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## Northwest Power and Conservation Council

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Montana

September 9, 2015

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Council members

**FROM:** Jeff Allen, Idaho staff

**SUBJECT:** Presentation on the historic Ceremonial Chinook Fishery held on the Duck Valley Reservation by the Shoshone-Paiute Tribe

Buster Gibson, Vice Chairman of the Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe, Jinwon Seo, Fish and Wildlife Director, Shoshone-Paiute Tribe, and Sam Sharr, Anadromous Fish Coordinator, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, will share information about the adult spring chinook ceremonial fishery that was held on the East Fork Owyhee River, Nevada, beginning May 28, 2015 and extending into July 2015.

This was an unprecedented historic event that offered an opportunity for tribal members and their families to participate in an adult Chinook salmon fishery in waters on their reservation lands for the first time in 87 years. Many tribal members and their families, including tribal youth, actively participated in this event. It is hoped that this type of tribal ceremonial fishery, in collaboration with IDFG and others, can continue on a yearly basis into the future.

**PROPOSED ACTION:** None required

**SIGNIFICANCE: BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

None.

### BACKGROUND

This fishery is an example of a collaborative approach among IDFG, SPT, and others, including advice on weir design and placement, and sharing ideas in a spear and fishing technique class offered by members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe of the Fort Hall Reservation.



Ethan Thomas

# Salmon Reintroduction to the Duck Valley Indian Reservation

in coordination with the  
Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Jinwon Seo, Ph.D.  
Director  
Shoshone-Paiute Tribes





# Duck Valley Indian Reservation



- Established on April 16, 1877
- Located on Idaho/Nevada border
  - Owyhee County, ID (50.2%)
  - Elko County, NV (49.8%)
  - Total land area: 450.391 mile<sup>2</sup>
- Deemed sufficient to provide ample fish and wildlife resources for subsistence

# Columbia and Snake River basins





# Bruneau and Owyhee Subbasins

- ❑ Southernmost drainages to Columbia River
- ❑ Historic runs of anadromous<sup>1</sup> salmonids
- ❑ Salmon and steelhead were a significant part of tribal culture
- ❑ Used for subsistence as well as trade goods
- ❑ Identified by NPCC<sup>2</sup> (1995) as “blocked area”

<sup>1</sup> Anadromous: migrating up streams/rivers from the sea to spawn

<sup>2</sup> NPCC: Northwest Power and Conservation Council

# Major dams in the basins





# Dam Construction

- ❑ Owyhee Dam – completed in 1932 (began 1928)
- ❑ Brownlee Dam - completed in 1958
- ❑ Oxbow Dam – completed in 1961
- ❑ Hells Canyon Dam – completed in 1967



**Owyhee Dam**



**Brownlee Dam**



**Oxbow Dam**



**Hells Canyon Dam**

# Background

- ❑ 2011 - Initial discussions with IDFG
- ❑ 2013 - Feasibility Study
- ❑ 2014 - Initial proposal bolstered by negotiations with ID Power's FERC relicensing for Hells Canyon Complex
- ❑ IDFG expresses tentative support for proposal
  - Request for preliminary details for potential reintroduction
- ❑ Steelhead likely, Chinook salmon questionable



# Background (continued)

- ❑ Dec. 2014 - Contacted Paul Kline & Peter Hassemer in IDFG for further discussion
- ❑ Jan. 8, 2015 - Conference call with IDFG
- ❑ Feb~Apr, 2015 – Provide IDFG with preliminary implementation proposal
  - Identify specific river reach                      - Blocking weirs
  - Tribal fishers only, by Tribal Ordinance
  - Emphasis on use of traditional fishing methods
  - Focus on restoration of traditional culture and ceremonies

# Feasibility Study

- ❑ Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund project
  - confirmed the existence of significant carrying capacity in the East Fork Owyhee River



Cramer Fish Sciences  
600 NW Farist Road  
Gresham, OR 97030  
503-431-9577  
www.fishsciences.net

## EAST FORK OWYHEE RIVER SALMON AND STEELHEAD RECOVERY PROJECT 2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Prepared for:

Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation

Owyhee, NV

By:

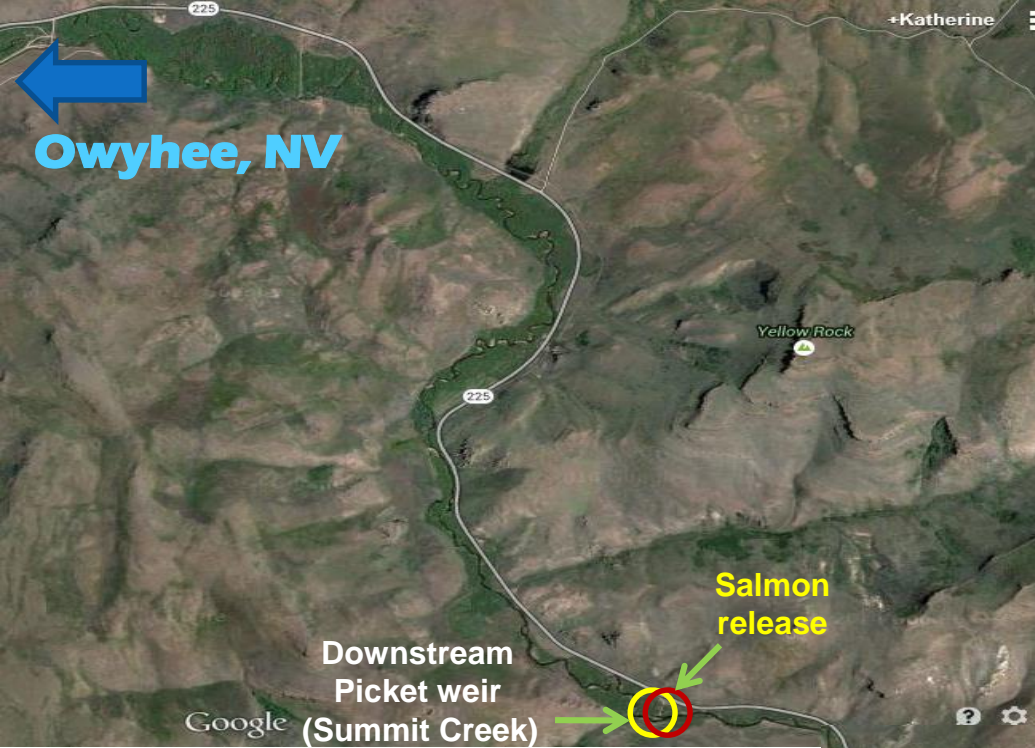
Ian Courter, Forrest Carpenter, Kevin Ceder, and Phil Gaskill

Cramer Fish Sciences

12/13/2013







# Site Selection

- ☐ 6.8 mile river reach selected
  - Based upon habitat parameters
    - Water quality
    - Habitat types, diversity
    - Cover
- ☐ Access
  - safely accommodate dual axle, fish transport truck





# Location of upstream picket weir





# Location of downstream picket weir



Lower site for salmon release (Summit Creek)







**Middle site for salmon release (Fawn Creek)**







**Upper site for salmon release (Tall trees)**





# Picket Weirs

- ❑ Design borrowed from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes - not commercially available
- ❑ Custom fabrication contracted with local Boise metal shop
- ❑ Panels - 10'×3', ~125# each, link together
- ❑ Pickets - 10' aluminum electrical conduit
- ❑ Cost - ~\$950/panel

# Set up picket weirs



Water temperature 13.3 °C  
Dissolved Oxygen 10.73 mg/L







RESOLUTION NUMBER 2015-SPR-107

*A resolution to establish a ceremonial Chinook Salmon fishery on the East Fork of the Owyhee River.*

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BUSINESS COUNCIL OF THE SHOSHONE-PAIUTE TRIBES,

WHEREAS, This organization is an Indian Organization known as the Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation defined under the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934, as amended, to exercise certain rights of home rule and to be responsible for the promotion of cultural, economic and social welfare of its tribal members; and

