

Scott Schuyler sot

“It sounds like you feel as though the city of Seattle has stolen this river from you? Absolutely, they’ve taken a lot from this tribe for the last 100 years and the tribe is not going to take it anymore.”

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THE SKAGIT RIVER IS ONE OF THE TREASURES OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST. IT’S THE LARGEST RIVER IN WESTERN, WASHINGTON: THE ONLY ONE THAT’S HOME TO ALL FIVE SPECIES OF PUGET SOUND SALMON.

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Heli nats

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IT’S THE NUMBER ONE FOOD SOURCE FOR THE BELOVED ORCA.

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“Drumming nats”

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AND IT IS WITHOUT QUESTION, THE HEART OF THE UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE.

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Scott Schuyler sot:

“Our people have resided in the Upper Skagit Valley for literally 10,000 years now.”

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SCOTT SCHUYLER IS THE NATURAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR OF THE UPPER SKAGIT TRIBE, WHICH IS BASED IN SEDRO WOOLEY.

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Scott sot

“The Skagit River is the lifeblood of my people. The salmon are also a part of that lifeblood.”

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“Water nats”

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NEARLY A CENTURY AGO, MAJOR CHANGE CAME TO THE FREE-FLOWING SKAGIT. SEATTLE CITY LIGHT BUILT THREE MASSIVE DAMS IN THE MIDDLE OF IT, FOR HYDROPOWER. SINCE THEN, THE SKAGIT POWERS UP ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF SEATTLE’S LIGHTS AT A BARGAIN PRICE.

CITY LIGHT CUSTOMERS PAY LESS THAN HALF OF WHAT RESIDENTS DO IN CITIES SUCH AS SAN DIEGO, NEW YORK AND BOSTON.

Sus stand up

“And that’s great. Who doesn’t want inexpensive power that doesn’t cause air pollution? But that’s not the whole story. In a three month investigation involving dozens of interviews and a review of more than 1,000 pages of government records the KING 5 Investigators have found there’s a very dark side of generating light here on the Skagit River.”

THE UTILITY DENIES IT’S TO BLAME, BUT SINCE THE FEDS LAST RELICENSED SEATTLE DAMS, THREE SPECIES OF FISH HAVE LANDED ON THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST: BULL TROUT, STEELHEAD AND CHINOOK SALMON. AND IN 2005, ORCAS, WHO DEPEND ON CHINOOK SALMON FROM THE SKAGIT TO SURVIVE, WERE ALSO LISTED AS ENDANGERED.

“water nats”

IT’S WELL DOCUMENTED BY FEDERAL AGENCIES THAT DAMS HURT FISH BY BLOCKING OFF HABITAT THEY NEED TO SPAWN AND GROW. SEATTLE’S DAMS CHOKO OFF NEARLY 40 PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE RIVER.

“fishing nats”

A RIVER THE UPPER SKAGIT SAY IS THE SOUL OF THEIR CULTURE. THEY CALL THEMSELVES SALMON PEOPLE, BUT WITH SALMON SLIDING TOWARD EXTINCTION, THEY SAY SEATTLE IS EXPLOITING ALL THAT TO THEM, IS SACRED.

Scott sot

“The taking of our river, the impact to our salmon. The desecration of sites that are important to us. This is cultural trauma.”

Debra Smith Zoom interview

“Is the city of Seattle exploiting indigenous people for hydropower? For cheap power? I can absolutely tell you that the people of Seattle and Seattle City Light have no intention of exploiting the people of the Skagit Valley, the tribes that make their home there and have established their way of life there.

DEBRA SMITH IS THE CEO OF SEATTLE CITY LIGHT.

“truck nats”

SHE SAYS THEY HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR RATEPAYERS BUT ALSO THE TO TRIBES, AFFECTED BY THEIR BUSINESS.

Debra sot

“If they feel exploited then that’s something we have to work on. Our commitment is to continue to learn, to have an open mind and as we do so, to change, change our position.”

IN PUBLIC MESSAGES ABOUT THE SKAGIT DAMS, CITY LIGHT SAYS THEY’RE HELPING, NOT HURTING, FISH. THEY LABEL THEMSELVES THE NATION’S GREENEST UTILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS TO MOTHER NATURE.

