



To: Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development  
From: Cheryle A. Kennedy, Tribal Council Vice-Chair, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde  
Date: June 14, 2017  
Subject: Senate Bill 256

Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Gomberg, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cheryle A. Kennedy, I am Vice-Chair of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Tribal Council. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today regarding Senate Bill 256.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is the only modern-day sovereign Tribe that originally inhabited the area of Willamette Falls. The Clowwewalla people, signers of the ratified Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 and a member tribe of Grand Ronde, were the owners and caretakers of the Falls. **Since time immemorial, the Grand Ronde people have lived, fished, gathered, worshiped, and traded with their neighbors at the Falls.** It remains a sacred and culturally important place to the Tribe and its members to this day.

Grand Ronde is the primary consulting Tribe at Willamette Falls, and should be the primary Tribal voice at the table. While the stories of other tribes and peoples are obtained to tell the whole story of the Falls, Grand Ronde's is the primary Tribal story. Grand Ronde is the original owner of the land and the fishing rights at Willamette Falls. **Grand Ronde should be formally consulted as the primary Tribe on any potentially impactful activity proposed at the Falls.**

Fishing at Willamette Falls was not historically open to all people, only to the Clowwewalla, their relatives, and those who paid a fee to the Clowwewalla. Any non-Clowwewalla person who wanted to fish at the Falls had to either pay an agreed-upon fee to the Clowwewalla (traditionally 25% of the catch) or prove that they were related to the Clowwewalla, before being allowed to use the cedar platforms and fishing areas.

The Clowwewalla signed the Willamette Valley Treaty of January 22, 1855, and were subsequently removed to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation. **The Willamette Valley Treaty of January 1855 is the only ratified treaty with Indian tribes in the entire Willamette Valley and river system.** It is mentioned in the documents creating the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation as the treaty for which the Reservation was specifically created (see letter to President Buchanan below). It was signed by, among others, Lal-bick, aka Oregon City John, aka Kwgchyawhesuschk (also a place name for the Falls), Chief of the

Clowwewalla. The Clowwewalla were also known as the Williams Band of Tumwaters and the Willamette Tumwater Band, and were sometimes confused with the Clackamas People (actually their closely-related neighbors, also removed to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation).

Grand Ronde Tribal members, including those with Clowwewalla ancestry, have maintained a close connection to Willamette Falls throughout their history. In the decades after their removal to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation, Tribal members could only leave the Reservation with a special pass from the Indian Agent. Today the Tribe is in possession of the original Passbook, and it is evident most of the passes were procured for the purpose of fishing at Willamette Falls. Several Tribal members today are direct descendants of Chief Lal-bick, and the Falls remain of paramount importance to them and other Tribal members at Grand Ronde. Grand Ronde is the only Tribe that conducts cultural salmon fishing at the Falls.

The protection of salmon, Pacific lamprey, and sacred places is of primary importance to Grand Ronde. The Tribe appreciates the many partnerships it has with governmental and non-governmental organizations at Willamette Falls. Grand Ronde is committed to restoring the once-plentiful runs of salmon and Pacific lamprey that return to the Falls. **Grand Ronde is a partner in protecting and mitigating salmon, lamprey, and cultural sites, and has spent much in Tribal funds toward these goals.**

Letter from J. Thompson, Secretary, Department of the Interior, to President Buchanan. Washington, June 30, 1857:

*SIR: I have the honor to submit to you, herewith, a report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs recommending, and a report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office concurring in the recommendation that the lands embraced **in townships 5 and 6 south, of range 8 west, and parts of townships 5 and 6 south, of range 7 west, Willamette district, Oregon, as indicated in the accompanying plat, be withdrawn from sale and entry, and established as an Indian reservation for the colonization of Indian tribes in Oregon, and particularly for the Willamette tribes, parties to treaty of January, 1855.***<sup>1</sup>

*I respectfully recommend that the proposed reservation be established and have accordingly prepared a form of indorsement on the plat of the same for your signature, in case the recommendation is approved.*

*The "Coast Reservation" alluded to in some of the accompanying papers was established by order of your predecessor, November, 1855.*

*I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,*

*J. Thompson, Secretary*

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<sup>1</sup> Emphasis added.

Oregon is truly unique when it comes to the relationship between the state and the tribes. Together, we have done amazing things, from Governor Atiyeh and the creation of the Commission on Indian Services, to Governor Kitzhaber's Executive Order 96-30, and then passage of SB 770, which put into statute the government-to-government relationship. We should all be proud as Oregonians of the work done to solidify a strong bond between the state and the tribes. This is yet another example of the collaboration that continues to make Oregon a leader in state-tribal relations.