
COULEE CORRIDOR BYWAY BEAT

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Coulee Corridor Consortium – Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway January 2020

Kiosk Dedications Scheduled

After nearly 15 years of challenges, struggles, starting and stopping, endless meetings and discussions, negotiations and administrative wrangling, the Coulee Corridor Consortium's efforts at establishing community kiosks are finally starting to pay off in a big way. Largely through the efforts and coordination of Denis Felton, Dry Falls Coulee Corridor Coordinator, with help from the Coulee Corridor Consortium Board, and the National Scenic Byways grant that sustained the project, has come to fruition. Though seven community kiosks were planned, there was sufficient grant funds for five kiosks in the towns of Grand Coulee, Coulee City, Soap Lake, Warden, and Othello.

The Coulee Corridor Consortium developed standardized panels that encompass resources, activities, and highlights of the Coulee Corridor. Then, towns identified preferred locations, committed funds, and contributed panel content and pictures which were used by Melanie Pierson, Conservation By Design, a graphic designer, to create visually appealing displays. The engineering firm of Gray & Osborne conducted environmental studies and engineering specifications at each location and WSDOT and WSP handled the administrative responsibilities all in close collaboration with the Coulee Corridor Consortium.

Ground breaking began in May 2019 when massive basalt columns were trucked in.



Artifacts Transferred to Colville Confederated Tribes

By Mark Amara

A special dedication took place in July 2018 along the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway in Ephrata, Washington at the Nat Washington House. This was the location for a transfer of artifacts from the Nat Washington, Sr. residence to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

It was a nearly 2-year process to transfer Native American artifacts back to the tribe. The Nat Washington house, which is next door to the Bureau of Reclamation offices in Ephrata, Washington, was purchased by Mike Scellick, a local Ephrata native, from the Washington family.

Nat passed in 2007 and up through through 2011, Nat Washington's sons, Tom and Nat, Jr. had been going through the materials in the residence's basement there. Besides a lot of historic documents, there were photos of Nat, Sr's military service, his time as Grant PUDs attorney, materials related to his time as a Washington State Senator, and materials related to other elected positions. Many historic records went to the Bledsoe-Washington Archive at Central Washington University.

When Scellick took over ownership of the house there were still 500 boxes which had not been removed. Among the boxes were Native American artifacts. Rather than contacting a university or museum to take them, contacts were made with the Colville Confederated Tribes. The artifacts had been meticulously labeled by Nat Washington, Sr as to their provenance, place, date, etc. so it was apparently easy to attribute them to the CCT.

That is when heavy equipment was used to site them into especially designed holes and cemented in place.



However, it wasn't until late December 2019 that the panels were completed and anchored to the columns.

Now that this phase of the project is complete, plans are to hold dedication ceremonies in 2020.



The ribbon cutting ceremonies will take place in early spring 2020.

Plan to attend one or more of the ceremonies open to the public:

- March 27, 2020 - Othello 9 am in front of the Watermasters Office on Main
- March 27, 2020 - Warden 11 am downtown
- April 3, 2020 - Grand Coulee North Dam Park 10 am
- April 17, 2020 - Coulee City 9 am - City park
- April 17, 2020 - Soap Lake 11 am - Along the lake



Kiosk panels at Grand Coulee's North Dam

Nat Washington Artifacts Continued

Scellick felt he "had a responsibility to preserve the treasures" and to "document the material before it is lost." On June 22, 2018, 40 boxes were transferred to the Colville Confederated Tribes. Dr. Michael Marchand, Chairman of the Colville Business Council accepted the donation.

Dignitaries at the dedication included Nat Washington, Jr. who praised the new owner, Mike Scellick for renaming the house, the Nat Washington Inn, and for making improvements to it and Willie Womer, Colville Confederated Tribes. The house has been updated but looks pretty much the way it did 100 years ago.

With the transfer of materials, the CCT plans in the future to build a work class museum to house its artifacts. To help educate the public and honor Native Americans, a new kiosk will be erected with audio, pictures, and text about Nat Washington and the Indian encampment that was part of the pre-Ephrata historic. Among Nat Washington, Sr's skills were his interactions and communications with Native Americans from several tribes. His travels with Billy Curlew, Jimmy James, Cleveland Kamiakin, and Harry Nanamptin were described as legendary and contributed to formally documenting many places and cultural features throughout the region.