Debra sot

“We operate our hydro projects in a fish-first manner.”

ON TOP OF THAT THE CITY SAYS THEY’RE NOT HARMING SALMON BECAUSE THE FISH NEVER LIVED THAT FAR UP THE RIVER ANYWAY, EVEN BEFORE THEIR DAMS WENT IN.

“river nats”

THEY SAY STEEP CANYONS AND ENOURMOUS BOULDERS FORM AN EFFECTIVE NATURAL FISH BARRIER.

Jon Paul Shannahan sot

“This is where City Light and their science says there’s no way that right there, fish could get past that boulder. In your scientific opinion, is that true? No. Not at all.”

JON PAUL SHANNAHAN IS THE TRIBE'S TOP BIOLOGIST. HE SAYS FOR DECADES THE UTILITY'S GOTTEN AWAY WITH NOT PROVIDING A WAY FOR FISH TO GET OVER THEIR DAMS, LIKE BUILDING A FISH LADDER, BY STICKING TO THEIR GUNS: THAT HISTORICALLY, SALMON COULDN'T SWIM PAST THE NATURE-MADE OBSTACLES BELOW THEIR DAMS.

Jon Paul sot

"What is your reaction to that? It's kind of like big tobacco when they said smoking's not bad for you. It's like big hydro saying fish never got up here. It's the Pacific Northwest. Fish swim upstream, that's what they do. This is not an insurmountable barrier for salmon."

KEY FOR THE UPPER SKAGIT: THEY WANT SEATTLE TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO FIND OUT IF FISH EVER SWAM PAST THE ENTIRE DAM AREA. IF IT TURNS OUT THEY COULD, SEATTLE MAY BE ON THE HOOK TO SPEND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS BUILDING A FISH PASSAGE SYSTEM. SO FAR THE CITY WILL NOT AGREE TO THE STUDY.

Jon Paul

"We're asking them to join with us on a scientific inquiry about fish. I don't know what's so scary about that."

THE UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE ISN'T ALONE IN ITS DEMAND FOR A STUDY. RECORDS SHOW EVERY SINGLE AGENCY INVOLVED WITH THE PROJECT AGREES WITH THEM: US FISH AND WILDLIFE, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE, NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY, THE SWINOMISH AND SAUK-SUIATTLE TRIBES, AND MORE.

ALL THESE GROUPS ON ONE SIDE, WITH ONLY THE CITY OF SEATTLE ON THE OTHER, SO FAR REFUSING TO AGREE TO A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON FISH PASSAGE.

Debra Smith sot

"Only Seattle, the one agency with a financial interest here saying something else. What does that say to you? Well it says we need to listen more. And we are starting that process. We're listening, we're going to approach the discussion with a completely open mind."

"bell ringing nats"

THE SMALL UPPER SKAGIT TRIBE KNOWS THEY'RE UP AGAINST A POWERFUL CITY AND UTILITY, BUT THEY WON'T STOP FIGHTING UNTIL THEY GET THEIR RIVER, AND SALMON BACK.

Scott sot:

“The Skagit helped build Seattle into probably the greatest city on the West Coast. And we have an expectation now that that’s returned to the Skagit. The Skagit is in desperate need of help right now and we’re hoping the city government now sees fit to start looking at a return to the Skagit and helping us rebuild the Skagit to the greatest river in the Puget Sound.”

(anchor)

TONIGHT THE KING FIVE INVESTIGATORS ARE ALREADY SEEING RESULTS OF THEIR INVESTIGATION INTO THE CITY OF SEATTLE'S DAMS ON THE SKAGIT RIVER.

(ANCHOR)

LAST WEEK WE AIRED OUR FIRST STORY SHOWING THAT FEDERAL REGULATORS AND TRIBES IN THE SKAGIT VALLEY ACCUSE "SEATTLE CITY LIGHT" OF HURTING SALMON AND NATIVE AMERICAN WAYS OF LIFE - IN THE WAY THEY OPERATE THEIR HYDRO-POWER PROJECT ON THE RIVER.

KING 5'S SUSANNAH FRAME JOINS US WITH THE VERY LATEST IN HER SERIES: "SKAGIT, RIVER OF LIGHT AND LOSS."