WHEREAS, According to the Duck Valley Hunting & Fishing Ordinance, 2010-SPO-05, Section 6.2 Fishing, Sub-Section J, "the Shoshone Paiute Business Council, by special resolution, may further limit fishing on the reservation in certain locations for specific periods, when necessary..."; and,

WHEREAS, The Shoshone Paiute Tribes wish to develop a ceremonial salmon fishery to re-establish our cultural traditions and customs; and

WHEREAS, The State of Idaho, in coordination with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, has identified and agreed to transport approximately 100 to 200 returning adult Chinook Salmon surplus, from their Hells Canyon trap on the Snake River, to the Duck Valley Indian Reservation for those cultural traditions/customs purposes; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Business Council hereby adopts the following restrictions/regulations for salmon in the East Fork Owyhee River from the dates of May 26, 2015 through June 30, 2015:

- a. Open Waters: That portion of the East Fork of the Owyhee River from Summit Creek upstream to the southern boundary of the Duck Valley Reservation;
- b. Closed Waters: That portion of the East Fork of the Owyhee River from the Chinatown Diversion Dam upstream to the confluence with Summit Creek;
- c. Restrictions:
  - (1) Only Shoshone Paiute Tribal Members & their immediate family (as defined by Ordinance 2010-SPO-05, Section 3 - Definitions, Sub-Section U: Spouse/Guardian, Children under the age of 18), are allowed to fish for Chinook Salmon in the East Fork of the Owyhee River;
  - (2) Any other person(s) holding a Tribal fishing permit, which may include the Owyhee River, will not be allowed to fish during the stated time period below;
  - (3) All fish harvested from the East Fork of the Owyhee River during this fishery shall be used solely for subsistence and cultural purposes and are not to be sold;
- d. Season: The waters listed above will be open for salmon fishing from May 26th through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015;

Shoshone Paiute Tribes  
Resolution 2015-SPR-107  
Page 2

- e. Possession and Limit: There is no limit on harvest or possession of salmon during this time period;
- f. Reporting Requirements: Each individual shall report the total of each days harvest of salmon to the Shoshone Paiute Tribes' Fish, Wildlife & Parks Department for recording purposes and to facilitate future opportunities;
- g. Fishing Hours: No restrictions;
- h. Gear/Tackle Allowed:
  - (1) Traditional Methods: Spear Fishing, Net Fishing, Weir Traps
    - i. Tools Needed for Spear Fishing: Thick Tie Wire (Baling Wire); Rope; Small Diameter String; Draw Knife; Large Hooks; Lodge Pole/Willow/Other 10'-20'; Plyers; and, Hack Saw, Grinder & File (to modify and prepare hooks).
  - (2) Contemporary Methods: Salmon Fishing Poles
    - i. Tools Needed: Quality Reels with 30-50 lb. test line and large in diameter; Large Treble Hooks; Coil Lead; Orange Flagging or Yarn.
  - j. Prohibited Gear/Tackle: The possession or use of live bait (including earth worms & chumming bait), firearms, bows or any other gear not commonly used in angling;
  - k. Boating: Will not be allowed on the East Fork of the Owyhee River; and

BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Law Enforcement, as well as, Fish, Wildlife & Parks staff have the authority to enforce the restrictions/regulations listed herein; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, As of July 1, 2015, the restrictions/regulations listed herein will become null and void and all sections of Ordinance 2010-SPO-05 will resume.

#### CERTIFICATION

It is hereby certified that the Shoshone Paiute Business Council is composed of 6 Council Members and a Chairman of whom 4 Council Members constituting a quorum and a Chairman were present at a meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015, and that the foregoing resolution was adopted by an affirmative vote of 4 FOR; 0 AGAINST; and 0 ABSTENTIONS pursuant to the authority contained in Article VI, Section 1(f), of the Constitution of the Shoshone Paiute Tribes approved April 20, 1936.

