2017 Survey’s

at Spring Jam, Backpack Giveaway, other Community Events

Approximately 500 surveys were responded to.

At least 60% wanted Pedestrian Safety addressed.
SAFETY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Tribal Transportation Safety Program

Prepared by:
Yakama Nation
Department of Natural Resources
Engineering Program
August 2019

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2019

Tribal Transportation Program
Prepared by:
Department of Natural Resources
Engineering Program

USC Title 23, FAST Act, requires a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) in order for tribes to receive Highway Trust Funds (HTF). This 2019 Long Range Transportation Plan, solely for the Yakama Nation, updates LRTP completed in 1999 and as updated in 2008. YN Engineering developed this LRTP with the assistance of the public comment, various tribal programs and local transportation agencies.
Sacred Mount Adams returned to Yakama Nation after century-long fight

On May 20, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed an executive order returning 21,000 acres of forest land to the Yakama Nation of Washington and resolving a century-long dispute over reservation boundaries. The order returned to tribal control the east side of Mount Adams, a nearly 11,000-foot, snow-covered peak that is one of the Yakama Nation’s sacred mountains. The Yakama Treaty of 1855, which created the reservation, erroneously omitted the mountain.

“When we were negotiating the treaty, our elders made sure to include Mount Adams within the reservation boundaries,” said Erich Watchman, a spokesperson for the Yakama Nation. The treaty sparked the Yakama battles that took place between 1850 and 1870 and finally the treaty was ratified, but at that point they made a surveying error that cut Mount Adams out of the reservation boundaries.”

In 1967, President Grover Cleveland created the Mount Baker Forest Reserve near the western boundary of the Yakama Reservation. Ten years later, President Theodore Roosevelt extended the boundary of the forest to include a tract of 21,000 acres, then assumed to be public land. In 1962, a portion of the tract was designated the Mount Adams Wild area, and between 1964 and 1972, it was considered public land under the Wilderness Act. When Nixon returned the land to the Yakama, it was part of a larger tract known as the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

“The surveyors were wrong. After 45 years,” Nixon said as he signed the executive order. “The U.S. Government lost the treaty map in its own files. And by the time it was found, actions had been taken which had mistakenly displaced the Indians from this land.”

The executive order was a victory for the Yakama Nation, a confederacy of 14 tribes and bands in south central Washington that revered Mount Adams as an important and legendary landmark. The mountain, also known as Pahto, is one of five sacred mountains that comprise the Yakama Nation’s five sacred mountains.

The story of Pahto

Pahto was jealous of Wawanch, or Simcoe Mountain. Because she was the first to greet the sun every morning, she chopped off Wawanch’s head, leaving the mountain with a flattened top. As punishment, Wawanch turned into an evergreen fir. Despite Pahto’s act of aggression, the mountain still delivers clear spring water and many sources of food.

“Mount Adams is important spiritually, but it also is a source of a lot of resources,” Watchman said. “Cranes come down, animals live there and berries are harvested. We also have traditionally gathered there as fishing.”

A generations long fight

Immediately after it lost Mount Adams, the tribe began working to get it back. Before it was successful, however, it had to raise up a generation of savvy leaders.

“As each generation grows up, one of the things the elders would retell was that the two were on the part of the U.S., this was something we needed to fix,” Watchman said. “Our children were raised knowing this, hearing this. We Really had a generation that understood the laws and spoke English and could take care of the government.”

The first victory came in 1946 when the Indian Claims Commission found that the land was rightfully part of the Yakama Reservation. But the commission had authority only to reimburse the tribe for lands lost, not correct the mistake.

The tribe then partnered with other Indigenous Peoples in similar circumstances—and caught the attention of the national media, said Johnson Merriw, cultural resource program manager for the Yakama Nation. Merriw is a member of the tribe that lived when Nixon returned the land.

“The original surveyors were all mixed up,” he said. “We always knew the tract had been left out of the treaty, but we had to complain for years before we got it back. Our forefathers fought for it for 30 years before it finally went through.”

In his signing statement, Nixon acknowledged the “unintentional but mistaken actions” of the federal government and the Indian Claims Commission’s inability to return the land. Roosevelt’s 1907 executive order “did not constitute a taking of the land by the government in the legal sense,” Nixon said, so the land could be restored through executive order.

When he received news that the mountain was returned, Yakama Tribal Council Chairman Robert Jim praised Nixon. “Although we have not faced all other claims or treaty matters, the President of the United States, representing Indians as their trustee, in returning Mount Adams has shown the world the calibre leader he is,” he said.

Meanwhile, in the halls of conference centers, homes and offices, the people could be heard saying, “We got the mountain back; we got the mountain back,” Watchman said.

Yakama Nation Tribal Transportation Program and Tribal Traffic Safety Coordinator

Heritage Connectivity Trails

Help us pave the way for Pedestrian Safety in the Lower Yakima Valley

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BE SEEN. WA KINU PINAKINŪ.

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