(SUS)

FOR TWO-AND-A HALF-YEARS SEATTLE CITY LIGHT HAS REFUSED TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF GOVERNMENT AND TRIBAL SCIENTISTS TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF HELPING FISH GET THROUGH ALL THREE OF THEIR DAMS.

BUT TONIGHT SEATTLE IS CHANGING ITS POSITION – NOW SAYING THEY WILL UNDERTAKE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON FISH PASSAGE.

Sus and Scott sot

“What is your reaction to their change in position? I think mostly I’m pleased to see movement in that regard.”

SCOTT SCHUYLER IS THE POLICY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE, WHOSE ANCESTORS HAVE LIVED ALONG THE SKAGIT RIVER FOR CENTURIES. HE SAYS TODAY’S DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES A GLIMMER OF HOPE.

Scott sot

“That’s all we have right now. We do not have our fish. These runs are depleted, our fisheries, our culture everything is being degraded. To what extent due to hydropower? We don’t know yet. We hope to accomplish that.”

THE THREE DAMS OPERATED BY SEATTLE CITY LIGHT TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY FOR THE CITIZENS OF SEATTLE IS SURROUNDED IN HEATED CONTROVERSY.

MOSTLY OVER WHETHER SEATTLE IS DOING ENOUGH TO HELP FISH IMPACTED BY THEIR PROJECT, LIKE CHINOOK AND STEELHEAD, WHICH ARE SLIDING TOWARD EXTINCTION.

THE UTILITY’S LICENSE TO OPERATE THE NEARLY 100 YEAR OLD DAMS IS ABOUT TO EXPIRE. AND IN TALKS ON HOW TO BETTER HELP FISH UNDER A NEW LICENSE, THE CITY HAS BEEN AT ODDS WITH EVERY OTHER STAKEHOLDER INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS: INCLUDING THE UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, THE US DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE, THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE AND MORE.

“water nats”

THE BIGGEST CONCERN? THE CITY’S REFUSAL TO LOOK AT BUILDING A FISH PASSAGE SYSTEM LIKE A FISH LADDER OVER ALL THREE OF THEIR DAMS. CURRENTLY THERE IS NOTHING IN PLACE TO ALLOW SALMON TO GET ABOVE OR BELOW THEIR PROJECT.

NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME, CITY LIGHT OFFICIALS ARE AGREEING TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY.

Scott sot

“I think we’re moving in that right direction, but right now we have a ways to go.”

“historical dam construction footage”

WHEN SEATTLE STARTED BUILDING DAMS ON THE SKAGIT RIVER MORE THAN 100 YEARS AGO- NOBODY WAS TOO WORRIED ABOUT SALMON – THE PROJECT WAS A WIN! COST-EFFECTIVE HYDRO-ELECTRICITY FOR THE PEOPLE OF SEATTLE.

Sound from 1958 film @ 11:37

“All aboard, ladies and gentlemen your cruise is going to take you 4.5 miles back into the mountain.”

THE PROJECT WAS AN ENGINEERING MARVEL: TOURISTS FLOCKED TO SEE IT.

1958 film sot @ 13:19

“There she is! Ross Dam, one of the highest in the world.”

BUT IN THE 80’S A BIG CHANGE: CONGRESS PASSED A LAW MANDATING DAM OPERATORS MUST THINK NOT ONLY ABOUT GENERATING POWER.....BUT ALSO HOW THEIR DAMS HURT FISH AND WILDLIFE AND FIX IT: IF NECESSARY BUILD A SYSTEM TO **HELP FISH** GET OVER THEIR DAMS.

Frame stand up:

“But Seattle never engineered any help to get fish over their dams. Because – they lucked out. The utility held up science showing by coincidence, their dams were built in a perfect place - where no fish could migrate anyway.”

Jeff Fisher Seattle City Light Zoom sot @ 20:25

“We think we’ve looked at the data objectively.”

