

# Diné Solidarity for Pushpum

---

- Tó Nizhóní Ání
- Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Columbia Riverkeeper

Photo by Columbia Riverkeeper

# Webinar Outline

---

- Introduction
  - Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project Summary
  - Creating Solidarity for Pushpum
  - Pacific Northwest Tour
- Presenter Introduction
- Pumped Storage Hydropower
- Big Canyon Dam Summary
- Protecting Pushpum
- Call to Action
- Closing



# Webinar Introduction

---

Adrian Herder, Tó Nizhóní Ání

[www.tonizhoniani.org](http://www.tonizhoniani.org)

Topics:

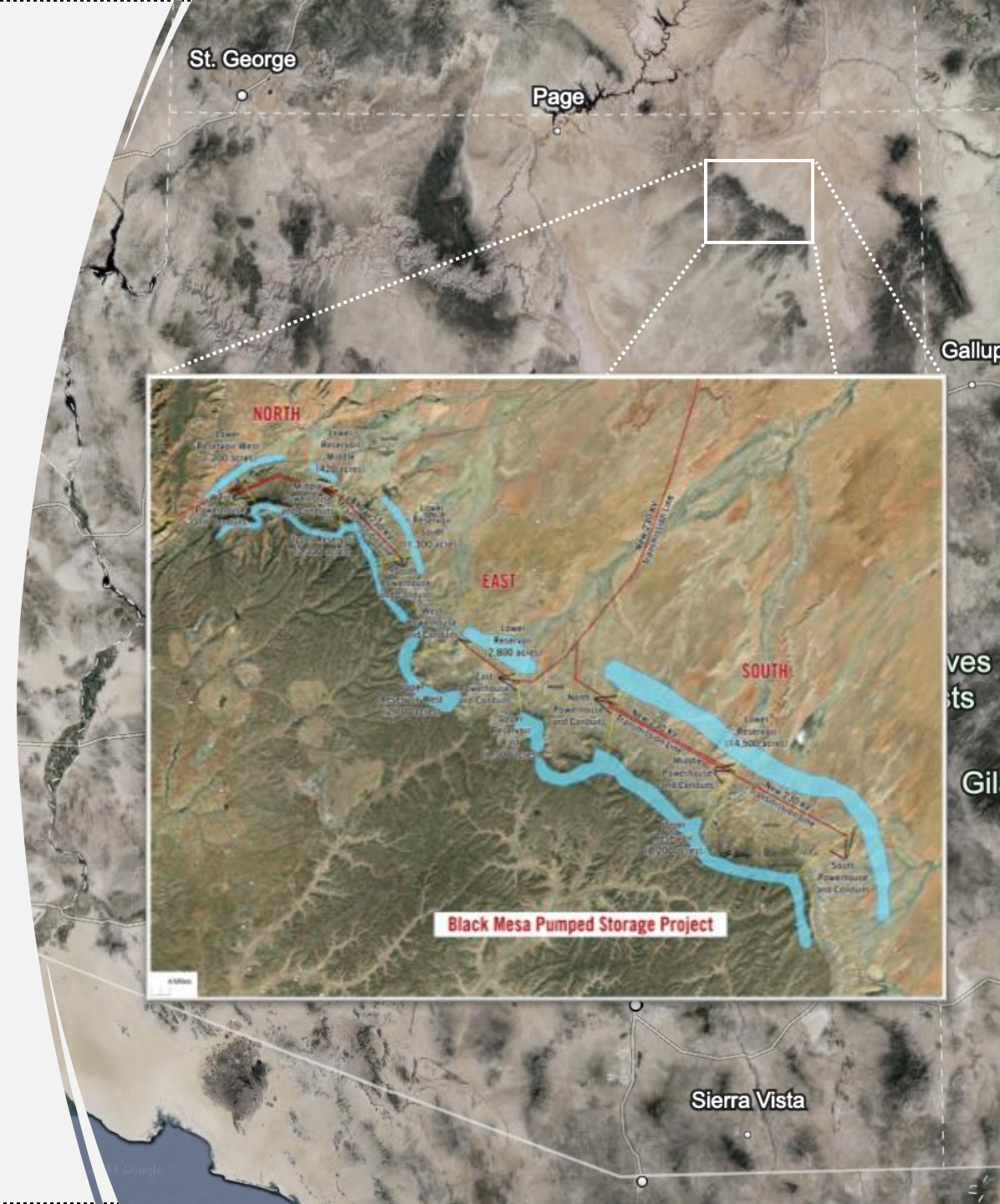
- Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project  
Summary
- Creating Solidarity for Pushpum
- Pacific Northwest Resource Tour



