



# The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

P.O. Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

(509) 634-2200

FAX: (509) 634-4116



Prepared Statement of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

House Committee on Rules

Hearing on House Bill 2069, a bill related to tribal consultation.

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Good Morning, Chairman Bowman, Vice Chairs Pham and Drazan, and members of the Committee. On behalf of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, I would like to thank you for convening this hearing on House Bill 2069 and allowing us to submit this testimony in support of tribal consultation. My name is Jarred-Michael Erickson and I am an elected member of the Colville Business Council and the elected Chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation is a federally recognized tribal government headquartered in Nespelem, Washington. We are the representative tribal government and successor interests of the Joseph Band of Nez Perce Indians. Our government works to ensure the Joseph Band's traditional territory, historical connection and cultural ties in the Wallowa area are remembered and accurately and respectfully considered before the state of Oregon.

Since time immemorial, members of the Joseph Band have utilized the creator's bounty by hunting, fishing and gathering first foods in the Wallowa Mountains, valley and nearby rivers. Even after removal, today the Joseph Band has over 560 descendants living on the Colville Reservation. Many of these members still travel to Wallowa County to exercise their treaty rights.

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation strongly supports tribal consultation, especially when it directly impacts or could impact policy around our members traditional territories within the state boundaries of Oregon. Accordingly, we support HB 2069 and its goals to convene a task force and for them to submit to the legislature a report by September 15, 2026.

The Colville Tribes, specifically the Joseph Band of the Nez Perce have hunting, fishing and gathering rights enshrined by the Treaty of 1855 and subsequent court decisions, including the 1987 Judge Valentine decision in Oregon vs. Nanpooya, Sr, where Judge Valentine held, "*For those that come we are speaking. Mr. Nanpooya has come back to his traditional hunting grounds... The time has arrived to restore the clear intent of the Treaty of 1855 to the Joseph Band of Nez Perce.*"

In 1859, the same year Oregon became a state, Old Joseph stated "The boundary of Nez Perce lands was made as I wanted it, not for me but my children that will follow me. There in the Wallowa Valley is where I live and there is where I want to leave my body." Today, Old Joseph

is interred just south of Joseph, Oregon and near the shores of Wallowa Lake. I share this quote to remind you of the long and deep ties the Joseph Band of Nez Perce and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation has to the Wallowa area in present day Northeastern Oregon.

The Colville Tribes appreciates the Committee convening this hearing and is happy to answer any questions that the committee may have in writing.

\*\*\*