JEFF FISHER IS CITY LIGHT’S SENIOR AQUATIC ECOLOGIST. IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS HE AND OTHER CITY OFFICIALS AGREED TO **STUDY** THE IDEA OF FISH PASSAGE FOR WHAT ARE KNOWN

AS ANADROMOUS FISH....LIKE SALMON....SPECIES THAT GO OUT TO SEA AND COME BACK TO THE RIVER TO SPAWN...AT THE SAME TIME THEY WROTE, BASED ON THE CITY'S SCIENCE, ANADROMOUS FISH "ARE NOT AFFECTED" BY THEIR OPERATIONS.

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Jeff sot @ 1:38

"Those reports...1:44 "they are one of the lines of evidence that indicate that there were no observations of anadromous fish, anadromous salmon or steelhead in the upper basin."

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THE KING FIVE INVESTIGATORS HAVE FOUND THE CITY HAS BEEN HANGING ITS HAT ON **THIS** SCIENCE....TWO STUDIES THE UTILITY PAID FOR 33 YEARS AGO! AND THIS ONE FROM 100 YEARS AGO: SMITH AND ANDERSON 1921.

SMITH AND ANDERSON BOATED AROUND THE SKAGIT AND OBSERVED "LOW FALLS AND RAPIDS" THAT COULD STOP SALMON.... AND LOCALS TOLD THEM THEY'D "NEVER SEEN SALMON MORE THAN A MILE ABOVE" (WHAT IS NOW THE TOWN OF NEWHALEM).

THEIR STUDY FROM 1988 INCLUDES INTERVIEWS WITH HOMESTEADERS SUCH AS GLEE DAVIS, WHO SAID "THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT OF RAPIDS" BELOW THE DAMS...AND "SALMON NEVER MAKE IT TO A PLACE LIKE THAT".

STUDY AUTHORS ALSO INTERVIEWED A SEATTLE CITY LIGHT TRAIN CONDUCTOR WHO SAID "TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE ONLY A FEW STEELHEAD HAVE EVER MADE IT PAST" THE BARRIERS.

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Jeff Fisher Zoom interview sot @ 9:49

"Is that the kind of science you think we should be relying on when we're talking about something so important as species, different species of fish headed toward extinction."

Answer: sot @ 10:41

"Absolutely it's important to be interviewing the local citizens that are living in the basin and some history and understanding of what was there."

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Tom O'Keefe/scientist sot @ 9:19

"A hundred years later, we can do better."

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TOM O'KEEFE IS AN AQUATIC ECOLOGIST WHO ALSO SITS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD FOR SEATTLE CITY LIGHT.

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Tom O'Keefe sot @ 10:43

"We need to shift from this place of just looking at stories from 100 years ago and pivot to" sot @ 10:59 "a modern understanding of how fish move up and down river systems and what we need to do to quantity that."

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JP Shannahan question @ 30:55

"What do you think of the science they're using? "It's no good. It's old. It's not true."

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JON-PAUL SHANNAHAN IS THE TOP BIOLOGIST FOR THE UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE. HE SAYS NEW SCIENCE COULD BE EXPENSIVE FOR THE CITY....BUILDING A WAY TO HELP FISH GET OVER THEIR DAMS WOULD COST MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

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JP sot @ 23:50

"It makes me angry because we're not using science. We're using financial incentives."

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THIS IS WHERE CITY LIGHT, FOR YEARS, HAS SAID THEIR SCIENCE CONCLUDES THE LANDSCAPE IS SO ROUGH...FISH CAN'T USE THIS HABITAT ANYWAY...MAKING IT HARMLESS TO LET THE RIVER GO COMPLETELY DRY.... LEAVING A 2 AND A HALF MILE STRETCH OF THE SKAGIT RIVER WITH NO RIVER IN IT.

WHY'S THAT? THE UTILITY BLASTS THE RIVER THROUGH A MOUNTAIN: A MAN-MADE TUNNEL— 11,000 YARDS LONG – CREATING MORE FORCE AND ELECTRICITY AS WATER HITS THE POWER PLANT BELOW.

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(nats of water spilling over Gorge Dam)

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BUT ONCE IN A WHILE – FOR MAINTENANCE REASONS OR WHEN THERE'S A TON OF RAIN... THE UTILITY DOES THIS....THEY SPILL WATER INTO THE DRY RIVERBED BELOW. AND IN THE LAST

FEW YEARS WHEN THAT'S HAPPENED: GUESS WHAT TRIBAL AND GOVERNMENT SCIENTISTS HAVE SEEN?"