A black and white photograph of a person wearing a dark hoodie and a white face mask. They are holding a large white sign with black text. The sign reads: "STOP CREATING JOBS THAT DESTROY NAVAJO WATER!". The background shows a stone building and a flagpole with a flag.

# Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project (BMPSP)

- Developer: Nature & People First - Arizona
- Projects: Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project
  - North (2,250 MW)
  - East (1,500 MW)
  - South (2,250 MW)
- Location: Northeastern edge of Black Mesa, Navajo Nation
- Water Use: 450,000 acre-feet of Navajo water
- [www.tonizhoniani.org/no-bmpsp](http://www.tonizhoniani.org/no-bmpsp)



# Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project (BMPSP)

---

- Preliminary Applications to FERC 2022
- Rejected by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) 2024
- 19 Navajo Chapter Resolutions opposing the projects
- Navajo Nation has repeatedly opposed these projects.



# Community Concerns:

---

1. Excessive use of Navajo water.
2. Water source was not identified.
3. Lack of community consultation and transparency.
4. Water evaporation.
5. Land and wildlife impacts.

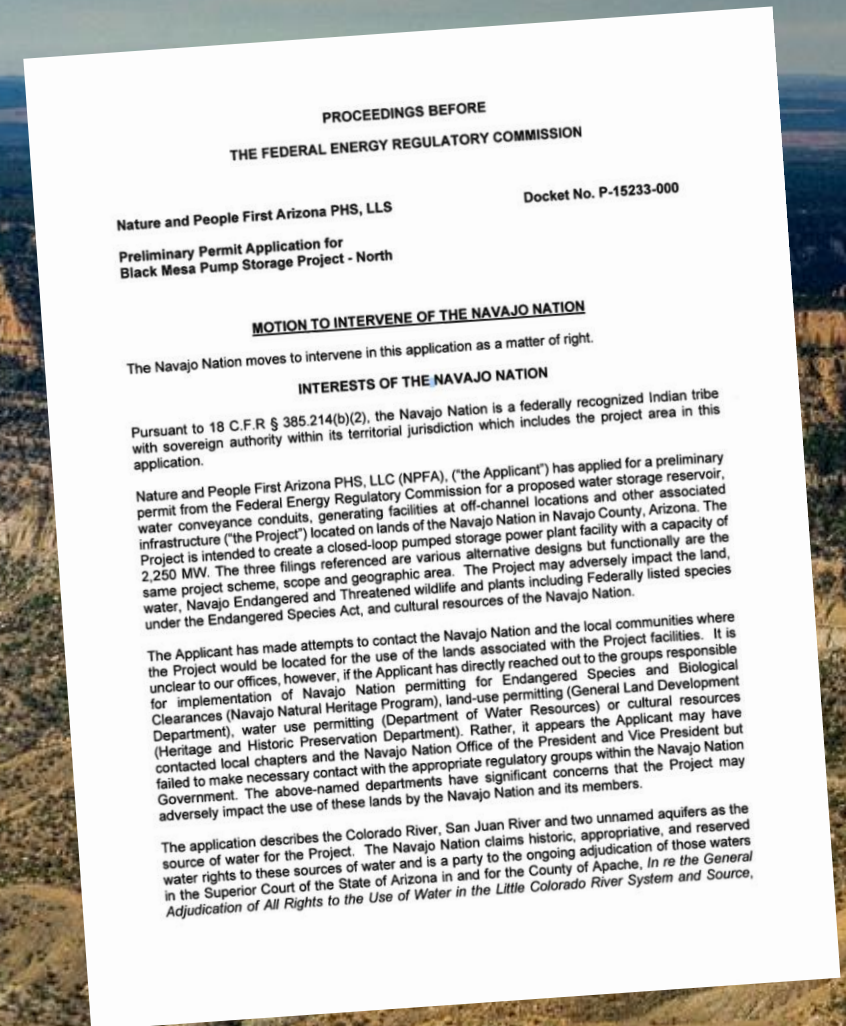
*"As they destroyed Black Mesa with their strip mining, all the animals that used to be down there came up this way, and that's why we consider all this area north of us as the refuge of all those animals. And that's why we object so strenuously against the Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project."*

