dig Deep and Whose Rules? OSPI Classroom-Based Assessments provided at the end of the Storypath and through OSPI's website.

Goals of the Program

After participating in this Storypath, students will be able to

- explain the significance of Celilo Falls to tribal and non-tribal people
- understand the many cultural, economic, and spiritual elements of Celilo
- analyze and evaluate the impact of the inundation of Celilo Falls on various stakeholders
- understand that treaties were the vehicles through which the United States dispossessed Indian people of their land and culture
- explain how treaties guarantee rights to tribes that they did not relinquish during treaty negotiations

As students research Celilo and participate in the simulations, they will discover the answers to the following questions:



- Where was Celilo Falls located?
- How did local tribes view Celilo?
- What were the many roles Celilo played in tribal lives?
- How did a tribal fisher family live in Celilo Village?
- Why did the U.S. government decide to flood the falls?
- How did the conflict between the United States and tribal governments and fishers evolve?
- What role did the treaties between the United States and the tribes play?
- How was the issue resolved?
- What were the immediate effects of the damming of Celilo Falls?
- What are the lasting effects?
- Why does Celilo continue to be a sacred place for tribes?

Planning the Storypath

Classroom Space

Students will create Celilo Village and a background frieze that depicts the area around Celilo Falls. There needs to be enough space to accommodate the frieze—6 x 4 feet of wall space with a table or counter in front of it for placing the village and other structures that students create. Students will add to the frieze as the Storypath evolves. Well before the unit of study, students should begin collecting materials.

Materials to Gather

- Cardboard boxes
- Yarn
- Fabric
- Skewers and twigs
- Modeling clay
- Plaster
- Wire (16–20 gauge [AWG] so that it is easy to cut and bend)

School-Supplied Materials

- Tempera paint and brushes
- Butcher paper
- Markers
- Glue
- Scissors

Organizing Student Groups

Students will become members of the Celilo community. The student groups in this Storypath are comprised of extended families of representative tribes that frequented Celilo or lived there, either temporarily or permanently. In grouping your students, consider the following:

The Tribes

Some tribes who primarily harvested fish at Celilo Falls and/or lived in Celilo Village were:

- **Wasco** http://www.warmsprings.com/warmsprings/Tribal_Community/
- **Wy'am** (the name of Celilo Falls in Sahaptin "Echo of Falling Water" and also the members of different tribes who resided there permanently) http://www.nwcouncil.org/history/CeliloFalls.asp
- **Umatilla** http://www.critfc.org/text/umatilla.html
- **Yakima** http://www.critfc.org/text/yakama.html
- **Nez Perce** http://www.critfc.org/text/nezperce.html
- **Warm Springs** http://www.critfc.org/text/warmsprings.html
- **Wanapum** http://www.pacificnorthwestjourneys.org/year2/supplements/na_profiles.cfm?chid=12

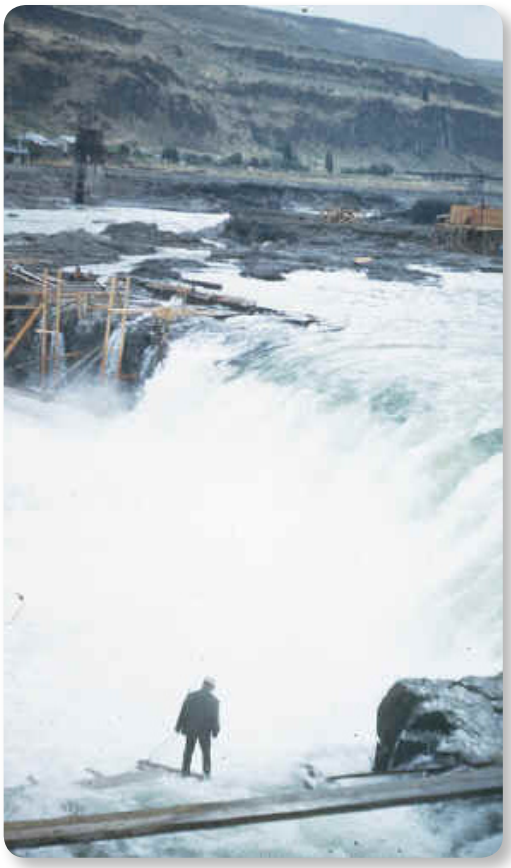
Non-Tribal People

- Center for Columbia River History (http://ccrh.org)
- Oregon Historical Society (http://ohs.org)

The Salmon

- http://www.critfc.org/text/salmcult.html

Preparing for the Role-Play



In learning about Celilo and its people, respect for culture in attire, demeanor, and voice are crucial. Students create their own characters and role-play using these characters in various simulations. These characters will act out their roles in the frieze.

