

Winds of Change: Contact History

Part 2

War As related to me by Felix Aripa, late one night, while looking for some water to refresh himself, a *Schitsu'umsh* saw something “shining in the hill side.” He had found a large gold nugget and it was immediately hid. He knew of “the White man's greed. ‘Gold becomes their God’ was a common expression.” Should they come to learn of the gold, “the Whites would take our lands.” With the opening up of *Schitsu'umsh* territory in the 1850s and the influx of Euro-American settlers came additional competing perspectives on the landscape, inevitably leading to conflict, war, and displacement.

Beginning in the early 1850s, concern by various Indian tribes steadily rose over the ever increasing numbers of White immigrants. Enticed under the Federal Government's 1850 Land Donation Act in which half-section grants of land (320 acres) would be offered United States citizens in return for a promise of tilling the soil for four years, White farmers were soon rapidly settling the rich agricultural lands of both Oregon and Washington Territories. Their initial route of arrival was primarily over the Oregon Trail. In addition, White encroachment onto Indian lands escalated with the discovery of gold. Prospectors would eventually invade virtually every corner of the new Territory. The new comers held little regard for Indian claims to the land.

In 1853, Washington Territory was established by the United States congress, placing the *Schitsu'umsh* within it and under the policies of its first governor, the 35 year-old Isaac Stevens. A West Point graduate, the ambitious Stevens assumed the responsibilities of not only the ex officio superintendent of Indian Affairs for the region, but in 1853, also led the search of a suitable northerly railroad route through the new Washington Territory.¹ The two duties had interlinking goals. Stevens envisioned a grand design in which all the Indian tribes of territory would be placed on a single reservation, thus extinguishing Indian title to vast tracks of land and opening them up for the railroads and homesteading by Whites. For the loss of title, annuities and other assistance would be provided by the government. Stevens had also promised the Indians that they would be paid for any lands taken by White settlers. In 1855, the *Schitsu'umsh*

¹ Two noted artists accompanied Isaac Stevens on his 1853 “Pacific Railroad” survey, the New York born, John Mix Stanley, and the German, Gustavus Sohon. Eight of Stanley's lithographs are included in this book. Stevens served out his four-year term as Territorial Governor (1853-57) and would later become a major general during the Civil War, only to be killed in 1862 at the Battle of Chantilly.

witnessed Governor Stevens, in what has been characterized as rather “heavy handed” and “intimidating” fashion, complete the Walla Walla Treaty with the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla, the Nez Perce, and the Yakama, and the Hellgate Treaty with the Flathead, Pend Oreille and one band of the Kootenai.

For the *Schitsu'umsh* in particular, tensions further escalated over the surveying of what would be called “the Mullan Road.” It would run right through the heart of *Schitsu'umsh* country. In 1854, the United States Congress authorized funding for a six hundred mile, transcontinental road, linking Fort Benton on the Missouri with Fort Walla Walla near the Columbia River. Under the direction of Captain John Mullan, who had assisted Governor Stevens in his 1853 railroad survey and who would serve under Colonel Wright in the 1858 War, actual construction of the road began in 1859, with completion in 1862. But for some *Schitsu'umsh*, the intention to build the road was proof that the U. S. Government intended to take Indian lands.

Despite the peacemaking efforts of Father Joset and initially, head chief Vincent, open revolt against the Whites began in 1858, and the *Schitsu'umsh* became involved in armed conflict with the United States army. As Felix Aripa stated, “We didn’t want to go to war, but what would you do when someone breaks into your home?”

During the first part of May, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Steptoe, with 152 enlisted men and 5 officers, two mounted howitzers and insufficient ammunition, left Fort Walla Walla on an assignment in Colville country. After he crossed the Snake River, he proceeded northeast through territory used by the *Schitsu'umsh*, Palouse, and Spokane. This was not a direct route north but a rather undiplomatic course right through the heart of Indian country. Women digging camas fled at his advance, fearing an attack. Adding to the tension, Steptoe had some 50 Nez Perce scouts with him who taunted the other tribes, saying “they were going to help the soldiers take your lands.”

After being shadowed on their northerly march, fighting broke out on May 17 near *Hngwsu^{mn}* Creek (meaning “Rope Place,” referring to an area where ropes were made, and called Pine Creek by Whites). The creek runs by the present town of Rosalia, Washington. Under the command of Vincent, beside *Schitsu'umsh* and Spokane, the fight was joined by

Kalispel, Palouse and Yakamas, in total, numbering around 500 warriors. Outnumbered, Steptoe's troops fought a running retreat south. Steptoe was in a hopeless situation and defeat was imminent. Recognizing Steptoe's dilemma and after conferring with leaders such as Andrew Seltice and Peter Wildshoe (who would themselves later become head chiefs), as well as with Father Joset, Vincent sent a message to Steptoe. The *Schitsu'umsh* would allow his troops safe passage through their lines that night, provided they leave their weapons behind. Under the cover of dark, Steptoe and his detachment of soldiers and Nez Perce withdrew back to Fort Walla Walla. As the troops passed through their lines, the *Schitsu'umsh* "drummed loud to cover their retreat." Under Steptoe's command, two officers, five troopers, and three Indian scouts were killed. For the *Schitsu'umsh* and their allies, at least nine were killed, with some forty to fifty wounded. Among the *Schitsu'umsh* killed were Jacques, Victor and Zachary. For many *Schitsu'umsh* the conflict is referred to as the *Hngwsumn* Battle.