-Herb Yazzie, Black Mesa Resident



# Navajo Nation Motion to Intervene

1. Lack of meaningful consultation
2. No consent from the Navajo Nation
3. Land use impacts
4. Impacts to water rights of the Navajo Nation
5. Impacts to wildlife and plant resources
6. Impacts to Colorado and San Juan River fish resources
7. Impacts to cultural resources



# Diné Solidarity for Pushpum Webinar

---

- Response to pumped storage projects on Yakama territories and Diné lands.
- Navajo Pacific Northwest Natural Resource Tour
- Call to Action





# Pacific Northwest Tour

---

- Navajo Nation Resource & Development Committee approved travel for tour
- Tour:
  - Large-scale irrigated agriculture
  - Hydroelectric power pumped storage.
- August 1 – 3, 2024
- In/near Goldendale, Washington



# Navajo Nation Resource & Development Committee (RDC)

---

Jessica Keetso, Tó Nizhóní Ání

[www.tonizhoniani.org](http://www.tonizhoniani.org)

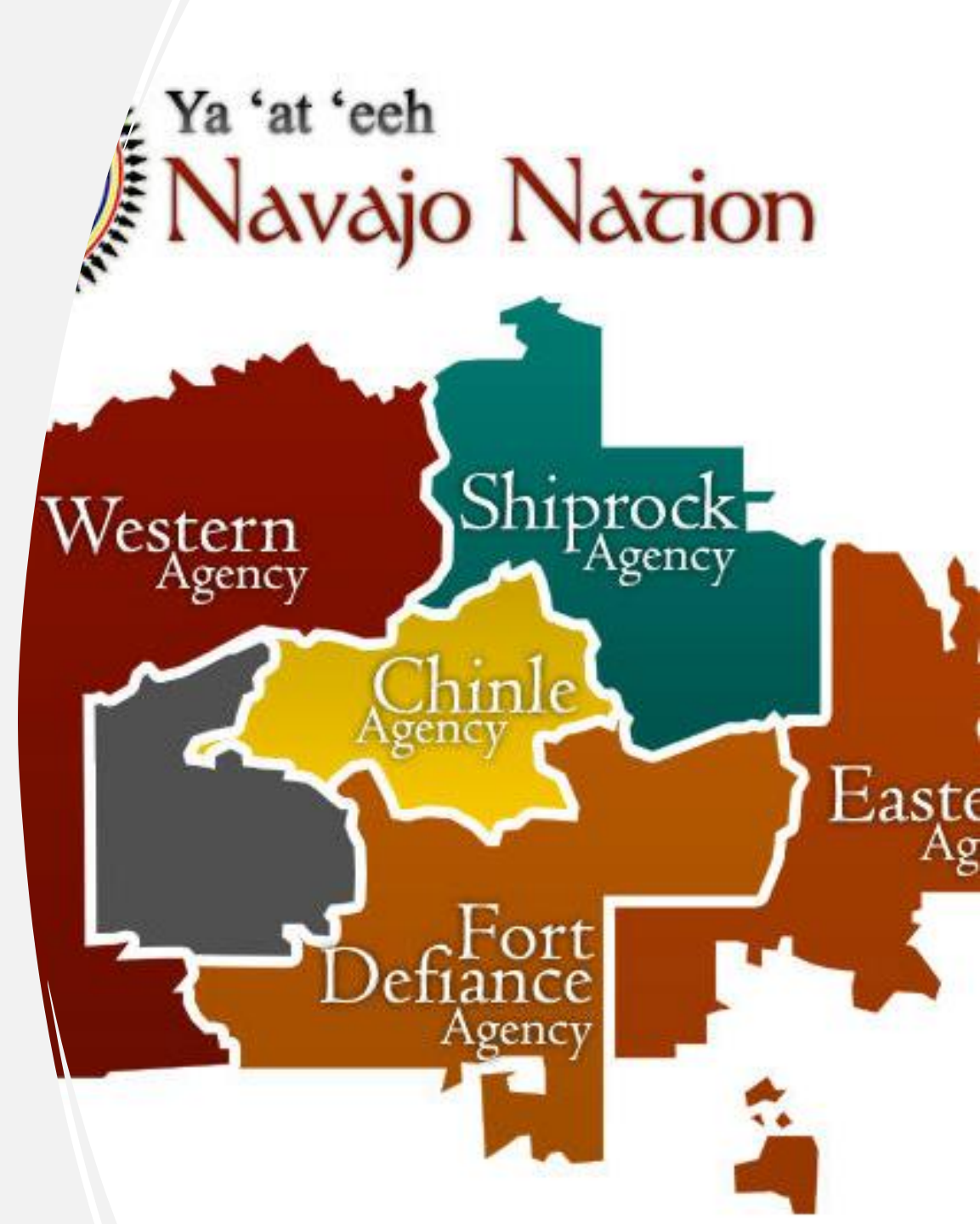
Topics:

