

# Cowlitz Indian Tribe



5/10/2012 presentation:

2013 Science to Policy Summit: the Columbia River Treaty

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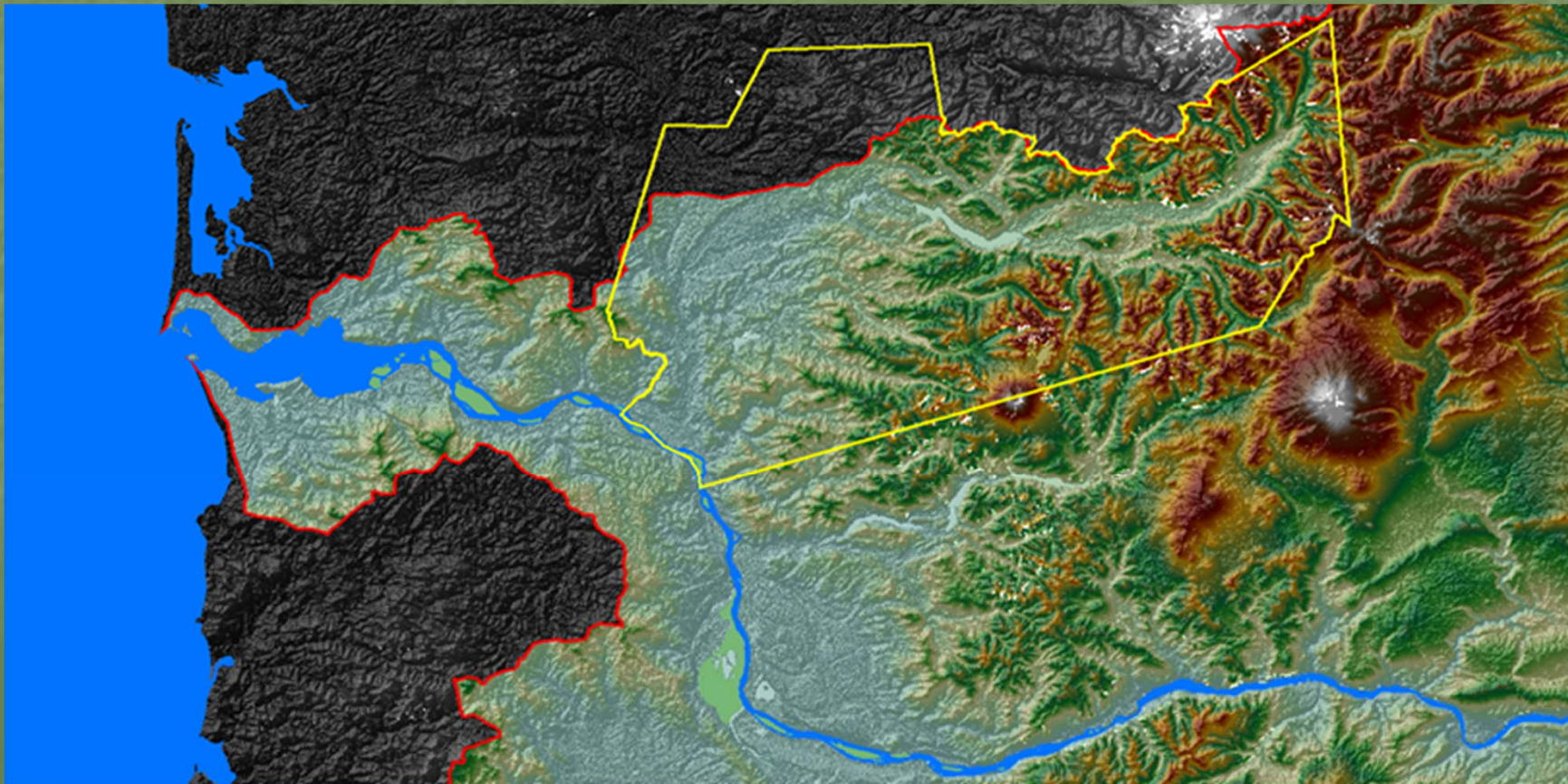
# Overview



- **Cowlitz Indian Tribe**
- **Natural Resources Department**
  - **Estuary activities**
- **Lower Columbia Basin Impacts**
- **Columbia River Treaty**
- **Opportunities for the Future**