From left to right: Nat Washington, Jr, Michael Marchand and Kristen Heidenthal from the Colville Confederated Tribes, and Mike Scellick at the ceremony in Ephrata

Besides the transfer of artifacts, the July 2018 ceremony discussed the possibility of renaming the third powerhouse at Grand Coulee Dam as the Nat Washington, Sr. Powerhouse. Michael

Marchand, the Colville Business Council supports the proposal. On July 24, 2019, Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) introduced H.R.3937, which is a bill to designate the Third Power Plant at Grand Coulee Dam as the “Nathaniel ‘Nat’ Washington Power Plant” recognizing the work of Nat Sr (and Nat Jr) were instrumental in the construction of Grand Coulee Dam and in helping harness hydropower as a renewable energy source in the PNW. The bills introduction was also supported by other state and tribal community leaders.

A Study of Mammoth Proportions

By Mark Amara

Just past a spur of the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway lies the remains of a mammoth on display at Tonnemaker Hill Farm off Dodson Road on the north edge of the Frenchman Hills in Grant County. The mammoth was discovered by Luke Tonnemaker while moldboard plowing up an alfalfa field in 2015. Over the past five years, Luke and his father, Kole, has been excavating the creature spread out over about 20 meters in the farm field with formal help from professional geologists, soil scientists, and paleontologists from the McBones (Mid-Columbia Basin Old Natural Education Sciences) Research Foundation in Kennewick including Mark Amara, George Last, Gary Kleinknecht, Bax Barton and a field crew. Geologists, Last and Amara conducted detailed stratigraphic analyses, and collected volcanic tephra from three distinct layers and soil samples for dating. Paleontologist, Bax Barton identified bones that were removed.

Volcanic ashes (tephra) were analyzed by WSU and identified as originating from Mount St. Helens S Series dated to 16 thousand years ago. Soil samples analyzed using optically stimulated luminescence dating was conducted by Utah State University confirming ages below the bones of 16-20,000 years old.

The mammoth remains lie in sediment that are less than 16,000 years old in a mixture of Ice Age flood deposits and loess. It is unclear whether the mammoth’s carcass was deposited by one of the last Ice Age flood events or if the animal

died later. It is likely the skeleton was exposed, spread by scavengers, and the sediments reworked by wind, water and bioturbation.

What is interesting about the mammoth is the information it is revealing to us about the environment in which it lived and died. The location of the animal seems to coincide with the shoreline of the highest Missoula flood in the region. Its close proximity to a nearby gravelly berg mound suggests it is associated with a late stage Missoula flood event. However, since the remains are contained in fine textured sediments indicative of quiet water conditions, it may have died along the edge of the slackwater lake, referred to as Lake Lewis, that was ponded as the floodwaters backed up in the Quincy Basin. Whether the mammoth’s demise was the result of old age, killed by wild animals or by Native Americans, or died in a drier period between floods is still speculation at this point. Other studies are taking place to put the animal in perspective in space and time and will be reported on as their results become available.

In December 2019, soil monolith samples were taken of a five-foot section of the stratigraphy. This work was conducted by Mark Amara and Isaac Madsen, a WSU Extension Agronomist. Another monolith was collected in January 2020 by Kole and Luke Tonnemaker and Mark Amara. Both monoliths will be prepared as a full-length soil profiles glued to boards for permanent display at the farm when they are finished.

Isaac Madsen carefully exposed and prepared the soil profile before securing it to a board for transport to the lab.



Preparation in the lab is the next step. This requires allowing the sample to dry out and then dripping liquid glue to it so it sticks permanently to the board.

Kole and Luke Tonnemaker prepared, excavated, and wrapped a 6 feet long soil monolith for transport.

References:

Amara, M. 2016. "Ancient Mammoth Unearthed" In: *Coulee Corridor Byway Beat*, Volume 5, Issue 1, March, p. 3-4.

Amara, Mark S., George V. Last, Luke Tonnemaker, Kole Tonnemaker, and Bax R. Barton. Late Pleistocene Mammoth Remains and Their Geologic Context in the Frenchman Hills, Grant County, Washington. Poster Presentation/Abstract. *Northwest Scientific Association Annual Meeting*, March 27-28, 2019.

Dodd, Jessica L., George V. Last, Mark Amara, Kole Tonnemaker and Luke Tonnemaker. 2016. "Tephra Chronology of the Frenchman Hills - Tonnemaker Mammoth Site: Shedding Light on its Geologic History." *Northwest Scientific Association Program and Abstracts*, March 23-26. Bend, OR, p. 51.