- Navajo Nation Council
- Navajo Nation RDC



# Navajo Nation Council

- Navajo Nation Council (NNC)
  - NNC makes up the Legislative Branch
  - 24 elected council delegates
    - Develop and enact laws for the Navajo Nation
- Standing Committees (5)
  - Each delegate is appointed to a standing committee, at least one from each of the 5 agencies.
    - **Resources and Development Committee (RDC)**



# What does the Resources and Development Committee (RDC) do?

---

## Oversight authority over:

- Water
- Land
- Grazing
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Cultural Resources
- Agriculture
- Livestock
- Wildlife
- Roads
- Communications and Utilities
- Information Technology
- Chapter Activities
- Economic and Community Development
- Commerce and Trade
- Gaming
- Right-of-Way
- Minerals
- Public Utilities
- Telecommunication
- Housing
- Transportation
- Air Transportation



# Who are the RDC members?

---

1. Brenda Jesus, *Chair*
2. Casey Allen Johnson, *Vice Chair*
3. Shawna Ann Claw
4. Rickie Nez
5. Danny Simpson
6. Otto Tso



(Oaksprings, St. Michaels)



(Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake)



(Chinle)



(T'iistoh Sikaad, Nenahnezad, Upper Fruitland, Tse' Daa' Kaan, Newcomb, San Juan)



(Becenti, Lake Valley, Nahodishgish, Standing Rock, Whiterock, Huerfano, Nageezi, Crownpoint)



(To' Nanees Dizi)

# Webinar Presenters

---

- Elaine Harvey
- Jeremy Takala
- Simone Anter
- Delores Wilson-Aguirre



# Webinar Presenters



Elaine Harvey

*Watershed Department Manager*

Columbia River Inter-  
Tribal Fishery Commission



Jeremy Takala

*Tribal Councilmen*

Yakama Nation



Simone Anter

*Staff Attorney/Hanford Program  
Director*

Columbia Riverkeeper



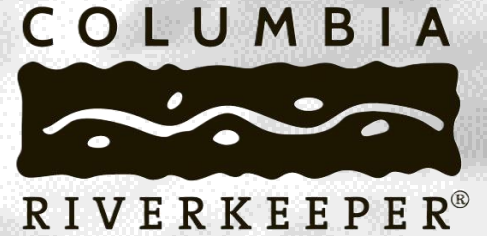
Delores Wilson-Aguirre

*Community Organizer*

Save The Confluence

# Pumped Storage Hydropower

---



Simone Anter, Columbia Riverkeeper

[www.columbiariverkeeper.org](http://www.columbiariverkeeper.org)

Topics:

- What is Pumped Storage Hydropower
- Goldendale Pumped Storage  
Development





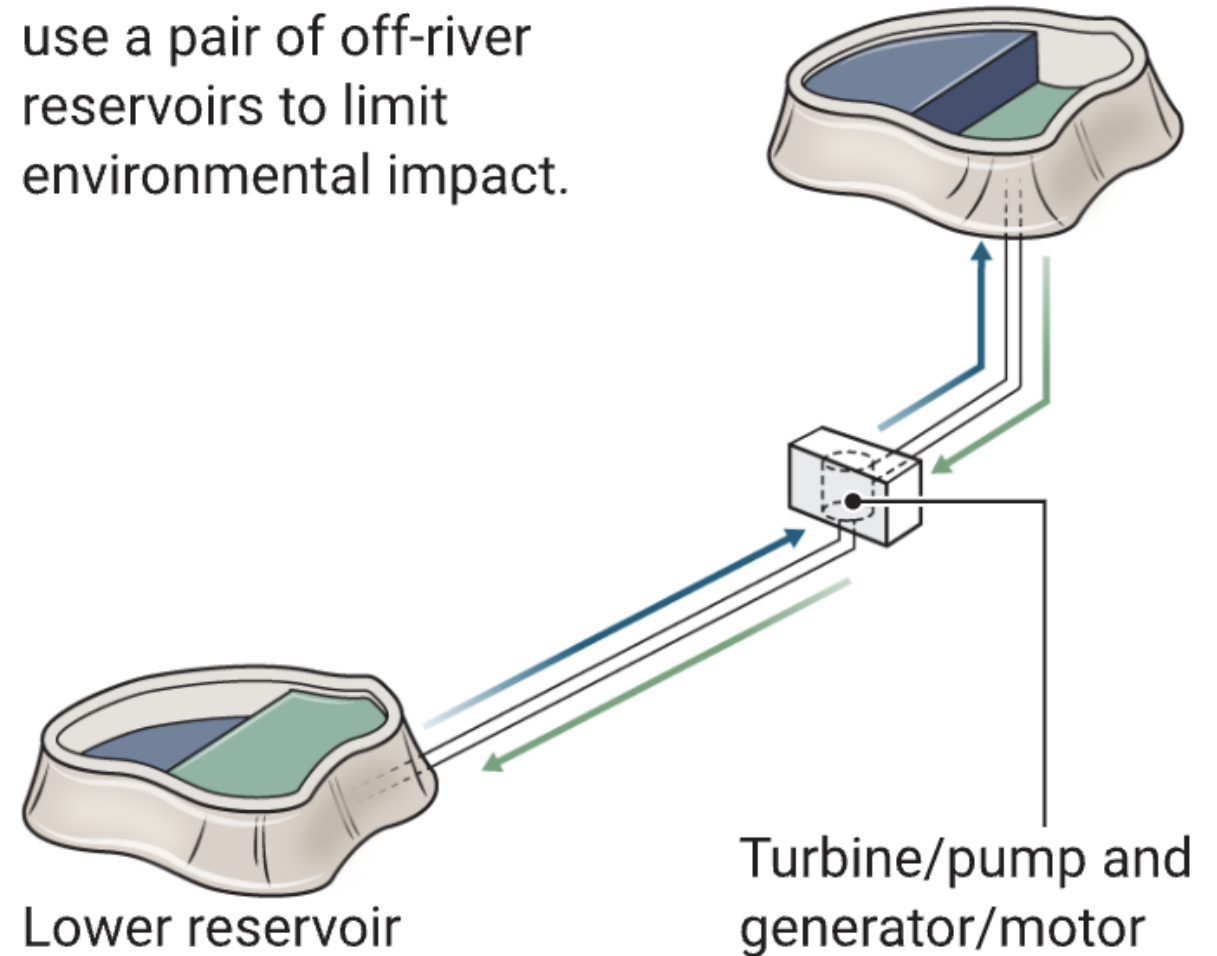
# What is Pumped Storage Hydropower? (PSH)

---

- Technology that stores and generates electricity.
- Think of PSH as a giant battery
- Not a new technology
  - Around 40 in the U.S.
  - Hundreds around the world that have been in operation for decades.