# History Overview

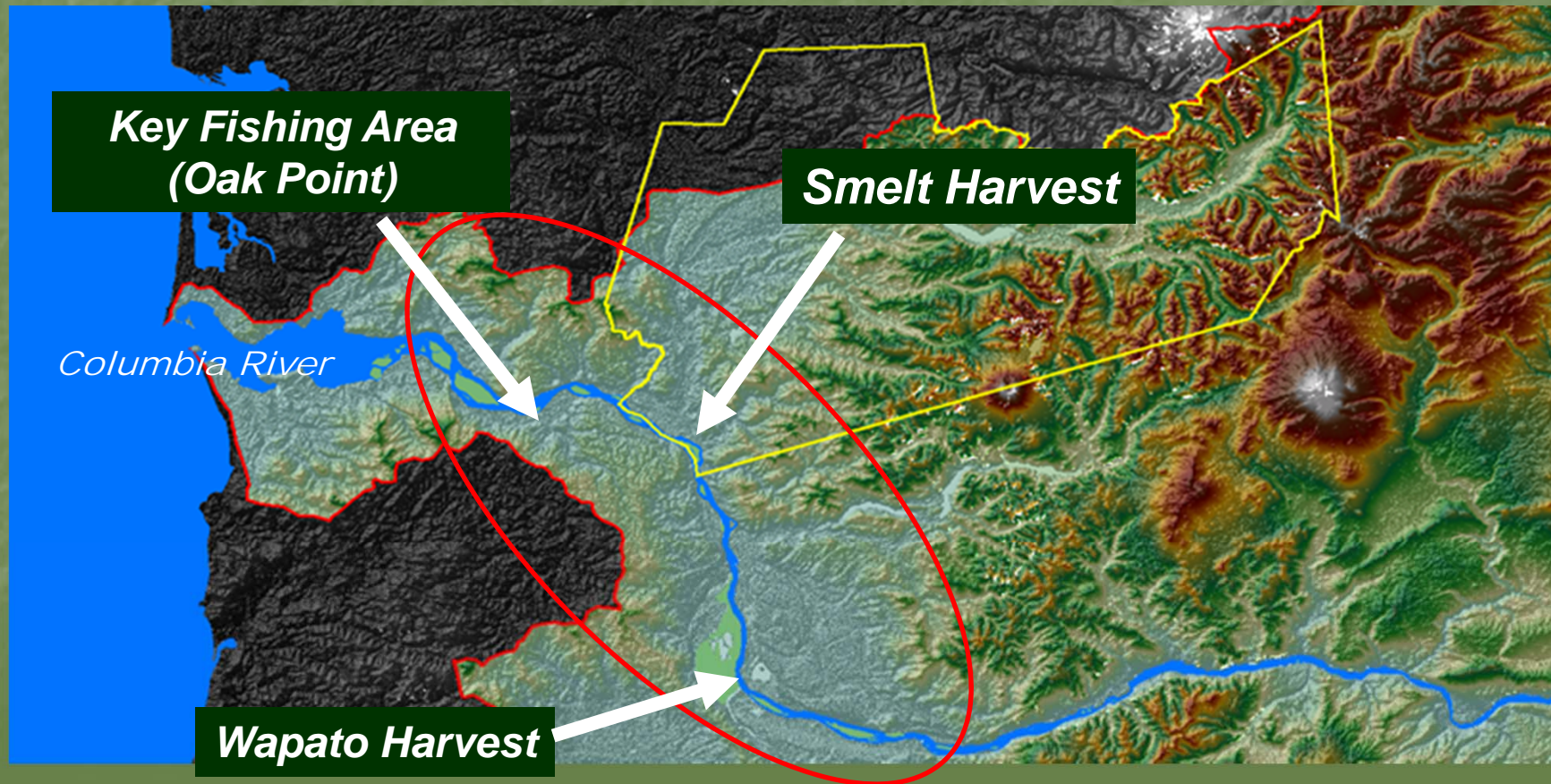
- Pursued land claims under Docket 218 with the Indian Claims Commission. In 1973, ICC determined 1.66 million acres exclusively used and occupied by the Cowlitz People.
- Became *Federally Acknowledged Tribe* in 2000 (appeal of decision upheld in 2002).



# Lower Columbia region Culturally Important to Tribe

## Provided For:

- Resource Harvest, Inter-Tribal Trading, Travel Corridors, Inter-Tribal Gatherings, etc.
- Our environment is a part of traditions, legends, folklore and many other components of our way of life which is important to existence.



