



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION & METHOW CONSERVANCY

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **The Colville Tribes Accepts the Wagner Ranch for Conservation**

**(Nespelem, WA)** — The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation announces that it held a signing ceremony today to receive the deed to the Wagner Ranch from the Methow Conservancy. The Wagner Ranch includes 328 acres of largely undisturbed riverfront land which will now be held in conservation to protect valuable fish and wildlife habitat. The land lies in the heart of traditional Methow territory and the Methow are one of the tribes of the Confederated Colville Tribes.

The land will be conserved under the guidance of Methow descendants through Colville Tribal ownership. The Tribes' Fish and Wildlife Anadromous Program will continue work in this watershed with this property serving as prime area for salmon recovery efforts. There may also be potential for restoration of native plants and wildlife. The Tribes will pursue habitat improvements and educational programming to benefit all inhabitants of the valley and surrounding region.

This gift was made possible through active fundraising by the Methow Conservancy and their thorough understanding of the history of dispossession of the Methow people from their lands. The Colville Tribes and Methow Conservancy seek to continue their collaboration on land conservation projects and to protect culturally significant lands.

“The Colville Tribes is pleased to receive these lands from the Methow Conservancy,” said Chairman of the Colville Business Council Andrew Joseph, Jr. “The land is already being used for cultural activities and to improve fish and wildlife habitats. We accept our responsibility as stewards of this land to preserve a fertile habitat and we appreciate this opportunity to right some of the historical damage done to the Methow.”

Sam Naney, President of the Board of Directors of the Methow Conservancy, said, “The Methow peoples' legacy of stewardship on these lands should inspire all of us to live humbly and with intention in this beautiful valley. While no single project can resolve the past injustices levied on them and their ancestors, we sincerely hope this small step provides meaningful opportunities for the Methow and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation to practice their cultural traditions, to gather, and to regain their time-honored place here in the Methow.”

Sarah Brooks, Executive Director of the Methow Conservancy, added, “It is simply an honor to be a part of returning this land. It is a special place for fish and wildlife and it just feels right to return the care of this stretch of the river to its original stewards. We appreciate the generosity of our donors who shared the vision that the return of this land matters. We also appreciate the patience of the Colville Tribes as we have navigated through a process that was new to us. We hope to continue our partnership and find new ways to ensure a thriving and welcoming presence of the Methow people and Colville tribal members in the Methow Valley.”

More information about how the Methow people are protecting their traditional lands and waters, and about how the Colville Tribes and Methow Conservancy collaborate on salmon restoration efforts, may be found at <https://colvilletribes.com/newsroom> and <https://www.methowconservancy.org>.

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About the Colville Tribes:

Today, more than 9,357 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<sup>w</sup> (deep water) or Chelan; walwáma (Wallowa people) or Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce; sǰ<sup>w</sup>yǰilp (sharp pointed trees) or Colville; šntiyátk<sup>w</sup>əx<sup>w</sup> (grass in the water) or Entiat; snǰáyckst (speckled fish) or Lakes; mətx<sup>w</sup>u (blunt hills around a valley) or Methow; škwáxcənəx<sup>w</sup> (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; sənǰ<sup>w</sup>ilx (grey mist as far as one can see) or San Poil, and šnpəšq<sup>w</sup>áwsəx<sup>w</sup> (people in between) or Wenatchi.