## ● Water **down** for **power generation**

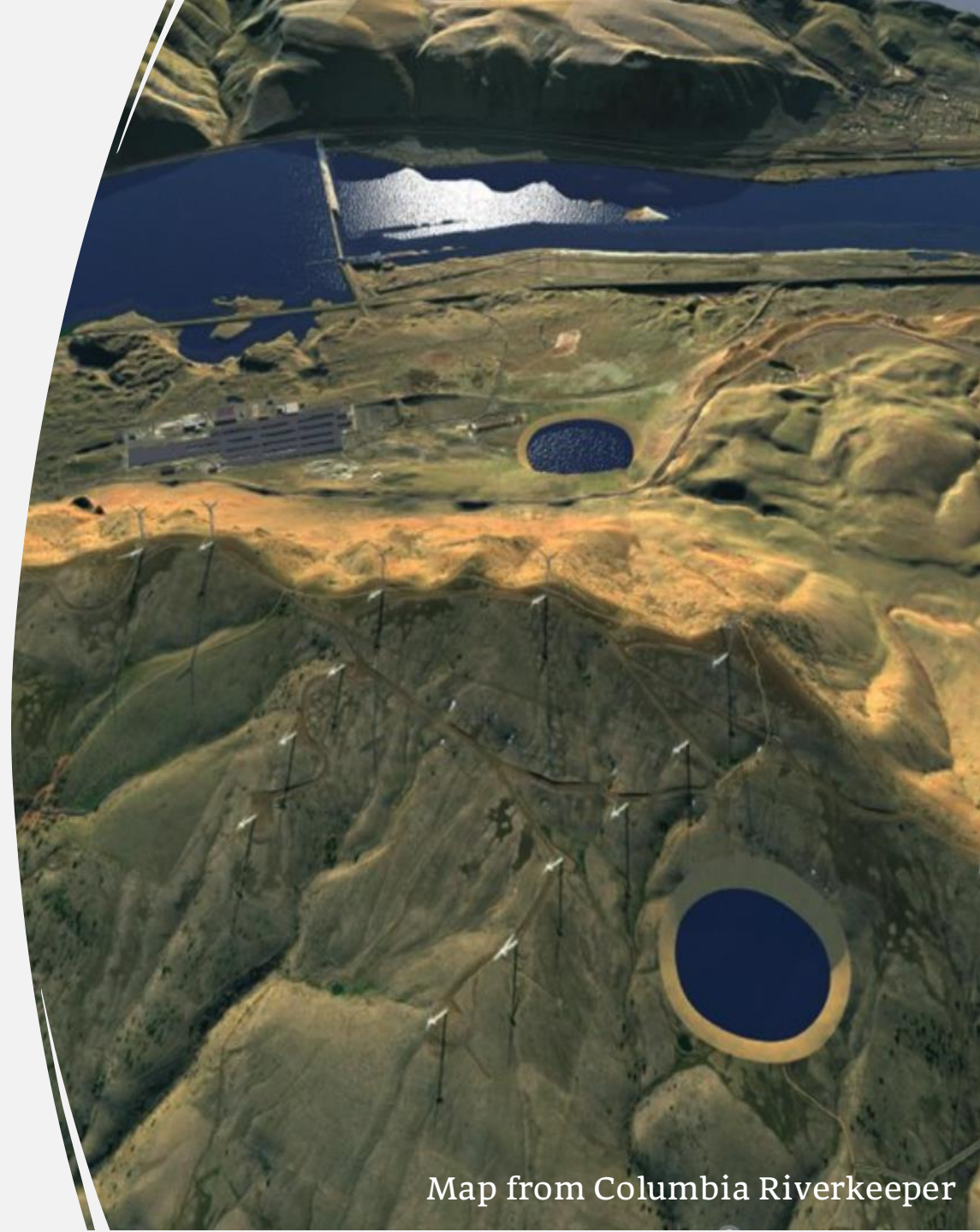
**Closed-loop** systems use a pair of off-river reservoirs to limit environmental impact.