Last, G. V., M. S. Amara, F. F. Foit, Jr., O. K. Neill, T Rittenour, J. L. Dodd, K. Tonnemaker, and L. Tonnemaker. 2017. Tephra and OSL Results from the Frenchman Hills - Tonnemaker Mammoth Site, Royal City, Grant County, Washington. *Geological Society of America Abstracts with Programs*. Vol. 49, No. 6. Doi: 10.1130/abs/2017AM-304854.

Annual Gardening Symposium

The 6th annual Columbia Basin Eco-Gardening Symposium is being held April 18, 2020 9-1 PM at the Technical Skills Center, 900 E. Yonezawa Blvd, Moses Lake. The Grant-Adams Master Gardeners and Grant County Conservation District are co-sponsoring this event.

Speakers for this session will focus on pollinators and exotic pests, mulching, and garden mistakes and solutions. There is an exhibitor marketplace as well.

To register for this free event, go to www.columbiabasinncds.org or via phone/in-person at: Grant County Conservation District 1107 S. Juniper Drive, Moses Lake, WA. 98837. Tel: 509-765-9618

Registration may also be done at the door starting at 8:30 AM though the symposium will be limited to the first 100 registrants. There will be snacks and door prizes.

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival

All the pieces are finally in place for the 2020 Othello Sandhill Crane Festival, March 20-22. <https://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/>

While the focus of the Festival is celebrating the spring migration of the Sandhill cranes, there are plenty of opportunities for the whole family to enjoy and learn about everything the Columbia Basin has to offer. Children’s activities will keep youngsters entertained, while adults can take part in lectures on topics ranging from drones and agriculture to wildlife to the area’s fascinating geologic history. Of course, the crane, birding, refuge, geology and agricultural tours are the highlight of the Festival.

Coulee Corridor Signage Expands

In addition to the new kiosks in place, 20 new Coulee Corridor road signs were installed on SR155 between Omak and Coulee Dam, on the Ephrata Loop on SR28 & SR281 and SR17 this fall 2019.

Sign placements required visiting sites several times, following proper permitting and environmental regulations.



Pat Arnold, WSDOT Engineer, and Denis Felton, WSP RC, stake Coulee Corridor sign location along SR155 north of Nespelem



New Solar Farm Dedicated

A 200-acre project, known as the Adams-Neilson Solar Farm began operating in 2018 outside of Lind, Washington along a new loop of the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway. Groundbreaking actually started May 24, 2018 when Adams County hosted the groundbreaking of the largest solar array in the state. Top officials from Avista, Strata Solar and Adams County Commissioners spoke about the project going forward. In October 2018, Adams County leaders and state officials met again for a ribbon cutting ceremony by Governor Jay Inslee. The governor noted that Adams County recognized the benefits of solar power for growing the best wheat in the world but this generation is using that source of energy to develop solar power.

The Lind solar farm has more than 81 thousand solar panels that can produce enough energy to provide power to over 4,000 homes in Washington. The panels are dark blue and are tilted to capture as much sun as possible. According to Avista, as much as nearly 41,000 tons of carbon dioxide could be released using traditional fossil fuels so this project is much safer for the environment. Solar power from the farm will also be made available to commercial and businesses through a special Avista Solar Select Program.

Besides Inslee, U.S. Rep. Dan Newhouse, Washington State House Minority Leader Rep. Mark Schoesler, Adams County Commissioner John Marshall, Lind Mayor Paula Bell and student leaders from Lind-Ritzville Middle School joined in the ribbon cutting event.



Solar panel farm at Lind. Spokesman-Review <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/nov/09/states-largest-solar-farm-nearing-production/>

Othello Community Museum

By Barb Caylor

The Othello Community Museum is open on Saturdays from 1-5pm starting in mid-June. There is a program at the opening that focuses on special groups around Othello (firefighters, police officers, etc.). There are displays about irrigation and the Columbia Basin Project, homesteaders around the area, an old school room, old farming tools inside and old farming equipment outside, an amazing bird display, a historical kitchen, and the Milwaukee Railroad display. The museum is open during the Sandhill Crane Festival March 20-22, 2020 from 10am-5pm.

During the off season, you can still visit the museum by calling one of the numbers listed on the signs outside. The museum is located at Third and Larch, Othello.



The Community Museum is housed in Othello's oldest standing church, the First Presbyterian Church built in 1908.

Othello picture provided by Barb Caylor.