While students will role-play non-tribal stakeholders and members of the tribes mentioned above, make sure you plan in advance to include some adults to role-play the non-Indian people who carried out President Eisenhower's plan to build the Bonneville Dam. They were:

- A Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agent
- An engineer from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE)

Background: The Story of Celilo Falls

The story of Celilo Falls is one of sadness and perseverance. Once the mecca for commerce and culture in the West, Celilo Falls and Celilo Village along the Columbia River provided an abundance of salmon so great that fishers used to say they could walk across the river on the backs of the salmon. Traders would come from as far north as Canada, some even say Alaska, and as far east as the Dakotas, to take part in this rich and vibrant economy that Lewis and Clark referred to as "The Great Mart."

The creation of the Works Project Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s signaled the beginning of the end for Celilo. The Grand Coulee Dam, followed by other dams, was for some a great tribute to progress. For others it meant sudden and swift devastation. Because of the need for jobs and cheap power, the government began construction of The Dalles Dam in 1956, which ultimately drowned Celilo Falls and the village. People were displaced and native fisheries crippled. More importantly, a way of life that had existed since time immemorial was gone in a matter of hours.

The Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and even the commercial non-Indian fisheries have had their stories told again and again. Now, it is the people of the N'Ichi Wana (Sahaptin word for "Great Water"), of Wy'am (Sahaptin word for "Echoing Falls") who will tell their story.

Information from The Center for Columbia River History at ccrh.org.