Many of the "spoils of war" went to the *Schitsu'umsh*. At the Veteran's Pow Wow I attended in 1993, I saw a saber from the Steptoe Battle held in honor by a Vietnam War veteran during his induction into the *Schitsu'umsh* veteran's honor guard. The lives lost at the Steptoe Battle, both Indian and soldier, are commemorated during the annual Memorial Warrior's Horse Ride - The *Hngwsumn* (*Hn-Givsumn*) Ride. The horse ride begins at the Agency grounds near Plummer and finishes in the hills near the actual battle site close to the modern town of Rosalia, Washington. At the end of the ride, families share stories, song, meals, and sweat prayers at a tipi encampment. At the 1996 Memorial Ride, I again saw the saber I had seen displayed at the 1993 Veteran's Pow Wow. Held in a beaded case, it was passed around and closely inspected by each of those seated around a family drum. It had been taken in "hand-to-hand combat" when a *Schitsu'umsh* warrior struck down its owner. The family of the warrior has kept it as "a symbol of bravery." When worn in a special dance or brought out at a family gathering, such as the *Hngwsumn* Ride, "you are honoring the soldier who had given his life for it and the Indian men who took it from the soldiers, who met the soldiers with only a bow and arrow and maybe a musket and met the encroachers."

Steptoe Warrior

When the hostilities were going on and just before the Battle of Steptoe, an old man, once a great warrior, from the Cataldo area, wanted to go and fight. He encouraged others to join him, but none would. The priests at the Mission told him not to go, that it was wrong, and if he went, they would not allow him to go to mass or even to work on the construction of the church building. Everyone turned their back on him, including his wife. She said that she would cook and clean for him, but in every other way, she would not be a wife to him. But he just couldn't resist the fight. This was the only way he knew how to get honors, for his bravery.

So he got on his horse and went to the Tekoa area, the Steptoe area. But it took him quite awhile, for it was many miles from the Mission. When he arrived, the battle was already over. And everywhere, there were pots, blankets, horses, a big mess. But no battle to fight. So he loaded up a horse with all kinds of war booty and went back to his village near the Mission.

When he arrived, he expected everyone would cheer him, but they all turned their backs to him. None would give him any honor. In fact, the priests said that he must return these things at once. "But these things are won by me, my honors; if I try to return them, the soldiers would kill me!" The priests insisted, as did everyone else.

So he loaded his things onto his horse and headed to the nearest fort, Fort Walla Walla, many miles away. It took him a long time to travel there, and he knew he'd be shot as soon as the soldiers saw him. But he went anyway. Finally he arrived close to the fort.

He hung his head down. His horse knew something too. It hung its head down and slowly they approached the gate. All the soldiers were at the wall looking down. He knew he'd be shot soon. But he continued. His horse knew as well. Slowly they entered the fort, with all the soldiers' rifles pointed at them. He got off his horse and laid out a blanket. On it he laid all the things he had taken from the battle site. After he had done this, and without a word, he got back on his horse and headed out slowly. He knew he'd get shot. Slowly he rode out of the fort. All the rifles were still pointed at him. After he had gotten out of the firing range of the rifles, he held his head high, and as if his horse knew they were out of danger as well, they galloped over the hill and back to the Mission.

But this time, when he arrived, expecting the same cold shoulder, everyone cheered him. And the priests welcomed him back to the Church. This was indeed a brave deed! (Abbreviated as told by Lawrence Aripa in April 1991.)

In August of 1858, a punitive reprisal for the Steptoe "disaster" was led by Colonel George Wright, a veteran of the Seminole (1835-42) and Yakama (1855) Wars. Wright's command included well equipped infantry and calvary, with the new long-range 58-caliber Springfield muskets and accurate howitzers. His forces engaged several hundred warriors from the area's tribes, first near Medical Lake in the "Battle of Four Lakes," and then several miles west of the city of Spokane in the "Battle of Spokane Prairie." As the Indians approached, they and their horses were easily shot, and as they retreated, the howitzers scattered their ranks. The two "battles" were decisive encounters. For the tribes, there would no longer be any hope for a military challenge to the White encroachment onto their lands.

Following these initial defeats the tribes sought peace. However, the campaign was not over, as Colonel Wright pursued a "scorched earth policy." In the days following the two

“Battles” literally hundreds of horses were shot. Food stores of grain for the coming winter were burned. Upon reaching the Cataldo Mission, Wright wrote, “For the last eighty miles our route has been marked by slaughter and devastation; 900 horses and large number of cattle have been killed or appropriated to our own use; many houses, with large quantities of wheat and oats, also many caches of vegetables, kamas, and dried berries, have been destroyed. A blow has been struck which they will never forget” (Wright 1895). Even though many *Schitsu’umsh*, out of respect for Father Joset, remained neutral and did not participate in the Steptoe Battle, Colonel Wright had their horses and cattle killed, wheat and hay destroyed, and barns burned as well.

Heroism

There were always one or two gentle ponies kept in the log barns, and these too were burned by the troops. These belonged to the innocent children of the Coeur d’Alenes whose parents had been willing to remain neutral, out of respect for Father Joset. The cattle that were killed for only their hind quarters also belonged to these neutral Coeur d’Alenes. So Wright’s troops displayed their heroism by seeing who could destroy the most property of the innocent. All the other cattle and horses became very wild, as the troops stampeded everything in sight. (From the account by Joseph Seltice based upon the memories of his father, Andrew Seltice, in Kowrach and Connolly 1990:131).

On his return to Fort Walla Walla, Colonel Wright “lured” several Palouse and Yakama leaders, along with members of other tribes, into his camp. Without benefit of a formal trial, Wright selected “at least twelve men” and had them hung. Some of the men were put onto a wagon and had ropes tied around their necks to a tree. From atop the wagon, they told their families “not to be afraid of these soldiers.” Then they deliberately jumped off the side of the wagon, denying any pleasure to the soldiers. “They hung themselves to show how brave they were.” The hangings took place along a creek that was in the general region where hostilities first began, Steptoe met defeat, and the *Schitsu’umsh* traditionally gathered to make ropes. The creek was subsequently named “Hangman Creek” by local residents and the *Schitsu’umsh* learned of a new application for ropes.

