



Confederated Tribes and Bands  
of the Yakama Nation

Established by the  
Treaty of June 9, 1855

## COMMENTS OF THE YAKAMA NATION

### Honorable Fidelia Andy, Tribal Councilperson

The Yakama Reservation is located in central Washington and encompasses over 1,300,000 acres. The Tribal population is approximately 10,000. There are a variety of industries on the Reservation, including farming, orchards, manufacturing of forest products, gaming, hunting and fishing. Also, there are several major power lines running through the Reservation. Bonneville Power Administration, Benton REA and PacificCorp are the primary owners of the power lines, which generally run across Tribal and individual Indian lands.

Historically, the lessees have enjoyed a decided advantage in the negotiation of rights-of-way. We have a lot of situations where land owners were paid mere pennies in return for approval of a long-term right-of-way. As an example, one elder was paid \$70 for a 50-year lease by BPA. She received \$1.20 per year, while BPA made millions of dollars from using her lands. This is not a unique situation.

Many of the BPA rights-of-ways have expired and there are ongoing negotiations for new agreements. Meanwhile, BPA continues to use the rights-of-way without agreeing to pay trespass damages or new compensation. Is this justice? The answer has to be no. The Yakama Nation realizes the importance of continued usage of the rights-of-way; however, adequate compensation and reasonable terms

**and conditions must be a part of the negotiations for new agreements. Meaningful value must be realized by the Nation.**

**The Yakama Nation realizes that many other Indian nations share these sad experiences. Like our fellow Tribal leaders, the Yakama Tribal Council is committed to realizing the greatest benefit to the Nation for use of its lands.**

**On behalf of the Yakama Nation, I ask that the study be fair, objective and include the perspectives of the Indian nations and the historical negative trends which have been established in the area of rights-of-way terms, compensation, and usage. The voice of the Indian people must be heard if the study is to have meaning and value.**