



PRESS RELEASE

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION

**For Immediate Release
April 26, 2023**

**Contact: Neeka Somday
509-634-2213**

Colville Tribal Police Assist in Drug and Gun Seizure

(Nespelem, WA) — More than 161,000 fentanyl-laced pills were seized on April 19, 2023. The seizure also included approximately 80 pounds of methamphetamine, 6 pounds of heroin and more than 2 pounds of cocaine. The drugs are believed to have been headed to the Colville Reservation and other Native American communities.

Twelve firearms were also seized. Five individuals have been indicted so far in federal court by the United States Attorney for Eastern Washington for conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of actual (pure) methamphetamine and 400 grams or more of fentanyl, as well as other charges related to drug trafficking.

The investigation, seizure and arrests were conducted by a team comprised of tribal, federal, state and local agencies. The North Central Washington Narcotics Task Force is commanded by Colville Tribal Police Chief Steve Brown, with another Colville Tribal Police Officer assigned to serve on the Task Force. Other participating agencies included the Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Drug Enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Marshals Service, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Okanogan County Sheriff and the Kalispel Tribal Police Department.

Colville Business Council Chairman Jarred-Michael Erickson said, “The Colville Tribes will aggressively hold drug traffickers accountable for their crimes. We know the damage these drugs do to our community and this seizure is just a start of our efforts to remove drugs from the Colville Reservation.”

The Chairman continued, “I applaud the significant contributions to these arrests that were made by the Colville Tribal Police, including Chief Brown. I also wish to thank Vanessa R. Waldref, the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington, for the cooperation of her office in the investigation and for the diligent prosecution of the accused drug traffickers. I also thank all the other federal, state and local agencies who contributed. This drug seizure is a great example of how we can protect our community when we work together.”

###

About the Colville Tribes:

Today, more than 9,281 descendants of 12 aboriginal tribes of Indians are enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of the Colville. The twelve tribes which compose the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation include: ščəlámxəx^w (deep water) or Chelan; wal'wáma (Wallowa people) or Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce; sǰ^wyʔilp (sharp pointed trees) or Colville; šntiyátk^wəx^w (grass in the water) or Entiat; snʔáyckst (speckled fish) or Lakes; mətx^wu (blunt hills around a valley) or Methow; škwáxčənəx^w (people living on the bank) or Moses-Columbia; nspilm (prairie) or Nespelem; uknaqin (seeing over the top) or Okanogan; palúšpam (people from Palouse) or Palus; sənpʔwílɬ (grey mist as far as one can see) or San Poil, and šnpəšq^wáwəsəx^w (people in between) or Wenatchi.