Columbia River Timeline

Year	Event	Category
16 million-6 million B.P	The greatest outpouring of lava in the history of North America, 90,000 cubic miles, oozes to the surface of the ancient Northwest in repeated flows, forming the Columbia River Plateau.	Northwest
1774	Juan Perez sails past the mouth of the Columbia on about July 10, possibly because it is obscured by fog. More likely, though, he does not stop at the Columbia because he is not looking for it. The Viceroy of New Spain had ordered Perez to proceed directly to 60 degrees north to search for suitable harbor for settlement.	Northwest
1775	The first smallpox epidemic, apparently is carried by fur traders, hits Northwest coastal Indians. Another smallpox epidemic, apparently started in the Great Plains, strikes in 1782 east of the Cascades.	Northwest
1792	On May 11 at about 4: 30 a.m. Robert Gray, in his ship *Columbia Redivia*, discovers the Columbia River. Gray trades with Indians, explores the estuary for nine days, and names the river after his ship. In October, British Captain George Vancouver arrives and dispatches his lieutenant, William Broughton, to explore the river. Broughton travels to a point just east of present-day Portland and there claims the river and country to Great Britain, initiating a dispute between Great Britain and America over discovery of the river that will not be settled until 1846 in the Treaty of Oregon.	Northwest
1801	Smallpox ravages Columbia River Indian tribes, the third epidemic to sweep through the Columbia River Basin since 1782.	Northwest
1803	This year the United States buys more than 827,000 square miles of land, the Louisiana Purchase, from France for $15 million.	General
1805	Indians who live near the mouth of the Columbia River use salmon as a form of exchange with fur traders.	Northwest
1807	David Thompson crosses the Continental Divide west of present-day Calgary, Alberta, and arrives at the north-flowing Columbia River. He doesn't know it is the Columbia, and he names it the Kootenae. He establishes a fur-trading post, Kootenae House, near the outlet of Windermere Lake.	General
1807	Smallpox spreads among Interior Salish Indians in the Columbia Basin, probably the result of contact between European fur traders and coastal Indians.	Northwest
1810	Jonathan Winship, captain of the *Albatross*, and his crew attempt to establish the first American settlement on the Columbia. They plant a garden, but it is washed away by floods. This failure, and encounters with hostile Indians, convince Winship to abandon his brief experiment and continue his trading mission to China.	Northwest
1850	Two steamships, the *Columbia* and the *Lot Whitcomb* begin regular service on the Columbia River. The *Columbia* was the first built on the river and put into service between Portland and Astoria. The following year, the *Jason P. Flint* is brought in sections from the East, assembled at the Cascades and operates between those rapids and Portland.	Northwest
1850	There are now thirty-seven sawmills in the Northwest, most of them near the mouths of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1853	Congress approves funding for the Topographical Corps to explore the best route for a railroad to the Pacific Ocean. Isaac I. Stevens, the new governor of Washington Territory, is appointed to lead the northern survey.	Northwest
1855	Treaty with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama is signed.	Northwest
1855	Treaty of the Warmsprings is signed.	Northwest
1855	Isaac I. Stevens, Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Washington Territory, and Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon, negotiate treaties with some of the Columbia River Basin Indian tribes. At Walla Walla, treaties are signed with these tribes: Yakama, June 9; Walla Walla, Cayuse, and Umatilla, June 9; Nez Perce, June 11; and the Middle Tribes of Oregon, June 25. A similar treaty is signed on July 16 at Hellgate, in present-day Montana, with the Flathead, Kootenai, and Upper Pend Oreille tribes. The treaties establish reservations and obligate the tribes to move onto them. The treaties with the Yakama, Walla Walla, Cayuse, Umatilla, Nez Perce, Flathead, Kootenai, and Upper Pend Oreille tribes are ratified and proclaimed by Congress in 1859. The treaty with the Middle Tribes of Oregon is ratified and proclaimed in 1867.	Northwest
1859	The first large-scale irrigation project in the Columbia River Basin is built this year in the Walla Walla River Valley. Irrigation projects soon follow in the Umatilla, John Day, and Hood River Valleys of Oregon.	Northwest
1861	Commercial fishing is now an industry on the lower Columbia. Two entrepreneurs, Rice and Reed, are packing salted salmon at a site sixty miles below Portland.	Northwest
1861	The Civil War begins.	General
1862	Railroads portages now operate on both shores of the Columbia at the Cascades, making passage much easier for settlers arriving from the East. The Oregon Steam Navigation Company gains control of portage roads and equipment on the Oregon side, securing its monopoly on river transportation.	Northwest
1863	President Abraham Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation.	General
1863	In spring, work is completed on a portage railroad around The Dalles and Celilo Falls.	Northwest
1866	Brothers George W. and William Hume, along with Andrew S. Hapgood, move their business because of decreasing salmon runs from California's Sacramento River to a place they call Eagle Cliff on the Washington side of the Columbia River. This is the first salmon cannery on the Columbia River. Four thousand cases of salmon, forty-eight one-pound cans to the case, are packed this year by hand.	Northwest
1872	R.D. Hume introduces Chinese labor to American canneries. The Chinese workers are efficient and hard-working and accept low pay. Most of the fishing for the canneries is done by local Indians. The Chinese are not allowed to fish. Several canneries now operate on the lower Columbia River, and others are being built.	Northwest
1876	Work begins on the Cascades lock and canal.	Northwest
1877	Cannery operators, worried about the decline of the prized spring Chinook runs, organize the Oregon & Washington Fish Propagation Company, raise $21,000 in donations, and build a hatchery on the Clackamas River, the first hatchery in the Columbia River Basin.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1879	Fish wheels begin operating on the Columbia. By 1889, there are fifty-seven operating between Bonneville and Celilo Falls. Fishing with fish wheels continues in the Columbia for fifty-five years. 1879 is the first year fish traps are utilized on the Columbia. By 1886 there are 156 in use.	Northwest
1880	Commercial fishing pressure is so intense in the lower Columbia River that just twenty miles inland from the ocean there are so few salmon that cannery fishers are forced to move to the Columbia River's mouth to ensure they catch enough to satisfy the demand at canneries.	Northwest
1882	A rail line is completed between Celilo and Wallula, at the confluence of the Walla Walla and Columbia Rivers. With this link, a continuous line now exists between Portland and Walla Walla, allowing eastern Washington grain to be delivered to ocean-going ships in Portland.	Northwest
1887	The Allotment or "Dawes" Act is adopted by Congress.	Indian History
1887	Seufert's No. 5, the most famous fish wheel on the Columbia, is constructed on a point of rock jutting into the Columbia on the Oregon side of the river, about five miles upstream of The Dalles. It operates until 1926, when Oregon voters ban fish wheels, and averages 146,000 pounds of salmon per year.	Northwest
1889	Some 400,000 acres are under irrigation in the Columbia River Basin. Although some irrigation involves pumping groundwater, the earliest and simplest irrigation involves diverting water from streams.	Northwest
1889	With Chinook salmon runs declining and public demand for canned salmon high, canneries on the lower Columbia begin processing sockeye salmon and steelhead. A few years later, the canneries add coho and chum salmon.	Northwest
