

COMMENTS BY THE KAH-MILT-PAH (ROCK CREEK) BAND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSED GOLDENDALE PUMP STORAGE PROJECT



Sage Park
Washington Department of Ecology
1250 West Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009

February 12, 2021

Dear Ms. Park:

I am the designated chief of the Kah-Milt-Pah (Rock Creek Band) and I am providing comments for our people in reference to the Goldendale Pump Storage Project Environmental Impact Statement. The Kah-Milt-Pah Band has ancestral ties to this land where this project is proposed and we have grave concern for the potential impacts this project will have to our resources.

The location of this site is known as Put-a-lish and is a sacred site to our Kah-Milt-Pah Band. From the valley toe where the land meets the N'chi Wana (Columbia River) to the top of the ridge Put-a-lish is very important to our people. At the bottom of the ridge is where there was a village site known as Willa-wit-is with fish access sites and other culturally important properties. There are many culturally significant plants we gather on the north facing slope of this ridge site and also on top at Put-a-lish. Our families still camp and fish at Willa-wit-is to this day. The foods that are gathered here are our First Foods that we utilize for subsistence and ceremonial purposes.

We have concerns for our ancient village site, fishing sites, and root gathering sites which will all be disturbed when these two 60 acre reservoirs will be constructed and when the large pipes will be installed vertically along the ridge. This project will desecrate our sacred site and food gathering sites. We have concerns for the N'chi Wana and the amount of water that will be withdrawn and deprive the fish and other aquatic species since there will be evaporation from these reservoirs and additional water withdrawals will be required to fill the reservoir.

Our people have already endured the construction of wind farms in the Put-a-lish over decade ago on our sacred site and root gathering fields. If this project is approved and proceeds than the avian and wildlife species will also be displaced and their habitat will be degraded. This area is also an important wildlife migration corridor for deer and elk. We always have concern for all wildlife since they cannot speak for themselves and they take care of us to provide us with food, clothing, and ceremonial instruments. We continue to practice our seasonal realm of traveling and gathering our traditional foods and medicines in all our Usual and Accustomed lands.

We are here today to be counted, voicing the concern from our people of Kah-Milt-Pah and the surrounding areas along the N'chi Wana (Columbia River). Thank you

Bronso Ume-tee-chum Jim Jr