The Hangman Creek tragedy had a very personal and lasting effect on at least one *Schitsu’umsh* family, as they are descendants of one of those hung that day. At the hanging this warrior gave his family “some words and a song,” which are vividly remembered and still sung today. While sitting on the horse with the rope around his neck, the warrior asked to speak with his relatives, who were gathered on a nearby hillside. After he spoke (refer to the following

vignette), he sang the song. “It is somewhere between a death song and a medicine song for our young people.” When he finished, “a man with marks on his arm” (a sergeant) whipped the horse and he swung there “until his tongue came out.”

Don't Be Sad

If things are going bad and your people are suffering and your children are crying, this song will heal you. So don't be sad because of the death around us, because these men who are being hung were fighters and they faced the soldiers. Don't be sad that the young girls who followed the battle and some of them even getting involved with killing soldiers. When they get old and they are feeling bad for what they had to do, sing this song. When your children and grandchildren are hurting or having hard times, then sing this song. (From an interview conducted October 3, 1997).

On September 17, 1858, the conditions for peace were established by Colonel Wright. The articles of the treaty included the immediate cessation of hostilities, the return of all property belonging to the U.S. and its citizens, assurance that Whites would be “unmolested” while traveling through *Schitsu'umsh* country, and that “at least one chief and four men” responsible for “initiating hostilities” and their families be held as hostages for one year (Wright 1859). Payments for property destroyed belonging to neutrals were supposed to be made, including payment to the *Schitsu'umsh* who had stayed out of the fighting. But such payments were not made.² Among those signing the “Peace Treaty of 1858” were head chief Vincent, Andrew Seltice, Peter Wildshoe and Tecomtee, a son of Stellam.

The landscape of the *Schitsu'umsh* could no longer be protected with bow and arrow and the deeds of its warriors. It was a landscape in turmoil. Colonels would ultimately triumph over war chiefs. And never before had humans so deliberately and woefully destroyed what in the landscape had nurtured life. It must have been an incomprehensible sight for the *Schitsu'umsh* to behold.

One of the Old Time Indians

There was one time, my uncle and my dad, I went with them, they took me along. . . . My dad always called Spokane, Spokane City. He said we'll have to camp in Spokane City. Something went wrong with the Model T truck. My dad went and told my uncle, and we had grandmother with us, too. . . . “Well, we'll camp here in Spokane. We'll get a hotel.” They got rooms and grandma got her a best room.

² It is of interest to note that George Wright later became a “true friend of the Coeur d'Alene,” was their attorney in Washington D.C., and has descendants on the modern reservation.

My uncle said, "Let's go to a movie." My uncle couldn't speak English or read or write, but he could understand English. He enjoyed watching them, silent movie then.

After the movie, we went back to the hotel. My dad went to check on grandma. Got no grandma. My dad went back to our room and looked around and grandma not here. He went down to the desk and asked the clerk, "Has the old lady gone by?" He said, "No, I haven't seen her." We walked around and walked around looking for her. So my dad saw a policeman. He told the policeman to look. Can't find the old lady. They were all going to help. We all went to grandma's room. All of her stuff was there. My dad happened to look. The beds were higher. There her moccasin was sticking out from under... She crawled underneath the bed. She never used the bed. She always had to lay on the ground or on the floor. That's what she did. [Laugh] You couldn't see she was underneath there. But my dad saw her moccasin sticking out. [Laugh] My dad went back down and told the police he found her.

She was one of the participants in the Steptoe Battle. She was one of the old time Indians who never believed in sleeping on the bed. (From an interview conducted on May 20, 1996.)

Executive Order and Allotment In June of 1855, while briefly stopping at the Sacred Heart Mission on his way to Blackfeet and Flathead country, Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens spoke of negotiating a treaty with the *Schitsu'umsh*. In the agreement, the *Schitsu'umsh* would sell a portion of their lands in exchange for living on a reservation. This may have been the first time the *Schitsu'umsh* heard from a representative of the United States government that they were to be confined to "a reservation."

In the Hoodoo area on the North Fork of the Palouse River, a traditional hunting and camas digging region of the *Schitsu'umsh*, gold was found in 1860. Because northern Idaho was so mineral rich, with an ever increasing population of "squatters seeking their fortune," on June 14, 1867, President Andrew Johnson sought to establish a quarter million acre reservation for the *Schitsu'umsh*. In confining the *Schitsu'umsh* to a reservation, large tracks of land could thus be opened up for settlement. But Congress never ratified the "agreement." In fact, no attempt was made to inform the *Schitsu'umsh* of their new territory until 1871. Upon hearing of the arrangement, the *Schitsu'umsh* refused to accept it, claiming the area was much too small.

During this period of negotiations between the various Indian tribes and the United States government, certain legal principles were established that would set the tone for subsequent agreements. The legal status of the tribal entities was conferred and acknowledged to be that of "sovereign nations." Treaties were nation-to-nation agreements, intended to be legally binding for all time. Property would not be taken without consent of the Indian. Ownership of the land and the resources was to be held by the tribes unless explicitly relinquished in the language of an agreement. For example, the ownership of a lake or river, if not explicitly granted to the United

States, would remain with the tribe. As such and as upheld in *Winans vs U.S.* (1906), the agreements entered into were not grants of rights to Indians, but rather grants of rights *from* Indians *to* the United States. In exchange for the cession of vast tracts of land and resources, the tribes would receive educational and health benefits. Such contracted services are thus “purchased” services, rather than social entitlements. Especially during the nineteenth century, the Federal government’s record of adhering to these principles was not always exemplary. Simply because one party in an agreement did not honor the accords of that agreement does not negate the legal status and continued integrity of the agreement.

In 1871, the Indian Appropriation Act ended the making of treaties between Indian tribes and the federal government. All future nation-to-nation agreements would be by executive order with congressional approval. In June of that same year, Frederick Post, a German immigrant, purchased land around the “falls” near the mouth of the Spokane River from Andrew Seltice. Post had been attempting to secure the land since as early as 1867, offering \$500 to Moses Seltice, the father of Andrew. Post would soon build a mill at the site in hopes a town would flourish there. It did and quickly grew into the city of Post Falls.