LINDSEY W. MANNING, Tribal Chairman

ANGELE SABERI, Executive Secretary

## Restrictions/Regulations for Salmon Fishing in the East Fork Owyhee River from May 26, 2015 ~ June 30, 2015:

(Per Tribal Resolution Number 2015-SPR-107)

**Open Waters:** That portion of the East Fork of the Owyhee River from Summit Creek upstream to the southern boundary of the Duck Valley Reservation.

**Closed Waters:** That portion of the East Fork of the Owyhee River from the Chinatown Diversion Dam upstream to the confluence with Summit Creek.

#### Restrictions:

Only Shoshone Paiute Tribal Members & their *immediate family* (Spouse/Guardian and Children under the age of 18 - as defined by Ordinance 2010-SPO-05), are allowed to fish for Chinook Salmon in the East Fork of the Owyhee River.

Any other person(s) holding a Tribal fishing permit, which may include the Owyhee River, will not be allowed to fish during the stated time period below.

All fish harvested from the East Fork of the Owyhee River during this fishery shall be used solely for subsistence and cultural purposes and are not to be sold.

**Season:** The waters listed above will be open for salmon fishing from May 26th through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**Possession and Limit:** There is no limit on harvest or possession of salmon during this time period.

**Reporting Requirements:** Each individual shall report the total of each days harvest of salmon to the Shoshone Paiute Tribes Fish, Wildlife & Parks Department for recording purposes and to facilitate future opportunities.

**Fishing Hours:** No restrictions.

#### Gear/Tackle Allowed:

Traditional Methods: Spear Fishing, Net Fishing, Weir Traps

(Tools Needed for Spear Fishing: Thick Tie Wire (Baling Wire); Rope; Small Diameter String; Draw Knife; Large Hooks; Lodge Pole/Willow/Other 10'-20'; Plyers; and, Hack Saw, Grinder & File (to modify and prepare hooks)).

Contemporary Methods: Salmon Fishing Poles

(Tools Needed: Quality Reels with 30-50 lb. test line and large in diameter; Large Treble Hooks; Coil Lead; Orange Flagging or Yarn.)

**Prohibited Gear/Tackle:** The possession or use of live bait (including earth worms & chumming bait), firearms, bows or any other gear not commonly used in angling.

**Boating:** Will not be allowed on the East Fork of the Owyhee River.

**Enforcement:** The Bureau of Indian Affairs Law Enforcement, as well as, Fish, Wildlife & Parks staff have the authority to enforce the restrictions/regulations listed herein.

*As of July 1, 2015, the restrictions/regulations listed herein will become null and void and all sections of Ordinance 2010-SPO-05 will resume.*



# Traditional Fishing Methods

- ❑ Fishing spears, gill nets, fish weirs
  - spears were preferred tools
  
- ❑ Spear-making workshop
  - training provided by Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and Sho-Pai Tribes Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Dept.
  - 65 people attended, many youth
  - on site instruction
  - hands-on demonstration

# CHINOOK SALMON



A PROJECT IS UNDERWAY TO  
REINTRODUCE CHINOOK SALMON BACK  
INTO THE OWYHEE RIVER FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
TRADITIONAL FISHING.

## Spear-Making Workshop

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MAY 27TH

TIME: 5:00 PM

WHERE: FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS SHOP

*\*\* Required materials are listed, some tools will be  
available for use, and hooks are for sale during the workshop.*

For More Information Contact: Buster Gibson at 208-409-4071, Richard Edwards or Jinwon Seo at  
208-759-3246.