# Proposed Goldendale Pumped Storage Development

---

- Developer: Rye Development backed by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners
- Location: Klickitat County, Washington
- Cost: \$2.5 Billion and rising
- Energy Generating Capacity: 1200 MW
- Columbia River Water Use:
  - Initial Fill: 2.40 million gallons
  - Periodic Makeup: estimated 117 million gallons per year
- Habitat Loss of 193.6 acres
- Reservoirs: 60 acres and 63 acres





Save The Confluence

# Big Canyon Dam

---

Delores Wilson-Aguirre, Save The Confluence

[www.savetheconfluence.com](http://www.savetheconfluence.com)

Topics:

- Big Canyon Dam Summery
- Importance of Solidarity



# Big Canyon Dam

---

- Developer: Pumped Hydro Storage, LLC – Phoenix
- Applications submitted: 2020
- Name: ~~Navajo Nation~~ Big Canyon Pumped Storage Project
- Projects: Three projects, narrowed down to one.
- Location: Little Colorado River, Western Navajo Nation
- Water Source/Use: Groundwater. 14 billion gallons
- Electricity Generation: 3,600 megawatts
- Project rejected by FERC 2024



Photo by EcoFlight

# Protecting Pushpum

---

Elaine Harvey, CRITFC

[www.critfc.org](http://www.critfc.org)

Topics:

- Protect Pushpum



# Protect Pushpum

---

Pushpum is inextricably connected to the 1855 Treaty rights of the Yakama Nation, which promised reserved rights to hunt, gather, and fish across usual and accustomed areas

Pushpum is known to the Yakama people as the "Mother of all Roots" and a natural seed bank to the very important traditional foods and medicines to the tribe



Photo by Elaine Harvey

# Protect Pushpum

## Resolutions:

- Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation  
(T-089-21)



Confederated Tribes and Bands  
of the Yakama Nation

Established by the  
Treaty of June 9, 1855

T-089-21

### RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation is a federally recognized Nation pursuant to the Treaty of 1855 (12 Stat. 951); and

WHEREAS, the Yakama Tribal Council is the governing body of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, by the authority delegated by the Resolution of February 1944 and Resolution T-38-56; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council has the duty and responsibility according to the Resolution T-38-56 and T-10-61 to protect and preserve the Treaty Rights of the Yakama Nation; and

WHEREAS, centuries of oppression by the United States against Native Nations under the Doctrine of Discovery, affirmed by United States Supreme Court through *Johnson v. McIntosh*, and implemented through Congressional policies of allotment and termination, have cost Native Nations hundreds of millions of acres of homelands of ancestral, spiritual, and ceremonial significance; and

WHEREAS, *Pushpum*, known as Juniper Point, is within the Yakama Nation's Treaty territory under Article I of the Treaty of 1855 and has been a site of religious, ceremonial, and cultural importance to the Yakama People since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, *Pushpum* is a place where Yakama People continue to exercise Treaty-reserved rights to gather traditional roots and medicines under Article III of the Treaty of 1855 and has been a site of sovereign food gathering since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Rye Development proposes to construct an industrial-scale pump storage project at Juniper Point, including the construction of two reservoirs totaling 124-acres of surface area and more than 14,000 linear feet of rockfill embankments; and

WHEREAS, the proposed pump storage development violates the Yakama Nation's inherent sovereignty and Treaty-reserved rights through direct, permanent, and adverse destruction of nine Traditional Cultural Properties of religious and ceremonial significance, and the reduction and elimination of access to gather food and medicine roots, which results in an irreplaceable loss of cultural resources and negative environmental degradation to several ephemeral waterbodies, and aquatic and terrestrial resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Executive Committee of the Yakama Tribal Council, acting under authority delegated by Section III-A of the Rules of Procedures, approved by Yakama Nation Tribal Council Resolution T-10-61, dated July 13, 1960, and meeting at the Governmental Headquarters of the Yakama Nation, that the Yakama Nation opposes pump storage development at *Pushpum* to protect sacred religious and ceremonial places of inherent importance to Yakama culture.

