

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN THE  
WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
AND THE  
COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to promote cooperation and communication between the Cowlitz Tribe (Tribe) and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department). The Tribe and the Department have common interests in maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations in Southwest Washington. The Department and the Tribe acknowledge that cooperation and communication will reduce the potential for conflict between the Tribe and the Department. This MOU does not attempt to precisely define nor does it create, expand or diminish any party's legal rights or jurisdictions.

## **Acknowledgements**

- 1) On behalf of the United States government, the United States Department of Interior has acknowledged the Cowlitz Indian Tribe as a sovereign governmental entity. Federal acknowledgement of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe results in the establishment of a government-to-government relationship between the Tribe and the federal government.
- 2) In 1989, Washington Governor Booth Gardner and tribal leaders, including the Cowlitz Tribe after following federal recognition in 2002, signed a Centennial Accord in which they pledged to institutionalize government-to-government relationships between the governments of the recognized tribes of Washington and the executive branch of state government including state agencies.
- 3) The Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe commit to working together consistent with the state of Washington's and the Indian Tribes' of Washington pledge to work on a government-to-government basis.
- 4) The Department has the statutory authority and responsibility to conserve the wildlife and food fish, game fish, and shellfish in a manner that does not impair the resource. The Department shall preserve, protect, and perpetuate, and manage the wildlife and food fish, game fish, and shellfish in state waters and offshore water.
- 5) The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission may authorize the taking of wildlife, food fish, game fish, and shellfish at times or places, or in manner or quantities, as in the judgment of the commission does not impair the supply of these resources consistent with state and federal law.

- 6) The Cowlitz Tribe will work to protect and restore fish and wildlife resources within their traditional homelands.
- 7) The Cowlitz Tribe has the right of self-governance consistent with applicable federal and state laws.

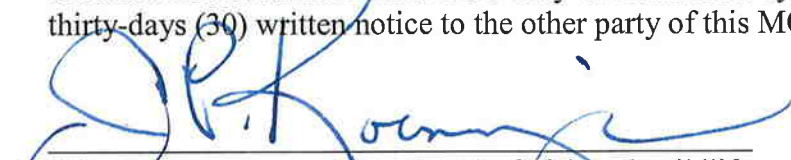
**Joint Commitments**

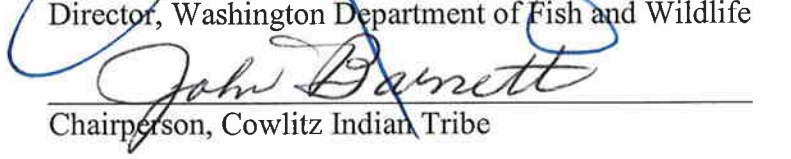
In the spirit of these acknowledgements, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe adopt the following commitments intended to institutionalize their government-to government relationship.

- 1) In recognition of the Cowlitz Tribe's sovereignty, the Department will work with Tribe on government-to-government basis involving issues that impact the Tribe within the their traditional homelands.
- 2) The Department and the Tribe will each designate a policy contact person that will have the responsibility of ensuring that emergent issues brought forward by either party are addressed in a timely manner.
- 3) Through their policy contacts and others whom they may designate, the Department and the Tribe will meet at least once per year to discuss items of mutual interest concerning fish and wildlife in Southwest Washington.
- 4) An agenda will be jointly developed by the policy contacts prior to the meeting and distributed to the appropriate designees.

**Term of the MOU**

This MOA shall take effect when each of the signatories indicated below have executed this document. This MOU may be terminated by either signatory upon thirty-days (30) written notice to the other party of this MOU.

  
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Director, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

  
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Chairperson, Cowlitz Indian Tribe