

Governance



Constitution and Bylaws of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

PREAMBLE

We, the Indians of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, recognize that our fisheries are a basic and important natural resource and of vital concern to the Indians of these states and that the conservation of this resource is dependent upon effective and progressive management. And that it is further recognized that federal court decisions have specifically established that the Tribes have treaty rights to an equitable share of the Columbia Basin Fishery Resource. We further believe that by unity of action we can best accomplish these things, not only for the benefit of our own people but for all of the people of the Pacific Northwest.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Membership shall be open to the Indian Tribes who have ratified the Memorandum of Understanding with Bonneville Power Administration and Pacific Northwest Regional Council (The Governors of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington) and who:

- (A) is recognized as a Tribe by federal treaty, statute, or an agreement, and who
- (B) is organized and operating under a Constitution and Bylaws, and who
- (C) ratifies this Constitution and Bylaws by appropriate tribal resolution.

ARTICLE III – GOVERNING BODY

SECTION 1. The governing body shall be the Commission. The Commission shall consist of the Fish Committees designated by tribal resolution from each member Tribe.

SECTION 2. The term of office of each Commissioner shall be designated by the respective governing body of each Tribe.

SECTION 3. The Commission members shall report in writing to their respective governing body on the business transacted, including recommendations for final approval relating to any contract or agreement to be entered on behalf of member Tribes, by the Commission.

SECTION 4. A special meeting of the Commission can be called by the Chairman at the request of any Commission member.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The officers of the Commission shall be Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary and shall be elected by the members of the Commission.

SECTION 2. The Term of office of each officer shall be for one (1) year and shall commence with the regular meeting, except the first elected officers shall serve until the first regular election.

ARTICLE V – VACANCIES AND REMOVAL

SECTION 1. If a Commissioner or official shall die, resign, permanently leave the state of area which he represents, or shall be found guilty of a crime or misdemeanor involving dishonesty by any court, the Commission shall declare the position vacant

and shall request a replacement for the balance of the unexpired term from the respective governing body.

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The Chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Commission shall perform all duties of a Chairman and exercise any authority delegated to him by the Commission and shall have authority to sign all documents for the Commission. He shall vote in all matters for his respective Tribe.

SECTION 2. The Vice Chairman shall assist the Chairman when called upon to do so and in the absence of the Chairman he shall preside. When presiding he shall have all the rights, privileges, and duties as well as the responsibilities of the Chairman.

SECTION 3. The Secretary shall be responsible for minutes of all meetings and meeting notices.

SECTION 4. The Duties of the officers and any appointive committees or officers may be further defined by appropriate resolution of the Commission.

SECTION 5. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Fish Commission.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

SECTION 1.

(A) The conduct and procedure of the meetings may be further defined by appropriate resolution of the Commission.

(B) A quorum shall consist of one Commissioner for each member Tribe.

(C) Each member Tribe shall be entitled to one vote.

(D) All decisions by the Commission shall be by unanimous vote.

ARTICLE VIII – POWER OF THE COMMISSION

SECTION 1. The Commission shall have the following powers:

(A) Formulate, in consultation and consent with local tribal councils, a broad general fisheries program designated to promote and coordinate the conservation practices of the members.

(B) Request technical advice and/or assistance from any source whatever for the purpose of assisting Indian fisheries

and to consult with any and all individuals, organizations, institutions, and governments (Tribal, local, state, federal, and international) on matters pertaining to fisheries.

(C) To render any assistance within the authority of the Commission to any Tribe requesting such assistance.

(D) As a non-profit organization to accept funds from state, federal, private foundations or other sources for operations, when not in conflict with funding efforts for individual Tribes.

(E) To provide public information.

SECTION 2. Any and all rights and powers vested in the member Tribes shall not be abridged by this Constitution.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by unanimous vote of the member Tribes upon at least 15-days notice prior to such meeting to consider a proposed amendment submitted to member Tribes.

ARTICLE X – RATIFICATION

This Constitution and Bylaws shall be in full force and effect when ratified by all member Tribes.*

Signed by:

Chairman Richard A. Halfmoon
Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho

Council resolution NP 77-55, November 23, 1976

Chairman Zane Jackson

Confed. Tribes of the Warm Springs Res. of Oregon
Council resolution 4879, March 21, 1977

Chairman Watson Totus

Confed. Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Indian Nation
Council resolution T-121-77, August 18, 1977

Chairman Leslie Minthorn

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Council resolution 77-43, December 6, 1976

**The first Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission meeting was held on April 27, 1977.*