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JP Shannahan cell phone video #4632 (on Eric's system) @ :55

"There she is, beautiful."

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THAT'S RIGHT – FISH! THAT'S 2019 CELL PHONE VIDEO OF A CHINOOK SALMON SPAWNING – IN THE RIVER WHERE NORMALLY, CITY LIGHT DOESN'T ALLOW THE RIVER TO BE!

AND IN 2016 GOVERNMENT BIOLOGISTS SNORKELING SPOTTED THIS: A STEELHEAD SWIMMING IN A PLACE – IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO GET TO.

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JP sot @ 6:10

"It was huge. It was a complete game changer. Sot @ 8:15 "And it facilitated a lot of conversation about what is science and what is folklore and yea, uhhhh, it was a big day!"

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THE CITY HOLDS UP ONE MORE PIECE OF SCIENCE TO SHOW THEIR DAMS AREN'T DAMAGING SALMON. THIS 2019 GENETICS STUDY BY SCIENTISTS FROM US FISH AND WILDLIFE AND SEATTLE CITY LIGHT, WHO PAID FOR IT. THEIR WORK SHOWS "BARRIERS....LIKELY PREVENTED FISH PASSAGE LONG BEFORE THE DAMS EXISTED."

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(nats of upper skagit scientists in river)

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BUT A SLEW OF GOVERNMENT SCIENTISTS QUICKLY LINED UP CRITICIZING THOSE RESULTS...IN PUBLIC RECORDS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SAID THIS IS AN "ARTIFICIAL" NARRATIVE "CONTRARY TO CURRENT STATE OF THE SCIENCE," US FISH AND WILDLIFE WROTE IT DOESN'T "SHOW THE FULL (PICTURE)" AND THE STATE DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE SLAMMED IT, SAYING THE REPORT IS "LADEN WITH INADEQUACIES" AND DOESN'T FORM "ANY REALISTIC CONCLUSIONS."

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Jeff Fisher/City Light sot @ 30:20

"Yes, scientists can disagree and they disagree all the time."

NO ONE DISAGREES THAT MANY FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO SALMON DISAPPEARING ON THE SKAGIT: OCEAN CONDITIONS, CLIMATE CHANGE, DEVELOPMENT, PREDATORSAS FOR SEATTLE, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND TRIBES SAY THEY JUST WANT THE CITY TO DO ITS PART.

JP Shannahan sot @ 23:02

“We’re not trying to blame them for everything. That wouldn’t make sense. But we’re just asking them to come to the table to identify their own impacts and help us fix it.”

“Drumming/Singing Nats”

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ACCORDING TO THE UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE, THEY ARE ETERNALLY TIED TO THE SKAGIT RIVER, AND THE SALMON THAT SWIM IN IT.

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Larry sot @ 48:30

“We are a salmon people and salmon mean more than just money, just food. It’s a way of life for us.”

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Larry sot @ “We are tied to this river by blood.”

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LARRY PETERSON’S ANCESTORS LIVED ALONG THE SKAGIT FOR 10,000 YEARS. WHERE SALMON FORMED THE CENTER OF THEIR NUTRITIONAL, SPIRITUAL, AND COMMUNITY BONDS. BUT THE SALMON ARE DISAPPEARING, HEADING TOWARD EXTINCTION.

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Larry sot @ 29:59

“It’s heartbreaking you know.” Sot @ 34:26 “We are a river tribe.” “I really feel like it’s ending a way of life for us. My children are robbed of that cultural aspect.”

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“Nats of dams”

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO WHEN THE CITY OF SEATTLE BUILT THREE DAMS ON THE SKAGIT TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY....NO ONE CONSULTED THE NATIVE AMERICANS...AND THAT’S CREATED PAINFUL CONSEQUENCES:

FOR EXAMPLE, THE UTILITY BUILT ITS COMPANY-TOWN OF NEWHALEM ON UPPER SKAGIT ANCESTRAL BURIAL GROUNDS.