## SPEAR-MAKING

### MATERIALS

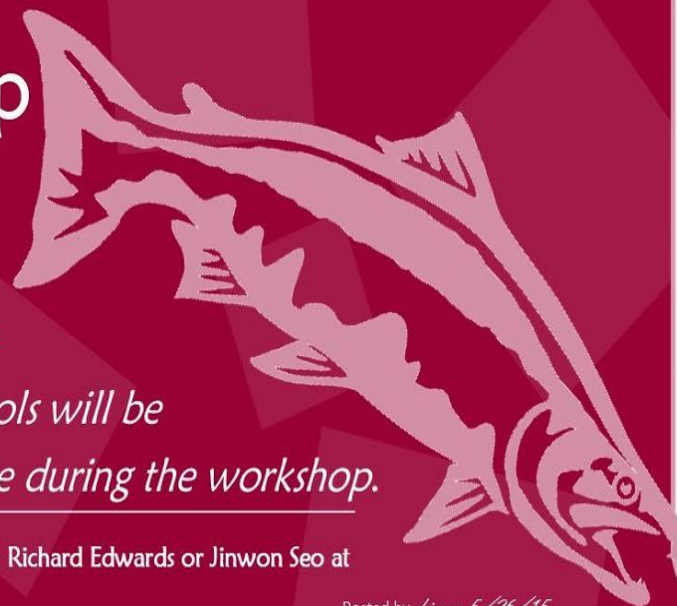
#### TRADITIONAL METHOD

- ~ Tie Wire/Baling Wire (thick)
- ~ Rope (low diameter, high strength)
- ~ Dental Floss/Nylon Thread (waxed) or Waxed Sinew
- ~ Draw Knife/Wood Plane
- ~ Shark Hooks (12/0 –14/0 size)
- ~ Lodge Pole or Willow (10 to 20 ft.)
- ~ Pliers (Needle-Nose)
- ~ Hack Saw/Grinder & File (to modify & prepare hooks)

#### CONTEMPORARY METHOD

- ~ Fishing Pole (Salmon Pole)
- ~ Reels
- ~ High Quality Line (30-50 lb. test)
- ~ Large Treble Hooks (3-Prong)
- ~ Lead Coil (to wrap around hook)
- ~ Orange Flagging (to tie on snagging hooks—sight fishing)
- ~ Salmon Eggs/Roe

*\*\* Some tools will be available &  
other items will be available for  
purchase during the workshop.*









# Chinook Salmon Release

- ❑ First fish ceremony, and blessing, held at initial release site - well attended by community
- ❑ IDFG provided transport from Hells Canyon Dam
  - ~300 miles
  - 199 adult Chinook salmon
  - 14 pound average
  - 3 sites, ~66 Chinook/site