1890	Largely as a result of the completion of transcontinental railroads, population in Idaho, Washington, and Oregon jump from about 251,000 in 1880 to 705,000.	Northwest
1891	Between 1891 and 1895, Columbia River salmon canneries pack an average of 486,000 cases (forty-eight pounds per case) each year.	Northwest
1892	The *Coulee City News* reports on a proposal to irrigate the Big Bend country of central Washington state with water diverted into the Grand Coulee from a large dam on the Columbia River.	Northwest
1893	A special committee appointed by the Oregon Legislature in 1887 to review fishery problems on the Columbia releases its report. The report concludes that claims of overfishing by wheels, traps and seines are based on "prejudice and misinformation" and recommends that fishing gear restrictions be repealed.	Northwest
1894	"It does not require a study of the statistics to convince one that the salmon industry has suffered a great decline during the past decade, and that it is only a matter of a few years under present conditions when the Chinook of the Columbia will be as scarce as the beaver that once was so plentiful in our streams. For a third of a century Oregon has drawn wealth from her streams, but now, by reason of her wastefulness and lack of intelligent provision for the future, the source of that wealth is disappearing and is threatened with annihilation . . . Salmon that ten years ago the canners would not touch now constitute 30 to 40 percent of the pack." — From the 1894 report of the Oregon Fish and Game Protector.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1894	Upper Columbia Basin salmon runs decline, such as those that normally passed Kettle Falls on their way to spawn in northern Washington tributaries and in British Columbia. Fish were abundant at Kettle Falls as late as 1878 but had been steadily decreasing since 1882, according to the United States Fish Commissioner, who cites commercial overfishing in the lower Columbia as the primary cause.	Northwest
1895	Washington builds the Chinook River Hatchery on a lower Columbia tributary using money from fishing license sales. In the five years between 1895 and 1900, fourteen hatcheries are built in Washington. Production of salmon triples. In 1900, twenty-three million eggs and fry are released. In 1905, sixty-two million are released. Washington's hatchery system eventually grows to be the largest on the West Coast.	Northwest
1896	Cascade Locks and Canal is completed, allowing continuous navigation through the treacherous Cascades. Previously, steamboats usually only ran the Cascades during low water. Between 1898 and 1920, the value of freight through the canal exceeds the construction cost in most years. The locks and canal are used until 1938, when they are covered by the water behind Bonneville Dam.	Northwest
1899	The number of fish wheels on the Columbia River peaks at seventy-six.	Northwest
1900	Natural resource industries are booming. Between 1900 and 1910, large-scale logging occurs in the Columbia River Gorge. By 1900, nearly 500,000 acres of farmland in the Columbia River Basin is being irrigated.	Northwest
1902	The federal Reclamation Act, passed by Congress this year, authorizes the government to aid the development of irrigation for agriculture and allows settlers to own 160 acres for the purpose of irrigating crops.	Northwest
1906	The most productive fish wheel on the Columbia, the No. 5 wheel of Seufert Brothers Fish Company, has its biggest year. Located in a chute about five miles upstream from The Dalles, Oregon, No. 5 captures 209 tons of salmon. The wheel began operating in 1887 and operates until 1926, when Oregon bans fish wheels.	Northwest
1910	By now, 2.3 million acres of farm land in the Columbia River Basin are irrigated, up from 500,000 acres in 1900.	Northwest
1911	Little Falls Dam is completed on the Spokane River. While there is a fish ladder, there is some dispute about whether it is effective.	Northwest
1912	Commercial fishery intensifies in the lower Columbia River with the beginning of ocean commercial trolling, towing hooks and lines from a boat, for Chinook and coho salmon. By 1915 there are 500 trolling boats, and by 1919 there are more than 1,000.	Northwest
1915	America enters The Great War (World War I).	General
1915	There are now 2,856 gill net boats on the lower Columbia River, the peak number in the history of the fishery.	Northwest
1915	The Army Corps of Engineers completes a canal and locks around river obstructions above The Dalles, opening river navigation between Astoria, Oregon, and Lewiston, Idaho. The Celilo Canal takes nearly twelve years to construct. It is sixty-five feet wide, eight miles long, and eight feet deep. It has periodic turnouts to allow boats to pass each other. Today it is under the water behind The Dalles Dam.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1915	Long Lake Dam, with no fish ladder, four miles above Little Falls Dam on the Spokane River, effectively ends salmon passage. Spokane River settler D.L. McDonald later writes: "It was a sad day for the settlers who had grown to depend on the salmon as one of their staple foods. But for the Indians, it was a catastrophe."	Northwest
1917	Washington and Oregon outlaw purse seines in the Columbia River. The same year, Washington begins licensing hook-and-line fishing.	Northwest
1919	A fishway is constructed around Sunbeam Dam on the Salmon River between Stanley and Challis, Idaho. The dam, about twenty miles downstream from the headwaters of the Salmon River at Redfish Lake, was built in 1910 to provide electricity to the Yankee Fork mining district. Fears of dwindling fish runs prompt construction of the fishway. In 1934, Idaho blows a hole in the dam, and private interests later blow it up again, widening the hole. In the 1980s it is blasted a third time to make the hole wide enough for rafters.	Northwest
1921	The harvest of Chinook salmon in the lower Columbia River begins an annual decline that continues until 1958. As the river catch decreases, the ocean catch increases, but the number of salmon landed at Columbia River ports continues to decline overall. Fishery managers in Oregon and Washington recognize that hatcheries have failed to reverse the steady salmon decline and ignored scientific evidence of the stock structure of salmon populations. Despite this, hatcheries continue to be the primary tool to mitigate the impact of the dams.	Northwest
1924	Indians become citizens of the United States.	Indian History
1926	The Oregon Legislature outlaws fish wheels. Meanwhile, 506 fish traps are in operation on the Columbia River, the most ever.	Northwest
1927	Inland Power and Light Company completes Lewiston Dam on the Clearwater River (at River Mile 4) near Lewiston, Idaho. There is a fish ladder, but it is inadequate. Lewiston Dam virtually eliminates Chinook salmon runs into the Clearwater Basin. Steelhead are able to negotiate the ladder, but their numbers decline dramatically, too. Washington Water Power Company of Spokane acquires the dam in 1937 and, two years later, builds two additional fishways. Improvements are made to all three ladders in the mid-1960s. The dam is removed in 1973 as part of the Lower Granite Dam project so that there is enough water to allow barge traffic to Lewiston.	Northwest
1932	A federal report on river planning, Columbia River and Minor Tributaries (House Document 103-73/1), proposes construction of eight dams on the Columbia River, including Bonneville and Grand Coulee.	Northwest
1932	Presidential candidate Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) promotes Columbia River hydropower development in a speech in Portland on September 21.	Northwest
1933	The Bureau of Indian Affairs is reformed. The sale of Indian land halts.	Indian History
1933	John Collier becomes the first progressive commissioner of Indian Affairs (he fights for Indian rights).	Indian History
1933	FDR authorizes Indian Emergency Conservation Work program.	Indian History