Pg 1

05/24/2021

Cultural Cas#071-2021-10

Yakama Nation, Post Office Box 151, Toppenish, WA 98948 (509) 865-5121

# Protect Pushpum

---

Yakama tribal members continue to gather First Foods in the vicinity of the project footprint and there is active year-round tribal fishing and ceremonies conducted there

Renewable energy projects have proven to be detrimental to tribal resources in the past, and the tribes would like to play an active role in energy project siting to protect the limited cultural resources



Photo by Columbia Riverkeeper



# Protect Pushpum

---

- This is the third attempt of a proposed water pump storage project at the site and Yakama Nation has remained in opposition
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission continues to fail to "consult" with the Yakama Nation
- If the project is permitted, there will be irreplaceable natural and cultural resource damages
- A clean-energy future must uphold federal trust and treaty obligations that consider the cultural and health impacts of these projects on sacred sites



Photo by Elaine Harvey

# Call To Action

---

- Email Letter
- Public Comments



# Call to Action

---

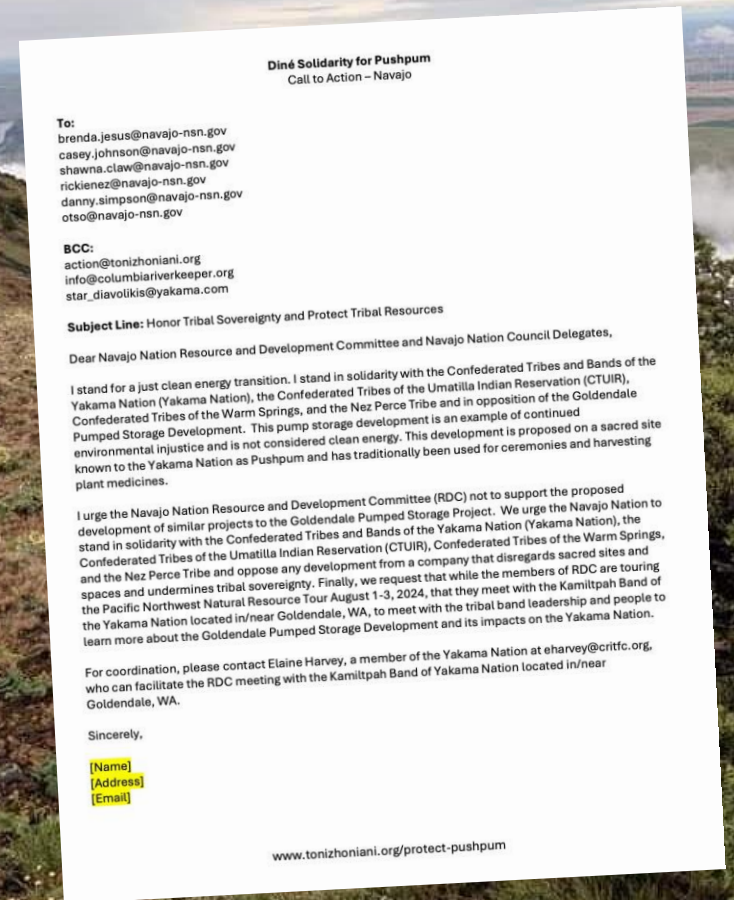
Email the members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council and RDC members and tell them to not support the destruction of tribal resources and Yakama Nation sacred sites.



Photo by Elaine Harvey

# Call to Action Instructions

1. Visit [www.tonizhoniani.org/protect-pushpum](http://www.tonizhoniani.org/protect-pushpum)
2. Download Templet
  - CTA Navajo or CTA Yakama
3. Draft Email
  - To, BCC, Heading, Body
4. Send Email



# Public Comments

---

- Submit a public comment on Docket 14861-002 - Honor Tribal Sovereignty and Protect Cultural Resources
- [www.columbiariverkeeper.org/actions/take-action-goldendale/](http://www.columbiariverkeeper.org/actions/take-action-goldendale/)
- For more information, contact:  
Simone Anter, [simone@columbiariverkeeper.org](mailto:simone@columbiariverkeeper.org)



# Closing

---

Ahéhee'! Kwathlanute! Thank You!

[Adrian@tonizhoniani.org](mailto:Adrian@tonizhoniani.org)

[www.tonizhoniani.org/protect-pushpum](http://www.tonizhoniani.org/protect-pushpum)



Photo by Elaine Harvey

# Stay Connected

---



**Tó Nizhóní Ání**

@tonizhoniani

[www.tonizhoniani.org](http://www.tonizhoniani.org)



**Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission**

@critfc

[www.critfc.org](http://www.critfc.org)



**Columbia Riverkeeper**

@columbiariverkeeper

[www.columbiariverkeeper.org](http://www.columbiariverkeeper.org)