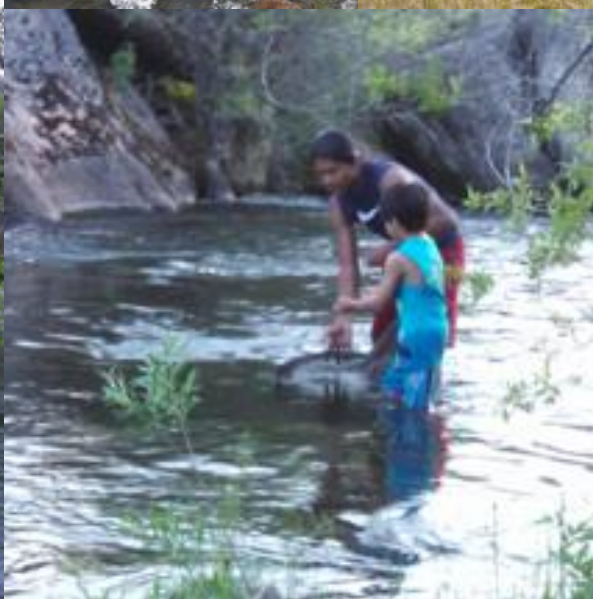














THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2015

**GUEST OPINION**

**Wolves demonized, with no regard for reality**

OPINIONS, D2

**WOMEN'S WORLD CUP**

**IDAHO STATE STAR PLAYING FOR MEXICO**

SPORTS, A8

**IDAHO OUTDOORS**

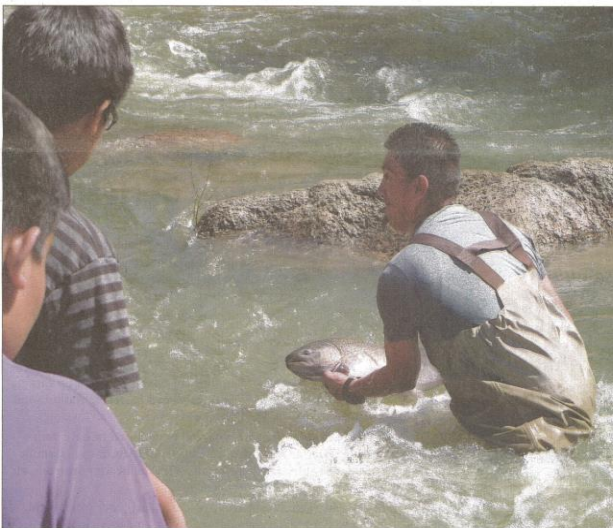
## COOL TRIP TO THE DESERT? GET THERE BEFORE SUMMER

The Owyhee Desert, in Southwest Idaho, northern Nevada and southeastern Oregon, offers stunning scenery, fun trips, cool wildlife and neat campsites, but no matter your pleasure, don't wait much longer to go, our Roger Phillips advises. **EXPLORE, E1**

**RETURN TO THE RIVER**

# SALMON SWIM IN OWYHEE AFTER 87-YEAR ABSENCE

Shoshone Paiute fishermen relearn traditions that once were part of everyday life



Shoshone Paiute Fisheries

For the first time since the Owyhee Dam was built in 1928, salmon were returned to the Owyhee River in Nevada by the Shoshone Paiute Tribes on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, about 130 miles south of Boise. The tribe was able to fish for salmon for both ceremonial reasons and subsistence in a historic event not seen for three generations. Above, Shoshone Paiute Fisheries staffer Josh Coons releases a chinook salmon into the Owyhee on May 28, one of 199 salmon trapped and released for the event. Rocky Barker explains what it took to bring back the fish. **DEPTH, D1**

## Shoshone Paiute relearn a fishing tradition, and pass it along, for both ceremony and subsistence

BY ROCKY BARKER  
rbarker@idahostatesman.com  
© 2015 Idaho Statesman

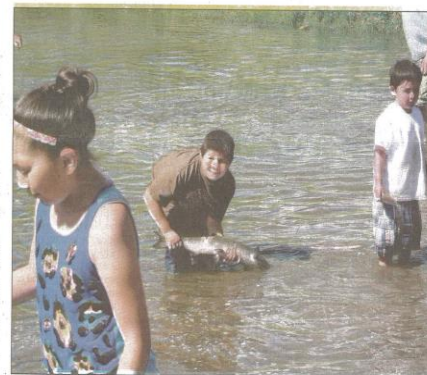
Salmon are swimming in the Owyhee River for the first time since 1928, and Shoshone Paiute tribal fishermen are catching them in Nevada.

The historic event, engineered in part by Buster Gibson, the vice chairman of the Shoshone Paiute Tribes Business Council, restores for now the spring chinook salmon that migrated into Nevada for centuries before dams cut them off from the Pacific. Working with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and federal fisheries officials, the tribe placed 199 salmon collected in a trap below Hells Canyon Dam and held temporarily at the Rapid River Hatchery near Riggins.

The fish were released May 28 after the tribe held a sacred "first salmon ceremony," the last celebrated 87 years ago.

"We celebrated with ceremony, we did it with prayer, we did it with song," said Shoshone Paiute Business Council chairman Lindsey Manning. "People were lined up along the banks of the river cheering and applauding."

Several elders are old enough to have memories of salmon as a child. But three generations have lost the harvest that provides both spiritual sustenance and healthy food, which fed their ancestors for centuries.



Shoshone Paiute Fisheries

Logan Cummings shows off the salmon he speared with a carved stick in the Owyhee. The fish later started flopping on the bank, causing Cummings to jump on top of it.

When the 3-foot-long fish arrived, some of the elders had tears in their eyes. The day before, tribal leaders sponsored a spearing workshop to teach traditional fishing methods to members who have not had the same chance to fish salmon as other Idaho tribes, such as the Shoshone-Banock.