Year	Event	Category
1933	Rock Island Dam, the first to cross the Columbia River, begins operation. Built by a company that later becomes part of Puget Sound Power and Light Company of Bellevue, Washington, Rock Island is a low dam with three gently inclining fish ladders to allow migrating adult salmon to pass. Today, the dam is owned and operated by the Chelan County Public Utility District. Location: River Mile 453.4.	Northwest
1933	On September 5, construction of Grand Coulee Dam officially begins, but it is September 9 before engineers set the stakes that mark the center line of the dam. On November 6, site preparation work begins at Bonneville Dam.	Northwest
1934	Indian reorganization Act 'Indian New Deal' ends the Dawes Act and promotes economic development.	Indian History
1934	On March 19, Congress passes the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (amended in 1946 and 1958), which requires the federal government to take fish and wildlife into consideration in the planning of federal water development projects. It is the beginning of efforts to mitigate the impact of federal Snake and Columbia River dams on fish and wildlife.	Northwest
1935	Washington outlaws fixed gear, such as fish wheels and pound nets, for commercial fishing on the Columbia River. Oregon bans fixed gear in 1949.	Northwest
1937	In January, the monthly mean flow of the Columbia drops to its lowest level since 1927, when regular records began to be kept. The monthly mean flow of 39,160 cubic feet per second, measured at The Dalles, Oregon, remains the lowest natural flow on record in the Columbia. The flow at The Dalles is lower, briefly, in the late 1950s when the reservoir behind The Dalles Dam is filling.	Northwest
1937	On August 20, President Roosevelt signs the Bonneville Project Act, which creates a new federal power bureau: the Bonneville Power Project. The new bureau is assigned to market and transmit power from federal dams and ". . . give preference and priority in the use of electric energy to public bodies and cooperatives."	Northwest
1938	On May 11, Congress passes the Mitchell Act (Public Law 75-502). The law is intended to mitigate the impacts to fish from water diversions, dams on the main stem of the Columbia River, pollution, and logging. Initially, the Act pays just for a census and survey of lower Columbia tributaries. Later it is amended to pay for facilities to protect salmon spawning habitat, such as screens on irrigation diversions.	Northwest
1938	Bonneville Dam begins operation on June 6. The dam has a fish ladder, and for the first time the number of adult salmon and steelhead crossing the dam can be counted. The 1938 total is 469,027 fish, primarily Chinook (271,799). Steelhead, sockeye, and coho also are counted.	Northwest
1940	The Bonneville Power Project, created by the Bonneville Project Act in 1937, is renamed the Bonneville Power Administration.	Northwest
1940	In June, the Colville tribes host the "Ceremony of Tears," a three-day event at Kettle Falls to eulogize the impending inundation of the falls and the loss of the salmon and steelhead fishery from the construction of Grand Coulee Dam about one hundred miles downstream. The reservoir is filling; it will cover the Falls in July 1941.	Northwest
1941	United States enters World War II.	General

