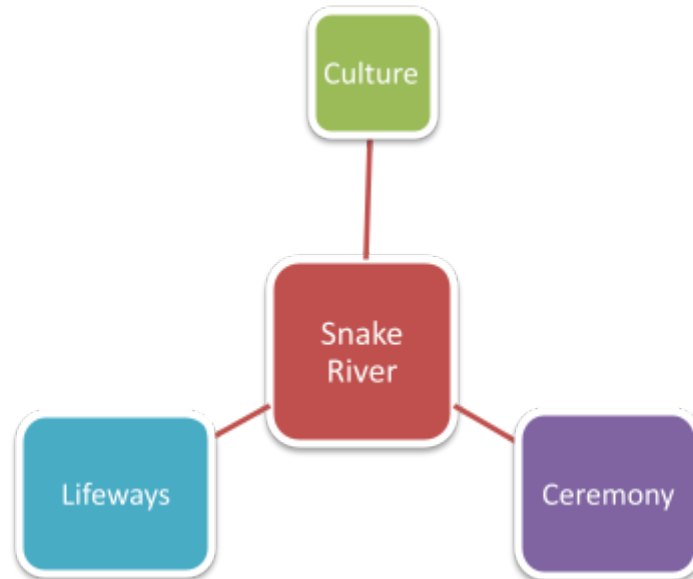


Frame of Reference: Snake River to Salish Sea *Spirit of the Waters* Totem Pole Journey



The totem pole journey is committed to standing behind and supporting the on-going intertribal campaign to remove the Snake River dams. While this broader campaign necessarily involves science, law, and politics, the *Spirit of the Waters* journey, and its events, approach the issue more from the complementary moral high ground of indigenous lifeways, culture and ceremony.

Sampling of Messaging Signifiers: Some of the important messaging signifiers include:

- The journey stands behind and supports the intertribal campaign to remove the Snake River dams
- Part of the resurgent indigenous-led conservation
- Brings together ceremony, art, science, spirituality, indigenous relationalities and lifeways, and diverse groups, publics, and communities
- Critical element is honor and the moral ground of the issue and its historical roots and branches connecting to a sacred relationship with nature

Sampling of Messaging Elements:

- Journey honors relations and relationality: Snake to the Columbia to the Salish Sea; salmon to the orca to indigenous lifeways
- The Snake River is not only a body of water, it is an inspirited life force for cultural and spiritual continuity and renewal.
- The salmon are not merely a resource, they are and have been for countless generations both an anchor and a life-line for indigenous lifeways, identity, and culture.
- Understanding the obligation to restore the Snake River and the Salish Sea requires not only the use of science, but also indigenous knowledge and intergenerational deep-storying that draws on a kinship and place-based relationship with nature.
- Removing the dams to restore the spirit of the river is more than a legal obligation or a biological necessity, it is a moral imperative of historic proportions.
- This ancient indigenous relationship with nature is not only important for the Snake River. In our era of indigenous-led conservation, understanding and honoring indigeneity might ultimately determine whether and how we emerge from the current regional and even global environmental crisis.

Journey Narrative: The Power of One in the Bundle of Many

The journey emphasizes events in key Pacific Northwest tribal communities with stake in the removal of the Snake River dams. It also includes events for the general public in Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and Eugene. In every case indigenous voice are elevated above the jural-legal and strictly scientific narrative to bring attention to their unique cultural, spiritual, and historic perspective on the issue. The events will also inform, educate, and engage through inspiration the general public as well as elected officials. They will, by way of the presenters and attendees, demonstrate the broad-based public for the tribes' position on this issue. It is a journey for the heart and mind in the spirit of the river, of collaboration, and the vision of restoring the Snake River and, with it, the Salish Sea.

- Eugene was selected as the first stop on the journey to coincide with the annual intertribal pow-wow and to engage indigenous and non-indigenous students and faculty on the background, vision and purpose of the journey. The first event, "The Science in Ceremony," will explore how indigenous ceremony and ceremonial knowledge can be more equitably represented in evaluating issues such as the removal of the Snake River dams. The second more public event, "Art, Ceremony and Activism," will include presentations from tribal leaders who will share their experience in bringing together art, ceremony, and activism in some of the most significant environmental campaigns in the Pacific Northwest over the past decade.
- After Eugene the journey begins an eight hundred mile drive with the totem pole from the Pacific Coast and the Chinook Nation to the land of the Shoshone-Bannock in Idaho. The event with the Chinook Nation in Astoria is similar in nature to those that will be held in tribal communities deeply impacted by the issue of the Snake River dams: the community of Celilo, Nez Perce, Umatilla and Shoshone-Bannock. At each location, and in accordance with tribal protocols, the event will focus on salmon, culture and lifeways, ceremony, and how they relate to the moral and historic imperative of removing the Snake River dams. They will each also include a blessing of the totem pole and the vision of a journey that signifies unity across landscapes and cultures. Finally, also present at each event will be an eight-foot long Chinook salmon carved by Lummi Indian Master Carver Jewell James. It will have been previously journeyed in April by Yakama tribal member JoDe Goudy and other ceremonialists through numerous private ceremonies to honor the waters from the headwaters of the Snake River in Wyoming down to the Astoria. It will also bring blessings, and be blessed, at every totem pole journey event.
- In addition to events in the tribal communities, the journey will reach into three major metropolitan centers in the I-5 Corridor: Portland, Seattle, and Tacoma. The events are designed to appeal to both the tribal community and the general public. Although the journey emphasizes resurgent indigenous-led conservation, it also honors the supporting role non-governmental organizations have played, and continue to play, in the Snake River campaign. In each metropolitan event tribal leaders will be joined with leadership from both the environmental and faith-based communities. In addition, and in order to further emphasize strength through diversity, the journey will be joined by the documentarian Gian Lawrence and Freebuilt Films. At Seattle and Tacoma events Gian will share his thoughts and feelings from witnessing the journey through the lens of the African-American experience.