Matt Wynne, Secretary Elect
Spokane Tribal Business Council
Spokane Tribe Aboriginal Homelands
Fish Weir
Confluence of the Spokane River and Columbia River, Circa 1930
Salmon fishing was so important to the Spokane Tribe that its leaders missed the 1855 treaty negotiations at Fort Walla Walla. The timing of the negotiations, in late May and early June, coincided with the return of the salmon runs.
“We never wanted for nothing……
until Coulee Dam was build, after that we had nothing…”

Spokane Tribal Elder, Marion Wynecoop
A Sea 2 Source canoe group organized by Voyages of Rediscovery teams with a group of Spokane Tribe students during a summer 2013 journey up the Columbia River to spotlight the plight of salmon runs that must pass dams en route to spawning grounds.
75 Years of Regional Benefits

- Hydropower
- WWII war effort
- Flood protection
- Barging
- Irrigation
- Municipal water storage
- Industry

Map and photos courtesy of NPCC and BPA 2012
75 Years of Spokane Tribal Impacts

- Anadromous fish losses
- Resident fish losses
- Wildlife habitat losses
- Cultural losses
- Economic losses
- Erosion and landslides
“Sometimes even now I find a lonely spot where the river still runs wild. I find myself talking to it. I might ask, ‘River, do you remember how it used to be - the game, the fish, the pure water, the roar of the falls, boats, canoes, fishing platforms? You fed and took care of our people then. For thousands of years we walked your banks and used your waters. You would always answer when our chiefs called to you with their prayer to the river spirit.’ Sometimes I stand and shout, ‘RIVER, DO YOU REMEMBER US?’”

1972 Chairman Alex Sherwood
Spokane Tribe of Indians
Does the cost of reintroduction outweigh the benefits of righting a 75 year wrong?