Year	Event	Category
1941	The Bonneville Power Administration commissions Woody Guthrie to write the folk song "Roll On, Columbia, Roll On." The song glamorizes the harnessing of the Columbia River. The song becomes famous as an anthem about American public works projects arising out of the New Deal during the Great Depression.	Northwest
1942	Tulee v. Washington limits state regulation of Indian fishing.	Northwest
1942	The Iroquois declare war on Germany, Italy, and Japan.	Indian History
1943	The Bonneville Power Administration receives an urgent request for a large block of power to serve a secret load in the desert between Richland and Yakima.	Northwest
1943	Congress approves the Columbia Basin Project Act, sponsored by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Interior Department. The Act replaces the Anti-Speculation Act of 1937, which President Roosevelt had sought to protect people who settled in central Washington from rising prices due to land speculation. The Columbia Basin Project Act requires the Bureau of Reclamation to sign contracts with three irrigation districts established within the project. Power revenues would subsidize irrigation.	Northwest
1944	With the approval of Montana's governor, Congress authorizes construction of Hungry Horse Dam on the South Fork Flathead River as a Bureau of Reclamation project. Hungry Horse is the first of many upstream dams in the United States and Canada that control summer and winter flows for maximum power generation at the larger dams downriver.	Northwest
1944	The first offspring of fish that once spawned above Grand Coulee Dam return to spawn in tributaries above Rock Island Dam where their parents had been released in experiments that began in 1939 and continue through 1947. It is the first evidence that Columbia River fish runs might be relocated.	Northwest
1945	The federal River and Harbor Act of 1945 authorizes construction of McNary Dam on the Columbia, 146 miles upriver from Bonneville Dam. The 1945 Act also authorizes construction of the Lower Snake River Project of dams in southeastern Washington. Specifically, Public Law 14, passed by Congress on March 2, 1945, authorizes the ACE to "construct such dams as are necessary" to provide slackwater along the lower Snake River from its confluence with the Columbia to Lewiston. The decision on how many dams are necessary is left to the Corps. Eventually, the Corps decide on four: Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite.	Northwest
1946	The Bureau of Land Management is formed to oversee Indian land issues.	Indian History
1946	Congress authorizes construction of the Chief Joseph Dam on the Columbia at River Mile 545, fifty-one miles downstream from Grand Coulee. The authorization is in the 1946 River and Harbor Act. Originally called Foster Creek Dam, the initial survey work is not funded until 1948 (the same year Congress renames it Chief Joseph), and then only for $42,000, but additional funding follows and construction gets underway in 1949. The main dam and intake structure is completed in 1955. The first sixteen turbine units go into service between 1955 and 1958. The project is completed in 1961. The L-shaped dam is 5,962 feet long in an area where the river is 980 feet wide. The design maximizes hydropower production. The powerhouse, at 2,039 feet one of the world's longest, originally contains sixteen turbine generators capable of producing a total of 1,078 megawatts. Today, the powerhouse has twenty-seven generators and a capacity of 2,069 megawatts.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1947	Construction begins at McNary Dam on the Columbia River near Hermiston, Oregon, on April 15.	Northwest
1948	In November, the ACE opens its Walla Walla District office to supervise construction of the four dams of the Lower Snake River Project.	Northwest
1948	In late May and early June, a Columbia River flood destroys the city of Vanport, Oregon.	Northwest
1949	A census shows that population of the Northwest has grown 44 percent since 1940. During the same period, the nation's population has grown 13 percent. Net immigration to the Pacific Northwest is more than 1 million. Oregon leads all states with a 59 percent population increase.	Northwest
1949	The Lower Columbia River Fishery Development Program is established by Congress, based on a 1946 amendment to the Mitchell Act that authorizes the federal Interior Department to use the facilities and services of state fish and wildlife agencies to develop and conserve Columbia River Basin salmon. The state agencies had signed the participation agreement in 1948. Federal agencies seek $1 million to pay for improving fisheries in the Columbia basin.	Northwest
1950	The Korean War begins.	General
1950	A total of 559,606 salmon and steelhead are counted crossing Bonneville Dam.	Northwest
1950	The federal River and Harbor and Flood Control Act of 1950 authorizes construction of The Dalles and John Day Dams on the Columbia and two upstream water storage projects on Columbia tributaries: Albeni Falls Dam on the Pend Oreille River near the Idaho/Washington border and Libby Dam on the Kootenai River in northwestern Montana. The Act also reconfirms authorization of Chief Joseph Dam.	Northwest
1950	Drift gill nets are declared the only legal commercial fishing method on the Columbia River for non-Indians. Fixed gear, such as fish wheels and pound nets, was outlawed in Washington in 1935 and in Oregon in 1949.	Northwest
1951	The eighteenth and final generator at Grand Coulee Dam begins operation. This completes both powerhouses at the dam.	Northwest
1952	On May 29, the first irrigation water from Lake Roosevelt behind Grand Coulee Dam starts to flow into the canals of the Columbia Basin Project.	Northwest
1953	Congress begins terminating rights of Indian tribes.	Indian History
1953	Public Law 280 places reservations in CA, MN, NE, OR, and WI under states' civil and criminal jurisdiction.	Indian History
1953	It is no longer illegal to sell alcohol to Indians.	Indian History
1953	President Dwight Eisenhower shifts the nation's power policy from one of encouraging federal dams to one of encouraging local utilities to build dams on major rivers. Three public utility districts in central Washington, aided by investor-owned utilities, take advantage of this shift and build four huge dams on the Columbia during the 1950s and 1960s: Priest Rapids (originally authorized as a federal dam), Wanapum, Rocky Reach, and Wells.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1953	President Eisenhower appoints George Boldt, a Tacoma, Washington, judge, to the U.S. District Court, Western Washington District. Twenty-one years later, in 1974, Boldt authors one of the most important legal decisions in the history of Northwest salmon recovery efforts, ruling that Northwest Indian tribes that signed treaties with the United States in 1855 are entitled to half of the harvestable surplus of fish that return annually to the tribes' usual and accustomed fishing sites.	Northwest
1954	McNary Dam on the Columbia River at River Mile 292, near Hermiston, Oregon, begins operation. President Eisenhower dedicates the dam on September 23.	Northwest
1955	On August 28, the 2,069-megawatt Chief Joseph Dam begins operation under the ownership of the ACE. There is no fish passage at this dam about ninety miles upstream from Wenatchee. Thus Chief Joseph is the upper extent of salmon and steelhead migration in the Columbia, blocking access to about 670 miles of the mainstem Columbia and all the associated tributaries where salmon have historically spawned.	Northwest
1957	Indian Vocational Training Act creates job training centers near reservations.	Indian History
1957	The Dalles Dam, a federal project operated by the ACE, begins operation. The Dalles Dam is at the city of The Dalles, Oregon, at River Mile 191.5. On March 10, the flood gates close, and the reservoir behind the dam quickly fills, inundating the historic Indian fishery at Celilo Falls. At this time, prior to the construction of John Day Dam, McNary Dam at River Mile 292 is the next dam upriver from The Dalles.	Northwest
1958	Priest Rapids Dam, owned and operated by the Grant County Public Utility District, is dedicated this year and placed in service October 19. The dam is at River Mile 397.1. Priest Rapids is built by a consortium of public and private power entities, including Puget Sound Power & Light Company (Bellevue, Washington), Portland General Electric (Portland, Oregon), Pacific Power and Light Company (Portland), and Washington Water Power Company (Spokane), and eight public utilities in Washington and Oregon. These twelve entities share about 63 percent of the power output, and the Grant County PUD receives 36.5 percent.	Northwest
1959	The Oregon Moist Pellet is developed. It remains the standard food at salmon hatcheries. Along with improvements in disease control and water quality in hatcheries, the improved diet makes hatchery programs more cost-effective. As a result, fish production begins to accelerate. By the late 1960s, hatchery production of salmon and steelhead, particularly Chinook and coho, overtakes and then far surpasses natural production. By 1974, hatchery releases from the forty federal, state and tribal hatcheries in the Columbia River Basin reach 155 million, five times the number of juvenile fish released from hatcheries in 1960. [Wilkinson and Conner, Page 82]	Northwest
1960	Tribal people can identify themselves as "Indian" on the U.S. Census for the first time.	Indian History

