



March 28, 2016

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Bill Blake, Chair  
Implementation Committee  
Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization  
3000 Rockefeller Ave.  
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Snoqualmie Indian Tribe's Participation on Executive Committee

Mr. Blake,

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe (Tribe) recently became aware of a March 23, 2016, letter from the Tulalip Tribes to you, concerning the Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization ("LIO"). In that letter, the Tulalip Tribes object to the Tribe's participation in the LIO Executive Committee stating, erroneously, that the "Snoqualmie Tribe does not hold treaty rights and their jurisdiction is limited to reservation lands." The Snoqualmie Tribal Council does not understand the basis for the Tulalip Tribes' unwarranted and unprovoked attacks, and we have responded directly to the Tulalip Tribes; however, we also submit this letter to you to correct the factual record and to support a position for the Tribe on the Executive Committee.

First, the Tulalip Tribes appear to misunderstand the purpose of the LIO. The purpose of the LIO is to serve as a local forum through which diverse stakeholders can work collaboratively to develop and coordinate actions to improve the health of the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds, and restore the environmental health of Puget Sound. The Snoqualmie Basin is included in this area. One of the missions of the LIO is to facilitate the integration of local governments, tribes and other organizations in developing and implementing strategies and priorities at a local scale. Contrary to the Tulalip Tribes' claims, there is no requirement of "jurisdiction and legal interests" to serve as a member of the Executive Committee contained within the 2015 LIO By-Laws. In fact, the Tribe is **already** a member of the LIO Implementation Committee. As such, it makes perfect sense for the Tribe to take a seat alongside the Stillaguamish Tribe and the Tulalip Tribes on the Executive Committee.



It is well within the role of the Implementation Committee to make recommendations to the Executive Committee, including recommending that the Tribe serve on the Executive Committee. LIO Bylaws § 3.2. The Tribe has directed and will continue to direct millions of dollars toward the recovery of Puget Sound and its sacred resources, including water and salmon. The vast majority of these funds would never have been invested in Snoqualmie Traditional Lands without the existence and direction of the Tribe's Environmental and Natural Resources Department. We hope to add to and improve the LIO, as well as to better direct our own programs and projects through the multi-level coordination and integration that the LIO is meant to facilitate. No other tribe, government or agency other than the Tribe can satisfactorily represent the interests of the Snoqualmie People.

Second, the Tulalip Tribes' letter contains statements that are legally and factually inaccurate, and appear to be little more than a continuation of the arguments that Tulalip advanced against the Tribe's re-recognition in 1999 that were rejected by the United States.

There is no credible dispute that the Tribe is a Treaty Tribe. The Tribe's Treaty-reserved hunting and gathering rights have never been abrogated by Congress. Nor have they been adjudicated. In fact, the Tribe's unadjudicated hunting and gathering rights are extensive. In *Snoqualmie Tribe of Indians v. United States*, 372 F.2d 951 (Ct. Cl. 1967), the court found that "the Snoqualmie were land hunters" and that "Snoqualmie relied on hunting for a large part of their subsistence." The Court of Claims further noted that "the Snoqualmie Indians, who had horses, were rated as one of the better hunting tribes[,] and that "the Snoqualmie ... wandered and roamed through the Cascade Mountains on hunting expeditions."

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in *United States v. Washington*, 593 F.3d 790, 800 (9th Cir. 2010), confirmed that "newly recognized tribes" such as Snoqualmie may "[litigate] a claim of treaty rights not yet adjudicated."

While the Tribe may be unfairly foreclosed from asserting Treaty fishing rights under *U.S. v. Washington* due to procedural limitations decided long ago in that proceeding, there is no such limitation with respect to other rights reserved by the Tribe in the Treaty. This also does not mean that the Tribe has somehow lost the right to be a concerned stakeholder about the health of our rivers, ecosystems, and the fish populations upon which the Snoqualmie people continue to depend.



The Tribe looks forward to its continuing role with the LIO and looks forward to the opportunity to serve on the Executive Committee. Please contact me at the address and telephone number below if you have any further questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carolyn Lubenau".

Carolyn Lubenau  
Chairwoman

cc: Chairman Melvin R. Sheldon, Jr, Tulalip Tribes  
Chairman Shawn Yanity, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians  
Christie True, Co-Chair LIO Executive Committee