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“Hoping for new nats here”

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CITY LIGHT HAS DRIED UP A THREE-MILE SECTION OF THE SKAGIT WHERE IT USED TO FLOW FREELY – AND THIS IS THE STRETCH OF THE RIVER THE TRIBE CONSIDERS THE MOST SACRED OF ALL: WHAT THEY CALL THEIR SPIRIT VALLEY.

ALSO, THE CITY’S DAMS FLOODED IMPORTANT CULTURAL SITES. SITES NOW RUINED, UNDER WATER.

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Larry sot @49:23

“My children are losing what they’re entitled to. They’re entitled to this river. They’re entitled to the time they have here with mother nature and their family.”

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Frame stand up:

“Those entitlements began right here...in Mukilteo in 1855.... where the US and 90 Puget Sound Indian chiefs signed the Treaty of Point Elliott.... The tribes gave away their lands to the federal government, peacefully – and in return, retained one critical right.”

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THE RIGHT TO FISH! AS THEY HAD FOR CENTURIES...IN THE TREATY IT SAYS: “THE RIGHT OF TAKING FISH AT USUAL AND ACCUSTOMED GROUNDS AND STATIONS IS FURTHER SECURED TO SAID INDIANS.”

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Prof Wilkinson sot @ 10:30

“It’s the supreme law of the land.”

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PROFESSOR CHARLES WILKINSON FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY’S FOREMOST AUTHORITIES ON INDIAN LAW, HISTORY AND POLICY. HE SAYS FISHING WAS THE DEAL BREAKER... THE ONE PART OF THEIR CULTURE THE TRIBES WEREN’T WILLING TO GIVE UP.

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Prof Wilkinson sot @ 21:46

“So we end up with that promise being that that way of life would be continued.”

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(fishing nats)

WITH SALMON IN SERIOUS DECLINE THE UPPER SKAGIT TRIBE RARELY GETS TO EXERCISE THEIR TREATY RIGHTS.THEY’VE GONE FROM FISHING 79 TOTAL DAYS IN 1980 TO ONLY SIX DAYS IN ALL OF 2017...SINCE THEN IT HASN’T GOTTEN MUCH BETTER.

SCIENTISTS FROM THREE TRIBES AND FEDERAL AGENCIES SAY SEATTLE’S DAMS, WHICH BLOCK OFF NEARLY 40-PERCENT OF THE RIVER ARE A BIG PART OF THE SALMON PROBLEM....THE AGENCIES INCLUDE NOAA FISHERIES, US FISH AND WILDLIFE AND THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE....THE ONLY SCIENTISTS ON RECORD SAYING THE DAMS AREN’T PART OF THE PROBLEM, WORK FOR SEATTLE CITY LIGHT.

Janelle at river @ 6:29

“Growing up with the stigma of Native Americans, it’s hard.”

20-YEAR-OLD JANELLE SCHUYLER’S LIFE CHANGED TWO YEARS AGO WHEN HER DAD BROUGHT HER TO THE TRIBE’S SPIRIT VALLEY - THE PORTION OF THE RIVER WHERE CITY LIGHT DIVERTS THE WATER OUT OF THE RIVER.

Janelle at river sot @ 2:36

“it really hurt me on a deep, emotional level and I wanted to seek out Mayor Durkan and wonder why? Why she allows this?”

SO SHE WROTE THE CITY’S TOP BOSS: MAYOR JENNY DURKAN.

Janelle reading: “Dear Mayor Durkan, I’m writing today to share my feelings with you and ask some questions....”

SHE ASKED THE MAYOR FOR HELP ON THE SKAGIT – TO URGE THE CITY’S PUBLIC UTILITY TO OWN UP TO THE IMPACTS CAUSED BY THEIR DAMS.

Janelle reading: “I ask this for my people. I ask this for the salmon...I ask this for our sacred Skagit.”

JANELLE ALSO ASKED TO MEET WITH THE MAYOR IN PERSON. THAT WAS IN 2019. AND TO DATE:

Janelle at river @ 3:18

“Nothing. Nothing at all.”

THE MAYOR DIDN’T RESPOND TO OUR MOST RECENT INTERVIEW REQUEST...BUT CITY LIGHT C-E-O DEBRA SMITH ANSWERED OUR QUESTIONS.