Year	Event	Category
1960	The population of the four Northwest states continues to grow and now stands at 5,964,000, an increase of 884,000 since 1950 and 2,058,000 since 1940. Salmon and steelhead harvests in the Columbia River continue to decline, as does the number of fish counted at Bonneville Dam. In 1960, 492,100 fish are harvested from the river between the dam and the ocean, and 3,900 fish upriver from the dam. Ten years earlier, the harvest was 717,500 fish below the dam and 157,200 fish above it. A total of 433,732 salmon and steelhead elude capture in the lower river and are counted crossing Bonneville Dam in 1960, compared to 560,683 in 1950. [Sources: U.S. Census; ODFW/WDFW Status Report, 1938-1998, Pages 126 and 135; Fish Passage Center]	Northwest
1961	Between 1961 and 1964, annual production at Columbia River salmon canneries drops to its lowest level since about 1870: 90,000 cases, at forty-eight pounds per case.	Northwest
1961	Ice Harbor Dam on the Snake River at River Mile 9.7, a federal dam operated by the ACE, begins operation. Rocky Reach Dam, located on the Columbia River just north of Wenatchee at River Mile 473.7, is placed in service on June 13. It is built by a consortium that includes the Chelan County Public Utility District (Wenatchee), Puget Sound Power & Light Company (Bellevue, Washington), Portland General Electric (Portland, Oregon), Pacific Power and Light Company (Portland), Washington Water Power Company (Spokane) and the Alcoa aluminum company, which builds a smelter in Wenatchee. Puget Power receives the largest share of the electricity, 45.5 percent. The dam is operated by the Chelan PUD.	Northwest
1963	Mayfield Dam on the Cowlitz River, a lower Columbia tributary, begins operation. The 162-megawatt dam (initially three units totaling 121.5 megawatts, with the fourth unit added in 1983) is built by the City of Tacoma, Washington, Department of Public Utilities (Tacoma Power). It is located at River Mile 52.	Northwest
1963	Wanapum Dam on the Columbia River, at River Mile 415.8, is placed in service on September 1, 1963. Built by a consortium of four private and five public utilities, the dam is operated by the Grant County Public Utility District. Like Grant County PUD's other dam, Priest Rapids, the utility receives 36.5 percent of the output of the dam, and the other financing partners share the remainder. Of these, the largest shares go to Portland General Electric (Portland, Oregon) and Pacific Power and Light Company (Portland), which each receive 18.7 percent of the output.	Northwest
1966	In order to protect dwindling runs of summer Chinook above Bonneville Dam, the Oregon Fish Commission asks the Oregon State Police to strictly enforce the law forbidding non-Indian commercial fishing upriver from Bonneville.	Northwest
1966	Some 6.5 million acres of farm land in the Columbia River Basin are now irrigated, up from 3.5 million in 1928.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1967	Wells Dam on the Columbia River at River Mile 515.1 begins operation on September 1, owned by Douglas County Public Utility District. The dam has an unusual design as the result of the underlying geologic formation. Because the most solid ground is at the center of the river channel, the dam is constructed with its heaviest components, the turbines and spillways, in the middle. This design, known as a hydrocombine, has the spillways built over the top of the powerhouse. Typically, the spillways and powerhouse are side by side. Later, this design proves to be very effective at passing juvenile fish over the dam — more effective, in fact, than at any other mainstem dam on the Columbia or Snake Rivers.	Northwest
1967	Hells Canyon Dam on the Snake River at River Mile 247 begins operation on October 23. It is owned by Idaho Power Company. By the time this dam begins operation, the salmon and steelhead runs that spawned in the river and its tributaries upriver from the dam have diminished from an estimated 1 million adults per year to an estimated 38,100 fish. The prime reason for this decline, according to the Idaho Power Company, is the construction of fifteen federal dams above Hells Canyon between 1904 and 1947. The company argues the decline is not attributable to its Hells Canyon Complex of three dams—Brownlee, Oxbow, and the newly completed Hells Canyon—even though the dams have blocked anadromous fish passage since the late 1950s when the first of the three dams, Brownlee, was completed.	Northwest
1973	Congress passes the Endangered Species Act. The forerunner of the Act, House Resolution 37, includes this statement of purpose: "From the most narrow possible point of view, it is in the best interests of mankind to minimize the losses of genetic variations. The reason is simple: they are potential resources. They are keys to puzzles that we cannot yet solve, and may provide answers to questions that we have not yet learned to ask."	Northwest
1974	U.S. District Judge George Boldt of Tacoma refines an earlier federal court decision regarding Indian fishing and rules that Indians are entitled to 50 percent of the harvestable surplus of salmon and steelhead in Northwest rivers. Thus, Indians whose ancestors signed treaties with the United States in which they reserved the right to fish at their usual and accustomed places "in common with" citizens of the United States are entitled to half of the catch, and non-Indian fishers are entitled to the other half.	Northwest
1977	Four Indian tribes with treaty fishing rights on the Columbia River form the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to coordinate fish management policies and objectives. The participants are the Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation.	Northwest
1980	In December, Congress approves and President Jimmy Carter signs into law the Northwest Power Act, which authorizes the four northwest states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington to form the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and gives the Council three distinct responsibilities: 1) prepare a program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife, and related spawning grounds and habitat, of the Columbia River Basin that have been affected by hydropower dams, while 2) assuring the Pacific Northwest an adequate, efficient, economical, and reliable power supply, and 3) informing the public about energy and fish and wildlife and involving the public in decision-making. The Council meets for the first time in April 1981.	Northwest