# Cowlitz Indian Tribe Natural Resources Department (NRD)

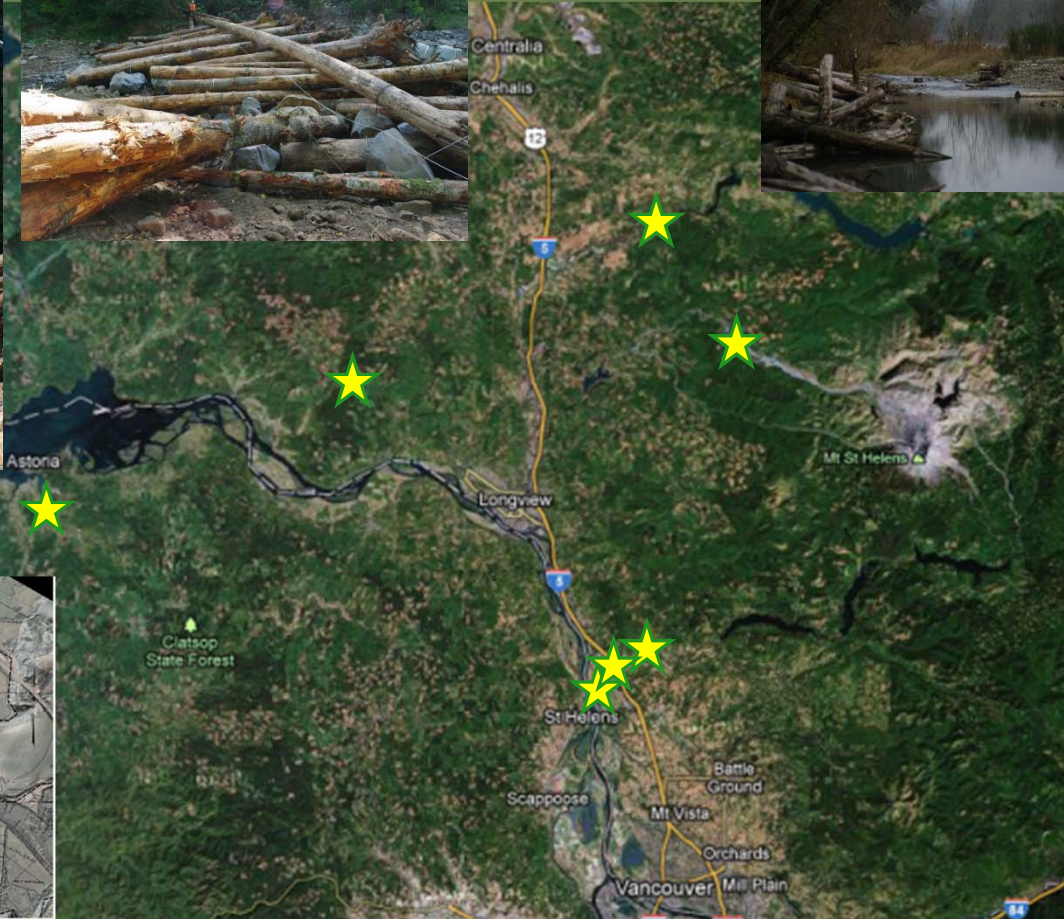
Mission:

*To protect, conserve, restore and promote culturally-relevant species and landscapes integral to the unique identity of the Cowlitz People. To further educate the community and inspire future leaders and participants in this vision.*

# **Columbia River Estuary**

**The Cowlitz Indian Tribe has been working on four primary activities within the Estuary:**

- Salmon Habitat Restoration**
- Smelt Research & Recovery**
- Columbian White-tailed Deer Recovery**
- Columbia River Treaty Review**



Geographic Review NPCC ISRP March 19, 2013



## Impacts Began Before Treaty

- Flood control management has opened up development within the Lower Columbia Floodplain areas.
- Caused for loss of wetland habitat for migrating salmon within the Estuary.
- Provided avenue for increased industrial development and shipping which has caused pollution and non-native species introduction.



- Lack of Spring/Summer floods impair water quality

- Increased water temperatures

- Dredging and continuous siltation.

- Ballast water intake from shipping.

- Pollutant retention.



# Challenges & Opportunities



# Columbia River Treaty



- Has exacerbated previous impacts by adding additional control attributed to flood risk management (i.e. additional flood protection levels).
- tribes are pushing to have ecosystem function addressed under the Treaty Review and to have it become part of a new operating system of the Columbia Basin.

## Current Restoration Efforts in Estuary

- **What Could the Treaty do?**
- **Primarily to provide value to restored habitat by providing a water management regime for improved water quality and quantity to benefit ESA Salmonids and Eulachon in the Estuary.**

## Flow Management

- Timing of freshets
- Size of freshets
- Water temperatures

## Impacts to LC Region

- Loss of Habitat Area
- Decreased function of remaining habitat
- Invasive Species

Would like  
Treaty to  
Address

Currently  
Implementing  
Restoration  
Activities

## Effects

- Declined abundance of Culturally relevant species



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