In 1873, at a site along Hangman Creek, a three-member Indian Commission, sent by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and led by Indiana Representative John Shanks, reached an “agreement” with head chief Andrew Seltice, former head chief Vincent and other sub-chiefs. A reservation would be established “for the exclusive use of the Coeur d’Alene Indians” that included land extending south and west from the site of the Sacred Heart Mission (see the map at the beginning of this work). From Cataldo the border would proceed west to the mouth of the Spokane River and then along the center channel of that river to the Washington Territorial line. The boundary would then run south paralleling the Washington-Idaho Territorial line to the mountain ridges just south of Hangman Creek. Moving east along that ridge, the boundary would then run directly northeast back to the area just west of Cataldo. The reservation of some 598,000 acres would include Lake Coeur d’Alene. In turn, the *Schitsu’umsh* would give up claim to the rest of their aboriginal lands, over three million acres, and allow the government the right to build roads through the reservation. In exchange for these lands and right of way, the

Schitsu'umsh would receive a mill, blacksmith shop, school with supporting personnel, farm implements, and \$170,000.

While the necessary congressional approval was not forthcoming, President Ulysses Grant, in an executive order and as a temporary measure, established the "Coeur d'Alene Reservation" on November 8, 1873. Hence the *Schitsu'umsh* are known as an "Executive Order Tribe." However, without congressional approval, the order could not provide remuneration for lands ceded, nor did it confer "title" to the tribe. And it did not include the lands of the Sacred Heart Mission, leaving the church outside the confines of the reservation. In addition, the precise boundaries of this 1873 reservation were not immediately surveyed and publicly disseminated. With the influx of settlers and miners, particularly in the northern sections of the region, this lack of clearly delineated borders would fuel increasing White-Indian tensions.

In 1875, the *Schitsu'umsh* "endeared" themselves to the local White community by not taking part in the Sioux uprising. There was fear by White settlers that hostilities would spread from the Dakotas into the western territories. But the *Schitsu'umsh* not only did not take part in the uprising, they sent a representative to the Sioux requesting that they, the Sioux, stay out of *Schitsu'umsh* territory. Then in 1877, the Nez Perce War broke out. Again the *Schitsu'umsh* chose not to get involved with the conflict, and, in fact, assisted many local Whites. In the area of the Palouse River, *Schitsu'umsh* actually looked after the livestock of Whites who vacated their farms in fear of Chief Joseph.

Soon after the relocation of the Catholic mission to Hangman Creek, in 1878 the U.S. army established "Camp Coeur d'Alene" to help "resolve" the increasing tension between settlers and Indians. The post was renamed Fort Sherman after General William T. Sherman who helped establish the post. With the start of the Spanish-American War, Fort Sherman was essentially abandoned in 1889 and entirely so by 1901.

"Indian Uprising on the St. Joe"

My family lived up on the St Joe. And before the place was settled, before it was completely taken over, they met just a very few White men, mostly trappers. I don't know, maybe some of you here are familiar with, Rochat? [the French pronunciation of "Rocher"]. My great grandfather [Rufinus Shi'itsin] had a beaver line with him; they trapped together. And so they had this special place where they would go together and they would set out their traps.

And that was when Fort Sherman was still going in Coeur d'Alene, . . . and everything was at a point where it was very uneasy; there was still a lot of trouble between the soldiers and the Indians. And so it was very, very shaky.

And so a group of soldiers, about seven of them, got leave and, they didn't have any place to go, so they decided to ride over here and go up the St. Joe and just camp. What they come up, without realize it, they run into my great grandfather and Rochat's trap lines. And so they saw these beaver ponds, and it was beautiful; the water was just clear, and cool, and so they decided to swim. And then when they got into the water then they saw the traps. So they start snapping them. They'd say, "Here's one," and they'd take it out and snap it and then they'd pick up another one.

And about that time the two came back to the point and then they saw what was going on. So Rochat told my great grandfather, he says, "You go over this side. I will go over here." It was a big area where there was a lot of beaver dams. So he says, "When I give you the signal," he says, "you fire your rifle, and yell," he says, "and I will, and we'll chase them away. So they won't bother our traps any more." So they did that. And when they fired and they yelled, the soldiers got scared and they ran out and jumped on their horses and they took off. And they went back to Coeur d'Alene.

And about three or four days later, there was a whole company of soldiers coming up the river. The paper, I don't know if it was Wallace or Kellogg, the paper had, "Indian Uprising on the St. Joe." [Tremendous laughter from the audience.] And here they were just protecting their traps. . . . Rochat went up there and he talked to the commanding officer, and he straightened everything out. And he says, "There was no uprising;" he says, "all the Indians are peaceful up there, and they were just protecting their traps." (Transcribed from an audio tape recording of Lawrence Aripa telling the account to an audience in April of 1991).

In another attempt to establish a permanent Coeur d'Alene Reservation, the Northwest Indian Commission met with the *Schitsu'umsh* in council and an agreement was reached on March 26, 1887. It included retention of the area signed in the original executive order of 1873. It also allowed members of some 32 Spokane families, numbering approximately 100 individuals, to relocate to the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, settling in the Worley area and becoming enrolled tribal members. The agreement specified that no part of reservation could be sold, occupied, or opened to Whites without consent of the *Schitsu'umsh*. It ceded all non-reservation and thus aboriginal lands to the U.S. government. But again the agreement failed to receive congressional ratification.