Year	Event	Category
1990	On April 9, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, Idaho, petition the National Marine Fisheries Service to list Snake River sockeye salmon as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act. On June 7, the National Marine Fisheries Service receives a petition from Oregon Trout, Oregon Natural Resources Council, Northwest Environmental Defense Center, American Rivers, and the Idaho and Oregon chapters of the American Fisheries Society to protect Snake River spring, summer, and fall Chinook, and lower Columbia coho salmon under the Endangered Species Act. This year all of the returns of Snake River salmon are low; a single sockeye returns to Redfish Lake.	Northwest
1990	Some 7.3 million acres of farm land in the Columbia River Basin are now irrigated, down slightly from 7.5 million in 1980.	Northwest
1996	On January 9, the ACE, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville Power Administration, the three federal agencies that operate and sell the power generated at (Bonneville) the federal dams of the Columbia and Snake Rivers, issue their final environmental impact study of dam operations. Five years in the making, the System Operation Review is intended to develop a system operating strategy for the dams, but it is too late, usurped by the 1995 Biological Opinion on hydropower operations issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service the year before. Not surprisingly, the preferred operations strategy in the System Operation Review is similar to the preferred alternative for dam operations in the Biological Opinion.	Northwest
2000	In December, NOAA Fisheries, the agency formerly known as the National Marine Fisheries Service, releases its latest revision of the Biological Opinion on Operations of the Federal Columbia River Hydropower System. The opinion, like its several predecessors dating to 1993, prescribes river and dam operations for federal agencies to follow to avoid further jeopardizing Endangered Species Act-listed salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin. The 2000 opinion relies heavily on habitat improvements, as opposed to major changes in dam operations. A coalition of environmental groups successfully sues NOAA Fisheries, claiming the opinion relied too heavily on habitat improvements that would be carried out by non-federal entities. A U.S. District Court judge remands the opinion to NOAA Fisheries and asks for a revised opinion by June 2004. Later the court extends the deadline to November.	Northwest
2004	Salmon and steelhead return to the Columbia River are far above recent ten-year averages. Some, such as the returns in 2003, are the highest since record-keeping began at Bonneville Dam in 1938. In 2003, more than 920,000 Chinook salmon were counted crossing Bonneville Dam, where the ten-year average count was 399,000. A number of factors appear to be contributing to the increased run sizes, including improved fish passage at dams, improved spawning and rearing habitat, and improved feeding conditions in the ocean. In 2004, as strong runs continue, scientists at NOAA Fisheries who monitor the runs say it appears the runs will stay high at least through 2006.	Northwest
2011	Removal of the Lower Elwha River Dam begins.	Northwest