**RETURN TO THE RIVER**

# Tribe welcomes back salmon to the Owyhee



Shoshone Paiute Fisheries

Ethan Thomas races to shore with a freshly caught chinook salmon. Tribal leaders held a spearing workshop the night before the fish were released to pass along the traditional methods.

**D** SALMON

CONTINUED FROM D1

Weirs were placed on a 5-mile stretch of the river south of Owyhee, Nev., on the reservation to keep the released salmon there. They are expected to remain through the end of the month, until they spawn and die. Only tribal members are allowed to fish.

"How inspiring it is to see a fishing people begin to fish again after so many years," said Will Stelle, NOAA Fisheries West Coast Regional administrator. "The best part is that this is only the beginning and a harbinger of more opportunities to come."

The Shoshone Paiute live on the 289,800-acre Duck Valley Reservation 130 miles south of Boise, where many of their ancestors lived for part of the year. About 1,700 of the more than 2,000 tribal members live on the reservation, which was established by presidential order in 1877 and expanded in 1886 and 1930.

The location was picked in part because of the salmon that swam in the Owyhee River running through the reservation. Manning remembers his father's stories of anglers dropping off salmon at his house from backboard wagons.

His father also told of salmon so large they "would hang off the saddlehorn of a horse with its tail touching the ground."

But development during the 20th century clipped away at the migration route for the great fish that came from the Pacific, up the Columbia and Snake rivers and finally up the Owyhee, a nearly 900-mile journey. The last run was 1928, before Owyhee Dam construction closed off the river. It was completed in 1932.

Then Idaho Power built Brownlee, Oxtow and Hells Canyon dams in the 1950s and 1960s. The required fish passage system failed, killing tens of thousands of salmon heading for tributaries such as the Owyhee.

Idaho Power convinced federal regulators to allow it to offset the blockage with hatcheries, which have provided fisheries throughout Idaho. But the deal ended what few salmon runs had survived into Nevada.

In 2007, then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada asked federal regulators to require Idaho Power to provide passage to salmon and steelhead above its Hells Canyon complex on the Snake River as part of its new license.

Reid wrote to Joseph T. Kelliher, chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, urging the commission to do what it can to restore salmon runs to Nevada.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

To learn more about the Shoshone Paiute Tribes and Owyhee County, read Boise State University History professor John Baker's new book, "Showdown in the Big Quiet Land, Myth and Government in the American West."

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Jeff Allen for the Northwest Power and Conservation Council

Buster Gibson dips salmon out of an Idaho Department of Fish and Game truck to release in the Owyhee River on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

reads.

"Some of our state's proud ranchers still recall a time when salmon would spawn in the streams that cross their meadows and fields," he wrote.

Nevada sportsmen had joined the ShosPais, as they call themselves, in the effort to have salmon captured below Hells Canyon tracked to Nevada rivers for anglers, much like Boise River anglers have done since the 1990s. That effort included

support salmon and steelhead. But it still has not resolved issues on water temperature and water quality issues.

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guished. But ShosPai officials didn't give up. They authorized studies in 2013 that showed the East Fork of the Owyhee River and other headwaters of the Owyhee had sufficient flow and water temperature conditions to support salmon.

Armed with the data, Gibson asked Yost, one of Idaho's members on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council — it recommends projects for the Bonneville Power Administration and other federal agencies — to push for the tribes during consultations in 2014. Getting all the approvals necessary made it impossible to do last year.

Fish and Game was able to complete the necessary protocols this year, but there is no guarantee it will continue every year.

"We'll take it one step at a time," Yost said.



# Acknowledgements

## ❑ Special Thanks

- Sho-Pai Tribal Business Council
- IDFG (Sam Sharr, Jeff Heindel, Jeff Seggerman, Pete Hassemer, Paul Kline)
- NPCC (Jim Yost, Jeff Allen)
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Chad, Tommy, Jacee)
- USRT (Heather Ray, Robert Austin)
- Senator Reed (NV)
- Sho-Pai Tribes Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Dept. (Rick Edwards and our staffs)



# Thanks for your support