Another three-man Indian Commission was sent in August of 1889. Under pressure to secure federal recognition and "title" to their lands and thus protection against further White encroachment, the *Schitsu'umsh* reached an agreement with the Commissioners on September 9th. Among the numerous leaders who marked an X by their name were head chief Andrew Seltice, former head chief Selepto Vincent (Vincent), sub-chiefs Pierre Wheyiishoo (Peter Wildshoe) and Pierre Bartholomew (Peter Moctelme), and such family headmen as Louis Arripa

(Louis Aripa), and Nicodemus (Croutous Nicodemus).³ The agreement called for the Tribe ceding the northern portion of their 1873 Reservation in exchange for a \$500,000 per capita payment (divided among the some 500 *Schitsu'umsh*) and an annual payment totaling \$150,000 over the next fifteen years. Starting at the northwestern corner, the northern boundary of the reservation was moved twelve miles south, and then south along the shoreline. It would then run east across the lake to the mouth of the Coeur d'Alene River and continue east to the border of the reservation (see the map in the front section). The 184,960 acres of ceded land went back into the public domain. The village of *Hnch'mqinkwe*, "Surface on the Head of the Water," was supplanted by the rapidly growing "Coeur d'Alene City." Cession of the rest of the *Schitsu'umsh* aboriginal territory was thus made to the United States, some of which would soon become almost incomprehensibly valuable once mining began. The agreement also assured the *Schitsu'umsh* that no part of their reservation lands would be sold or occupied by Whites without their consent.

Importantly and unlike the previous agreements, the 1889 Agreement was ratified by the United States Senate on March 3, 1891, inclusive of the 1887 Agreement. The year before, on July 3, 1890, Idaho was granted statehood. Added to the defining properties of the landscape were thus a "tribal" and "state," as well as "federal" jurisdictional status.

The exterior boundaries of the Coeur d'Alene Reservation were given their final definition with the "Harrison cession" of 1894. Soon after the reservation was established in 1891, settlers began occupying the area at the mouth of the Coeur d'Alene River. They named their community "Harrison," after the current president, Benjamin Harrison. But the community was clearly within the boundaries of the reservation. Instead of removing "the squatters," the federal government obtained an agreement from the Tribe to sell the northern strip of the reservation, one mile wide, from the mouth of the Coeur d'Alene River east to the border of the

³ Having served as head chief since 1844, Vincent, also known as Bassa, was followed in 1865 by Andrew Seltice. Selected because of his "wealth and intelligence," Andrew Seltice served as head chief until his death in 1902. Peter Wildshoe followed in this capacity from 1902 until his death in 1907. Peter Moctelme was head chief from 1907 until 1932, dying in 1934. And Andrew Seltice's son, Joseph, "elected by the tribe," served as head chief from 1932 until his death in 1949. Joseph Seltice was the last "traditional head chief" of the *Schitsu'umsh*.

reservation. The Tribe was paid \$15,000 for the land cession. Harrison, and this traditional village of *Atkwari't*, were now outside the reservation boundaries.

In 1887, the Federal government enacted the General Allotment Act (more formally known as the Dawes Severalty Act for its sponsor, Senator Henry Dawes of Massachusetts). But it was not until 1909 that the allotment process was actually implemented on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation. The Act established that 160 acres were to be “given” to each tribal member - man, woman and child. Its intent was to “civilize and make farmers” of the Indian. What better way for the Indian to learn American values than by owning and learning the value of “private property,” while at the same time, undermine the impediment to that goal, the “unproductive,” “communal nature” of Indian land tenure. The Indian would finally become “self-supporting.” In turn, the “surplus” lands not allotted to Indians would be brought into public dominion. The reservations would thus be opened up to further expansion by a White population hungry for inexpensive land. No compensation would be given to the Indian for the loss of these once treaty-designated lands. The Act was unilaterally imposed by the Federal Government, ignoring all previous treaty and agreement claims and rights.

Broken Promises

It has not been so very long ago that the President of the United States and his Law-makers promised, after they had bought the district of Coeur d'Alene mines, that this present Reservation was to be ours for all time to come. And when our late Chief Seltice made his treaty the Government, the White Man, promised that no White Man would ever set a foot on our land, that we were to have and control our own laws, that the Reservation was never to be surveyed, or sold without our consent. They broke their promises and bought the northern part of our Reservation when valuable and rich gold mines were discovered there, and this against our will. The Indian did not want to sell. They were almost forced to sell, and now at the present time, today, the Whites have decided to allot our Reservation. They already have started surveying it without consulting us, without even asking our consent, without any offer of compensation. What are we to do about this? My dear people, I want you to speak up and say what you think is best to be done. (Speech given by head chief Peter Moctelme in 1907 at a General Council meeting of the tribe. Peone 1938 May 1 (7): 17. Reprinted in 1981:134).

But what actually occurred to the *Schitsu'umsh* was very different from the Allotment Act's stated purpose. By July of 1909, some 638 allotments had been assigned for a total of 104,077 acres set aside for the *Schitsu'umsh*. Of the 638 allotments, 97 went to Spokanes and 66 to Whites actually “adopted” by the tribe and living on the reservation. *Schitsu'umsh* allotments were typically too small to be economically viable. While each adult may have received 160

acres, among the members of a single family their holdings might not be contiguous, resulting in fragmentation of that family's holdings. While many of the allotments were located in good farming land near and along Hangman Creek, other allotments were in forested and mountainous regions, not on the once productive agricultural camas prairies. Productive thousand-acre family farms were reduced to a few hundred acres.

As the original stipulation of the Act that land was to be held in trust for 25 years was removed in 1906, individuals were now free to lease or sell off their land holdings to Whites. Escalating the loss of *Schitsu'umsh* sovereignty over their land was the manner in which land was inherited. Upon the death of a parent, for example, each child would receive an equal, albeit, a fractional share of his or her parent's land holdings. Over time, this splintering of land inheritance resulted in a "checkerboard" pattern of land ownership. Any given acre of land could be owned by numerous, potentially unrelated individuals. Consequently, rather than attempting to farm their fragmented parcels of land, many *Schitsu'umsh* found the only efficient means of acquiring an income was through the leasing of their scattered land holdings to White farmers. This lease-pattern would continue into the present. In the decades to follow, over a third of the original allotments would be sold to Whites. By 1921 only four *Schitsu'umsh* families were able to productively continue farming their own allotments.

