



PRESS RELEASE

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION

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Washington State Tribe Continues Fight for River

Nespelem, WA-- The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday heard arguments from Teck Metals Ltd. (Teck) challenging previous lower court rulings that Teck is liable for response costs under U.S. environmental law based on its releases of hazardous substances in the Upper Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt in northeast Washington. In this appeal Teck continues to contest the U.S. courts' jurisdiction over it as well as arguing that it should not be required to pay district court's \$8,253,676 award to the Confederated Tribes of The Colville Reservation (CCT) for costs incurred proving its liability. And, Teck continues to argue that it should only be responsible for a small portion of the contamination in the Upper Columbia River and Lake Roosevelt. Decision is expected later this year.

The trial court's rulings were the result of more than a decade vigorous litigation by the CCT and the State of Washington against Teck based on its disposal in the Columbia River of 9.97 million tons of slag and effluent for almost 100 years.

This case is unique not only because a Canadian mining company was found liable under U.S. law, but because an Indian tribe and a state joined forces to protect a shared treasured resource--the Columbia River--and assure that the polluter, rather than U.S. taxpayers, would pay the cost of any needed remedial action.

CCT Chairman Dr. Michael Marchand, who attended the hearing in Seattle, said "the Tribes and States presented compelling arguments against Teck and he looked forward to a ruling in favor of the Confederated Tribes and State of Washington."

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About the Colville Tribes:

Today, more than 9,520 descendants of 12 aboriginal tribes of Indians are enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of the Colville. The tribes, commonly known by English and French names, are: the

Colville, the Nespelem, the San Poil, the Lake, the Palus, the Wenatchi (Wenatchee), the Chelan, the Entiat, the Methow, the southern Okanogan, the Moses Columbia and the Nez Perce of Chief Joseph's Bands.