Balmy First Day Hike at Dry Falls

David McWalter, State Parks Dry Fall Interpretive Specialist, annually leads a New Year's Day Hike beginning at Dry Falls Visitor Center. So, to continue the tradition, on January 1, 2020, McWalter and Denis Felton, Coulee Corridor Area State Parks Manager, opened the program. McWalter explained that the event is an opportunity to learn about the local geology, wildlife, and tour the Dry Falls Visitor Center during the off season.

The program began with snacks, an introduction to the area, and a film on the Missoula Floods inside the Dry Falls Interpretive Center.



The weather was unseasonably warm and brought out about 30 enthusiastic people.

The hike began from the Visitor Center and meandered across the grassland and shrub-steppe habitat across shallow soils overlying basalt bedrock and peered down the precipitous slopes above the Lower Grand Coulee.



Selected Events & Activities

Dry Falls Interpretive Center Open year-round 9-4:30 pm Closed Monday and Tuesday.



Warden Kiosk

Feb 20, 2020 - Grand Coulee Dam Chamber Open House - Chamber Office Bldg. in Grand Coulee- 6 pm. This is an opportunity for the public and businesses to review past year's accomplishments, announce Business and Achiever of the Year.

March 14, 2020 - Grand Coulee Dam Chamber Third Annual Crab Feed fundraiser for the COC - Location TBA - www.grandcouleedam.org

March 21, 2020 - Elmer City Fire Dept 50th Annual Pancake Fest - Coulee Dam City Hall - starts at 4 pm. Full breakfast includes eggs, bacon, sausage, hot cakes, and homemade pie.

Kiosk Dedication Ceremonies:

March 27, 2020 - Othello 9 am and Warden 11 am

April 3, 2020 - Grand Coulee, North Dam Park, 10 AM

April 17, 2020 - Coulee City 9 am Soap Lake 11 am



Soap Lake Kiosk

Sixth Annual Columbia Basin Eco-Gardening Symposium, April 18, 2020, Technical Skills Center, 900 E. Yonezawa Blvd, Moses Lake, 9-1PM. Free.

Remembering Mount St. Helens. The Othello Community Museum will hold a special event to remember the 40th anniversary of the Mount St. Helens eruption of May 18, 1980. The event is Saturday, May 16, 2020 at 2 pm. The community is invited to share their stories. Third & Larch in Othello.

Moses Lake Farmers Market, McCosh Park,
Saturdays, May-October 8-1 PM.

Flood Fest at Dry Falls, Saturday, June 20, 2020.
The program includes distinguished speakers on geology, geography, and wildlife; exhibits and center dedication. The public is invited to a walk through the shrub-steppe to look at habitat, geology, and other features.

Coulee Pioneer Museum in Electric City - Open Wednesday through Sunday from 1 pm to 5 pm. Public welcome - Free Admission This small museum was established in 2007 to provide a way of preserving the history of the Grand Coulee Dam Area and a place for the community to display the area's heritage. Grand Coulee lives in the shadow of the Grand Coulee Dam but the museum contains so much more of the area's history.

Monthly Coulee Corridor Consortium Meeting Schedule

The public is invited to attend any of these Friday lunch time events to find out what is happening and to participate in events and activities.

Editor's Note: Coulee Corridor Consortium Meetings are held monthly throughout the Region

Coulee Corridor Consortium Officers

Ken Caylor, Chair

Mark Amara, 1st Vice Chair

Denis Felton, 2nd Vice Chair

Birdie Hensley - Secretary

Barb Caylor, Treasurer

Contact the Coulee Corridor at www.couleecorridor.com OR, Call (509) 634-1608

Cut here and return with your membership materials

The Coulee Corridor Consortium (CCC) wants your help and asks that people consider becoming 2020 members of the organization. The CCC is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization with tax exempt status. Benefits of organizational membership include: supporting the Coulee Corridor Consortium, keeping abreast of and participating in new activities and events sponsored by the Consortium along the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway, opportunity to help leadership by focusing positive attention on the corridor, be placed on mailing list for quarterly newsletter, and receiving increased member visibility as a listing on the Coulee Corridor website.

- \$25.00 Individual Membership Fee
- \$40.00 Family Membership Fee
- \$75.00 Business, Non-Profit, or Other Membership Fee
- \$15 Senior Citizen
- \$5 Ages 6-18 or student

Name: _____

Address; _____

City; _____ State ____ Zip_____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Web page listing: _____

Send applications and checks to Coulee Corridor Consortium, PO Box 123 Grand Coulee, WA 99133