The loss of lands due to the individual sale of allotments to Whites paled by comparison to the loss of vast tracts of "surplus" lands not allotted to the *Schitsu'umsh* in the first place. At the time of allotment, the *Schitsu'umsh* immediately lost claim to an estimated 310,000 acres of land. These lands were, in turn, opened up for settlement to Whites, all within the boundaries of the Coeur d'Alene Reservation and all without compensation to the *Schitsu'umsh*.

Besides loss of major portions of their reservation, the Allotment Act also resulted in moving many families out from their traditional homelands around Benewah Creek near Lake Coeur d'Alene and at the mouth of the St. Joe River. For these *Schitsu'umsh* their cultural and subsistence links with the lake were thus severed. And finally, with the allotment process and its emphasis on "individual ownership" of land and property, also came a further eroding the prevailing collective family orientation and kinship obligations of the *Schitsu'umsh*, and a

solidifying of a landscape being redefined in terms of an “economic commodity.” The allotments were intended to be “owned and operated” in the mold of a Euro-American “nuclear family.”

When asked how he remembered the effects the Allotment Act on his family and the *Schitsu’umsh* generally, Felix Aripa simply said, “it broke everyone of them.” Once successfully integrating hunting and gathering with agriculture, *Schitsu’umsh* families would now face a severe period of dislocation and poverty. An Act which sought economic self-sufficiency for the Indian accomplished just the opposite.

While not part of the Allotment Act process, the few remaining *Schitsu’umsh* families living along the shores of Lake Coeur d’Alene were removed with the installation of a dam and the establishment of a park. Frederick Post had begun work on a mill and dam as early as 1871. But it wasn’t until Washington Water Power of Spokane (now the Avista Corporation) completed their dam and hydroelectric power plant at Post Falls in 1906 that the lake’s water was fully harnessed, providing electricity, irrigation water and seasonal flood control. Soon after the damming of the river the character of Lake Coeur d’Alene’s shoreline was significantly altered. While estimates vary, the lake rose at least six to seven feet above its former yearly average level (personal communication, Robert Singletary, October 1997). With the increased augmentation of the lake’s volume came permanent flooding of literally thousands of acres of land, as well as destruction of many traditional sites associated with residence, fishing, and water potato gathering. In raising the lake’s level, a series of small lakes were also fully etched out along the lower section of the Coeur d’Alene River - Rose, Bull Run, Killary, Medicine, Cave, Swan, Black, Blue, Thompson and Anderson Lakes, and at the southern end of the lake - Benewah, Round and Chatcolet Lakes. Also with the raise in the lake and thus level of the numerous streams and rivers that fed it, water no longer cascaded over boulders but gently flowed into the lake. At the junctures of the streams and rivers and the lake, the cutthroat trout now easily swam upriver, avoiding the need to leap a boulder and the possibility of a fisherman’s net. The waters of Lake Coeur d’Alene no longer ebbed and flowed with the changing seasons, but were monitored and controlled for the electrical power that water would produce.

In 1911, Heyburn State Park was established at the southern end of the lake to provide recreational opportunities for the local residents. It had been deeded by the federal government

to the State of Idaho. However, for the several *Schitsu'umsh* families who had traditionally resided in their cabins along the lake's shores, the park meant eviction without compensation. The monies received from the state for the purchase of the trust lands, some \$11,000, did not in fact go to the tribe, but were allocated to cover the costs of developing the state park.

The executive order process and allotment, in combination with the next wind which blew over the landscape, resulted in a landscape that could no longer provide economic self-sufficiency for the *Schitsu'umsh*, whether it be in any combination of a transhumance or "reduction" mode. Not unlike the consequences of the demise of the buffalo on the Plains, with the loss of land came loss of access to fishing, root gathering and game hunting, and the *Schitsu'umsh* entered a devastating era of economic impoverishment and of dependency on the United States Government. The *Schitsu'umsh* families were now legally defined and limited to some 100,000 acres they can lay claim to within a reservation one twelfth the size of their once four million acre aboriginal landscape. With the growing White desire for and incursion onto *Schitsu'umsh* lands, the federal government's solution was to remove the *Schitsu'umsh*, rather than the White squatters. Traditional village sites at the mouths and along the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene Rivers were replaced by commercial centers, all of whom were a part of a new burgeoning economy that essentially excluded *Schitsu'umsh* participation. As the warriors had failed to meet the military challenge of the colonels, the chiefs could not successfully bargain against the weight brought to bear by the commissioners. The executive order process saw the power and prestige of the chiefs further undermined. It became a landscape populated by numerically dominate Euro-Americans who sought ownership of the land to fulfill their own desires for independence and economic security. It became a landscape legally redefined in terms of a "reservation," an "economic commodity" over which "federal," "state," and "tribal" authority was asserted and contested.

Mining The 1880s saw a rush of miners to the Coeur d'Alene River basin, staking out claims and cutting timber.⁴ Discoveries included placer gold in the Coeur d'Alene Mountains in

⁴The intent of this section is not to demonstrate the extent and severity of ecological damage in the Coeur d'Alene River basin brought by mining activities. It is rather to clarify the consequences of such activities for the *Schitsu'umsh* landscape.

1880 and near Murray on the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River in 1883. The following year, lead and silver veins were discovered on South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, and in 1885 major silver strikes resulted in the opening of the Hecla, Bunker Hill, and Sullivan mines. In 1880 the first of several steamboats, the *Amelia Wheaton*, was launched, providing easier transportation of people and supplies up and down the rivers. The power plant at Post Falls began delivering electrical power to the mines by 1906. Chief Seltice had earlier requested that the United States Government send someone to negotiate with these new arrivals and have them removed. His requests went unheeded and the newcomers stayed.