Debra 2.0 / Sus sot @ 1:19

“The tribe feels like the city is ignoring their concerns and has done so for about 10 years. What do you say to that?”

Debra sot @ 2:23

“All I can do Susannah is promise that going forward our goal is to make sure that all the folks involved in this process with us, but particularly the tribes who do have treaty rights, that they feel listened to and heard.”

SMITH ADMITS THE UTILITY’S DONE A POOR JOB OF COMMUNICATING WITH THE TRIBE IN THE PAST AND SHE VOWS TO CHANGE THAT.

“Debra sot @ 5:00

“What we’re doing today is attempting to move forward to repair what we can.”

THE TREATY OF POINT ELLIOTT WAS SIGNED BY THE UPPER SKAGIT’S ANCESTOR – CHIEF PETAY-US. IT’S ALSO SIGNED BY CHIEF SEATTLE....THE CITY’S NAMESAKE....THE MOST FAMOUS PACIFIC NORTHWEST INDIAN CHIEF OF ALL.

Scott at Gorge sot @ 6:05

“In the era of social justice, this is a huge injustice to the tribe and to our people.”

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THE TRIBE’S POLICY DIRECTOR, SCOTT SCHUYLER, SAYS THE CITY IS BEING HYPOCRITICAL.

CHIEF SEATTLE....SIGNER OF THE TREATY PROMISING FISHING RIGHTS....IS THE FACE OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE...AND THE LOGO OF SEATTLE CITY LIGHT.

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Scott in office sot @ 35:24

***“There’s a large amount of hypocrisy here that they need to come to terms with.” Sot @ 35:35
“you can talk the talk.” Sot @ 35:47 “But you are not walking the walk.” Sot @ 35:54 “You
need to look in the mirror, Seattle.”***

IT'S ONE OF THE GREATEST SYMBOLS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST: THE BELOVED SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE – ORCAS – WHO SPEND TIME YEAR-ROUND IN PUGET SOUND. IT'S A SPECTACULAR SPECIES ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION.....SIGNALING THE DEMISE OF MUCH MORE: INCLUDING ENDANGERED CHINOOK SALMON - THE ORCAS MAIN FOOD SOURCE

“Pow Wow nats of drumming/chanting”

AND THE CULTURE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLELIKE THE SAUK-SUIATTLE INDIAN TRIBE OF THE SKAGIT BASIN...THEY ARE SALMON PEOPLE WHO, LIKE THE ORCA, ARE SUFFERING FROM THE LOSS OF CHINOOK....THEIR DANCES ARE A HEALING PRACTICE....A WAY TO HONOR ALL ANIMALS ON EARTH...INCLUDING SOUTHERN RESIDENT ORCAS.

Nino sot up @ 3:17

“It’s a way of life...”

NINO MALTOS IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SAUK-SUIATTLE TRIBE.

NINO MALTOS SOT @ 4:10

“The orca whales to us, we see them as our brothers and sisters of the water in the sense that we’re fighting for the same thing. We’re fighting for a food source and a way of life. And the only difference between us and them is that we have a voice and they don’t.”

Frame stand up:

“So what does the Skagit River and the dams in it have to with the health of the Orca in the Salish Sea? A lot! The Skagit produces more Chinook salmon for the Orca than any other river in Puget Sound. But government and tribal scientists say the Skagit could produce far more fish for whales – if Seattle City Light bucks up and does its part.”

IN A SIX-MONTH INVESTIGATION, KING 5 HAS EXPOSED THAT CITY LIGHT HAS TOUTED A NARRATIVE FOR DECADES THAT THEIR DAMS DON'T HURT CHINOOK SALMON – THE PRIZE MEAL FOR ORCAS – BECAUSE THEY WERE BUILT ABOVE NATURE-MADE FISH BARRIERS. BUT WE'VE FOUND THE ENTIRE PACIFIC NORTHWEST SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY DOESN'T BELIEVE THAT STORY ANYMORE.

IN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE BIOLOGISTS WROTE THAT'S A "FALSE NARRATIVE."

AND THE FEDERAL AGENCY, NOAA FISHERIES, WROTE BIG ROCKS AREN'T TO BLAME FOR BLOCKING FISH....BUT **THE DAM** IS THE "CONCLUSIVE BARRIER" TO SALMON GETTING UPSTREAM.

