

## Trant Lindsay

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**From:** Aurolyn Stwyer <aurolynp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 8:42 PM  
**To:** Trant Lindsay; Rep Clem  
**Cc:** Rep Helm; Rep Gilliam; Rep Gomberg; Rep Post; Rep Witt; Rep McLane  
**Subject:** Testimony of Aurolyn Stwyer, member, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

April 15, 2015

From: The Friends of Celilo Falls

Na-k'ishayat, Aurolyn Stwyer,  
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Member #1353

To: State Representative Brian Clem, Committee Chair  
House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water  
Oregon State Capitol  
By email

RE: HJM 15 Celilo Falls feasibility study

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

The Friends of Celilo Falls is a new public benefit nonprofit organization registered in Oregon.

Thank you for this opportunity to have a conversation about the beloved Celilo Falls. I am a member of the Board of Directors for the Friends of Celilo Falls. Please note that despite the false information that is presented by Ms. Seahdom Edmo we are tribal and non-tribal people with a shared vision: to educate the mainstream society about the oldest continuously-inhabited settlement in North America. My homeland is the *N'Chi-Wana*, the mighty Columbia River, Celilo Wyam, in which my people have enjoyed centuries of livelihood with an abundance of resources and wealth.

My great-grandfather is the late Celilo Chief Tommy Thompson who was married to my great-grandmother Lamoosh. The current Celilo Chief Olsen Meanus Jr. is my cousin. I reside on the land where my people were forced to settle at Warm Springs. I've served as an elected tribal leader, Vice Chairwoman for the 24<sup>th</sup> Tribal Council for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. My family has fished at our usual and accustomed places in the Columbia River since time immemorial. I'm blessed to have two sons who maintain our fishing rights today.

It is a rare occasion that I will publicly respond to mean politics. It is our way to pray and allow the will of the Creator. However, I've become protective when Ms. Seahdom has disrespectful, willful and verbose, false accusations along with no specific reference of the Native community she represents. My people ask, "*Shin iwa?*" Who is that? To my knowledge, Ms. Seahdom has never approached my tribe about any expressed concerns, and my people at the Celilo village do not know who she is.

Several Warm Springs and Yakama tribal members have supported the Friends of Celilo when Ms. Seahdom made accusatory personal attacks on the Facebook social media. The careless references by Ms. Seahdom that the Friends of Celilo are non-native is not true. The responses to Ms. Seahdom has been that there are numerous successful non-profit organizations with NON-NATIVE board members which were organized to champion the cause of the Columbia River such as the Columbia River Gorge Commission, Ecotrust, among others. It is ironic to know that Ms. Seahdom is half Caucasian, yet she continuously attacks the Friends of Celilo for being non-native. On the contrary, I'm one of other members of the four state/federally recognized Columbia River Treaty tribes that serve on the Friends of Celilo board of Directors.

We support HJM 15, the call for a feasibility study of a temporary lowering of Lake Celilo to reveal Celilo Falls, but will likely oppose any actual temporary lowering.

The Friends of Celilo Falls supports the treaty rights of the Columbia River tribes to fish at all "usual and accustomed stations." We are both tribal and non-tribal peoples who believe the United States should honor its treaties fully, and that the magnificent Celilo Falls should be put back the way the Creator made it as much as it possibly can be. . . back the way it was before Lewis and Clark. We believe that this is technically possible and morally, ethically, economically and environmentally necessary.

We believe that the present negotiations regarding the 2014-2024 Columbia River Treaty Review create the opportunity to accomplish this miracle while some of those people—tribal and nontribal—who saw Celilo Falls with their own eyes are alive to see the falls live again. *Naii! Axwai mash uncha q'inuta*. Respectfully. Until I see you again.

Na-k'ishayat, Aurolyn Stwyer  
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