The "Coeur d'Alene Mining District," located primarily along the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, is the world's largest source of silver production. Since 1884, it had "produced over 1 billion ounces of silver, 8.5 million tons of lead, 3 million tons of zinc, and substantial quantities of antimony, cadmium, cooper, and gold. The total value of this production is over \$4.8 billion" (Bennett, Siems and Constantopoulos 1989:137). The Bunker Hill mine contains over 150 miles of underground workings. At 7,900 feet deep, the Star-Morning mine is the deepest U. S. mine. And the Sunshine is the richest U. S. silver mine, having produced over 350 million ounces of silver. The mines continue to be very productive, annually producing over 3 million ounces of silver, representing approximately ten percent of the annual U. S production.

From the mines also came industrial by-products and waste. Heavy metal pollution began accumulating, kept in impoundment ponds. The contaminants included lead, cadmium, zinc, mercury, and arsenic. But spring run-offs and floods, eroding the containment dikes, spread the contaminants throughout the Coeur d'Alene River basin, down to Harrison and into Lake Coeur d'Alene. The floods of 1913 forced the once fertile hay fields around Cataldo to be completely abandoned. In the vignette, "Liquid Lead," we have an account offered by a young White girl traveling by steamboat on the Coeur d'Alene Lake just prior to 1911.

Liquid Lead

At Harrison the Coeur d'Alene river, flowing with liquid lead, empties into the lake, bringing as tribute a fortune in solution every year, the loss from the flumes at the mines. These lead-laden waters are death to animals and vegetable life; a dog or cat drinking from it dies. (From Mock 1911:2).

The relocation to Hangman Creek, the intensification of agriculture, and the establishment of the Reservation boundaries had inhibited, but did not curtail access to and reliance upon the northern reaches of the *Schitsu'umsh* landscape. As discussed previously, families continued to hunt, berry and fish that region, as noted in the sighting of *Schitsu'umsh* hunting mule deer and berrying along the Little North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene and on Grizzly Mountain up to 1900. But as smallpox had diseased the human population, pollution from mining activities in the Coeur d'Alene River basin brought illness to the other populations of the landscape - the fish, animal, and plant inhabitants. As a result, participation by the *Schitsu'umsh* in this region of their landscape had all but ceased. It is ironic that this land, now economically redefined, would so enrich one population at the expense of another.

Dishwater

Back when I was, from what I recall, age five to age ten [approximately 1950], my dad used to go fishing in Chatcolet area, Harrison area, and he just didn't go anymore. A lot of the older people that he was fishing with would say that the fish were sick. "They are sleeping." Those are the words that he came back with. "The fish are sleeping all the time." We never got the advantage or the opportunity of eating a lot of fish anymore. I remember distinctly the fact that in order to get any fish, we would have to go to Spokane. Or we would go up on the Spokane Reservation to fish. For whatever reason, other than, "what I remember him mentioning that, "the fish were sleeping," was what he told. "They were soft. They didn't taste good anymore." So we never got any more fish. . . .

I used to get water potatoes and things like that that my grandma and them used to go around Cataldo and there; even before there was the pilgrimage, they used to go there because one of our family is buried there, . . . They would dig for cub ears and water potatoes and for what they used to call the wild carrot. Then they quit and moved the whole area from digging around there and they began to have to dig with the Spokane, down to Davenport and Wilbur and Creston area [Wilbur is some 60 miles directly west of Spokane]. That is where they would go digging after that. . . . They would travel around, but they didn't go to Harrison anymore. They didn't go to Cataldo anymore. They didn't go that way at all anymore. They just quit going.

I remember asking him, my Hoppy, why we didn't go to the Coeur d'Alene River anymore and he mentioned that it was gray. His exact words were something like, "the water looked like dishwater. It looked like dishwater." So he just didn't go there anymore. There was an area where they used to go around Harrison and something about a cave. It must be Cave Bay or somewhere over in there [Cave Lake or Bay is on the Coeur d'Alene River, just a few miles east of Harrison]. They used to go over in there and pick water potatoes, and then they just didn't anymore. (From an interview conducted on June 7, 1996)

Self-Determination The 1920s and 30s signaled the blowing of a new, warmer wind across the landscape of the *Schitsu'umsh*. Congress bestowed United States citizenship upon all Indians in 1924. Citizenship was in part granted in gratitude for so many Indians serving the

country during WW I, but it was also enacted to help curb the authority of the Interior Department by “getting them out of the Indian business.” However, in granting citizenship, this action did not remove the treaty and executive order obligations that had been entered into by sovereign nations - the Tribes and the United States Government. Dual citizenship was thus established. A *Schitsu’umsh* is a citizen of the United States and of the Coeur d’Alene Nation.

In 1934, the federal government enacted the Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard) Act and the thawing of the landscape deepened. The goal of the Act was to rehabilitate tribal economics, promote self-determination via local rule, and provide religious and cultural freedom to Indians. It also formally ended the allotment process. Funding was provided for education. Each tribe had the right to accept or reject the Act. The Act encouraged self-government and, in 1947, the Coeur d’Alene Tribe formed its first tribal government that was not under the control of its traditional head chiefs. It set the stage for a form of government that would provide the *Schitsu’umsh* people with most all of their executive, judicial and legislative needs. The Tribe established an elected council of a Chairman and six board members, each serving a three-year term. All enrolled members, with at least “one-fourth Indian blood,” had a vote and voice in the governance of the tribe. Those who would lead would do so by the consensus of those they represented.