NOAA ALSO WROTE: "THE SKAGIT RIVER IS AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF CHINOOK NEEDED FOR THE RECOVERY" OF ORCAS.

Howard Garrett sot @ 6:55

"I think the entire public was misled and the orca community went along with that."

HOWARD GARRETT IS THE FOUNDER OF THE ORCA NETWORK, BASED ON WHIDBEY ISLAND. HE SAYS THERE'S BEEN A LOST OPPORTUNITY ON THE SKAGIT...THAT FISH PASSAGE THROUGH THE DAMS, LIKE FISH LADDERS, TO HELP CHINOOK ACCESS MILES OF BLOCKED OFF HABITAT, COULD BE A KEY BENEFIT TO THE STARVING WHALES.

Howard Garrett sot @ 6:14

"There's been this kind of cover up." Sot @ 10:42 "And now we're seeing it was wrong. It deprived us, us humans and certainly the tribes and especially, to me, the orcas of their essential sustenance."

Sus question @ 6:58

"So was it intentional? Of course it wasn't intentional Susannah."

DEBRA SMITH IS THE GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO OF SEATTLE CITY LIGHT.

Sot @ 6:02

“No misleading intended. I believe that most knowledge is cumulative. We learn we grow we study. We learn, grow and study and that’s where we are right now.”

BELOW THE HYDROELECTRIC DAMS, THE UTILITY HAS FOCUSED ON HELPING SALMON THROUGH HABITAT RESTORATION...BUT THAT PLAN HASN'T IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR THE FISH OR THE WHALES. IN 2005 THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LISTED THE ORCA AS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES...DESPITE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FUNNELED TO SAVE THEM...THEY'RE NOT RECOVERING. THE POPULATION GREW TO A HIGH OF 89 WHALES IN 2006 TO JUST 74 ALIVE NOW.

Dr. Bain sot @ 4:10

“The main problem southern residents are facing is lack of food.”

DR. DAVID BAIN IS THE CHIEF SCIENTIST FOR THE SEATTLE-BASED ORCA CONSERVANCY. HE SAYS RESTORATION PROJECTS HELP, BUT THE FASTEST ROUTE TO HELP THE WHALES IS TO ACCESS NEW HABITAT FOR CHINOOK.

Dr. Bain sot @ 5:58

“There’s a lot of high-quality habitat above the dams if the fish could reach them. We could see much larger production out of the Skagit.”

IN 2018 THIS WHALE, NAMED J-35 OR TALEQUA, BROUGHT INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO THE PLIGHT OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST ORCA. TALEQUA CARRIED HER DEAD CALF THROUGHOUT THE SALISH SEA FOR 17 DAYS....AN UNPRECEDENTED SHOWING OF GRIEF OVER THE DEATH OF HER BABY.

Howard sot @ 17:05

“J 35, Talequah, certainly showed everyone what happens when they don’t get enough to eat, so every little bit, every morsel, every new source of Chinook salmon especially that you can bring into their habitat is going to help her and all the other southern residents.”

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SEATTLE CITY LIGHT SAYS THEY’RE WORKING TO CHANGE CONDITIONS ON THE SKAGIT FOR SALMON AND THE ORCAS WHO DEPEND ON THE RIVER.

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Debra sot @ 1:00

“I think we all have a role to play. @ 1:15 “We’re committed to doing our part and to learn more about what has put this species in peril and how we can help bring them back.” Sot @ 8:00 “I don’t care about being right. I care about doing right.”

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Nino sot @ 9:45

“I think it’s a lot of talk. And I think actions speak louder than words.”

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“Pow wow nats”

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NO ONE HAS MORE AT STAKE THAN NATIVE AMERICANS WHO’VE CALLED THE SKAGIT VALLEY HOME FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THEY’RE WATCHING SALMON, THE VERY CENTER OF THEIR CULTURE, DISAPPEAR, AND IN TURN THE CHERISHED ORCA.

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Nino sot @ 12:25

“I think that the Skagit River has taken care of Seattle City Light financially every which way and I think it’s Seattle City Lights’ time to take care of the Skagit River.”