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 also lifted the governmental ban on ceremonies and dances. The repressive policies of the Jesuit not only ceased, but as we observed in the example of Father Byrne, the priests began encouraging many forms of traditional culture. With improved roads and a new means of transportation, the car, contact between various reservations, close and far, increased tremendously. As a consequence, the 1930s witnessed the syncretism of at least two dance traditions, the traditional war dance and the Lakota Omaha dance, to form a new expression - the Pow Wow. The term “pow wow” likely derives from an Algonquian word, “*pauau*,” or “*pau wau*.” It originally referred to a gathering of spiritual leaders. But as with so many Indian terms, it was then mispronounced and misapplied by early Euro-American observers of the dances. They believed it simply referred to a large gathering of Indians. In turn, the usage spread and has become adopted as a pan-Indian term. The arrival of the Lakota Omaha dance brought a certain associated dance regalia, for example, the use of the eagle-feather bustle and

porcupine hair roach, and like the term, “pow wow,” became widely shared throughout Indian country. In the songs, dances and regalia of the Pow Wow, the *Schitsu’umsh* had an opportunity to continue to express their prayerful and celebratory desires, so central to the war and harvest ceremonies of old, as well as develop a new forum to reaffirm to a hostile world their identity as *Schitsu’umsh*. The nature and significance of the *Schitsu’umsh* Pow Wow will be considered more fully in the chapter, “Sharing the Gifts.”

Leadership

I admire Joe Garry; I grew up when he was a leader, and I heard him speak. I thought Ozzy George could mesmerize the whole audience. And I saw the humility and the humbleness in him. And they looked at Happy LaSarte and the compassion he had for the people. And probably those three men had a great impact on my values. . . .

And we’re a matriarch tribe, where our grandmothers, our *T’upye’s*, are really the important woman in our families. I got to spend a lot of time with my grandmother; saw how strong willed she was and I admired her for that. And I learned how to maybe make decisions for the rest of her family, at that time. They taught me that decisions have to be made You couldn’t put them aside. They had to be made. And if you didn’t make those decisions, then things wouldn’t be right. Procrastinating. You couldn’t procrastinate. So I thought those people influenced me quite a bit. . . .

The leaders I talked about, I felt had a commitment more than anyone I knew, to the whole tribe, where the tribe was most important. And if they took care of their tribe, then the families would be taken care of. And they sensed that. That they really, really cared. That they weren’t in those positions for money; they weren’t in those positions for esteem. But there was a sense that they had to protect the tribe, they had to lead the tribe, they had to really take care of them. (From an interview conducted on February 19, 1997.)

It was under the leadership of such Council Chairmen as Joe Garry, Ozzy George, and Happy LaSarte, beginning in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, and in conjunction with the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975, that the Tribe further extended its autonomy over the lives of its own people and the landscape.⁵ Marceline Kevis, the granddaughter of Andrew Seltice and herself elected to and having served on the Tribal Council “for thirty-two years intermittently,” vividly remembers the efforts of such leaders as Joe Garry and others. During the 1950s, it was they who not only thwarted the efforts of the Federal government’s Termination Policy on the Coeur d’Alene Reservation, but “championed” the resistance to Federal abrogation of responsibilities for many of the tribes throughout the region. The Self-Determination Act provided the Coeur

⁵Joe Garry began serving as Chairman in 1948 and continued almost uninterrupted until 1967, while Ozzy George served as Chairman from 1968 through 1970. Happy LaSarte served as Chairman from 1970 through 1971.

d'Alene Tribe with the authority to directly control and operate many services previously provided by the federal government. Final transfer of the remaining BIA functions was assumed by the Tribe. It is important to note that the qualities that helped guide the chiefs of the *Schitsu'umsh* families through the seasonal round of bygone days are similarly expressed in the recent past and today among the elected members of the Tribal Council. The thawing winds brought by the Indian Reorganization Act and the Indian Self Determination Act witnessed from within the *Schitsu'umsh* landscape a re-flowering of what had been suppressed and lay dormant far too long.

Today the Tribe has its own court and police system, along with Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, Education, Health Services, Housing, Planning, and Social Services. As a function of the Law and Order Department, the Tribe has civil jurisdiction over all inhabitants living within the reservation boundaries, while the federal government retains judicial responsibility over all felony issues. As in former times, the Tribe also has the power of "banishment." If an individual's behavior is judged continually "harmful to his neighbors and to the children," he can be expelled from the reservation. In addition, health services were transferred from the Indian Health Service to the Tribe's own contracted providers, establishing the Benewah Medical Center.

In 1989, the Tribe entered into an agreement with the state of Idaho allowing the *Schitsu'umsh* to hunt, fish and trap in the territory ceded by the 1887 and 1889 Agreements with the U. S. government. The *Schitsu'umsh* are thus allowed limited access to much of their aboriginal territory. This agreement is exclusive of privately owned lands and the states of Washington and Montana. The Tribal Natural Resources Department has expanded its scope of services to include management of fisheries, wildlife, water resources, air quality, pesticide usage, and environmental planning on the reservation. Today the Coeur d'Alene Reservation boundaries include 345,000 acres, of which about 70,000 acres are actually owned by the *Schitsu'umsh* themselves. The enrollment of the tribe numbers some 1,650 individuals.

We see numerous on-going attempts by the *Schitsu'umsh* people to gain even further economic and political sovereignty. Such examples include the very successful Benewah Medical Center (in Plummer), the Tribal School (in DeSmet), and the Wellness Center (near the

Medical Center), each opening “state-of-the-art” facilities in 1993, 1997, and 1998 respectively, the *Schitsu’umsh* language programs in the tribal and public schools, and local college, and the gaming operation. In seeking to develop its own economic self-sufficiency, the Tribe has developed an Economic Development Corporation, which among other enterprises, oversees the operation of a 5,000 acre Tribal Farm. The Tribal Farm received its initial impetus in 1958, when the tribe was awarded approximately four million dollars from the Indian Claims Commission for lands ceded in 1889. Of that award, a million and a half dollars went to the purchase of agricultural lands for the Tribal Farm.

We're On An Expedition

We try to hire our people. We try to believe in them. We try to give them a chance. We try to train them well and right. We included in our training program things about who they represent and taking pride in it. Wearing the uniform, so to speak, with a great deal of pride. Before we opened up, there were a lot of people who came to me and said, “Dave, you're doing this wrong. It isn't going to work. It's going to fail like the pig farm and the construction enterprise. You're hiring the wrong people. You're training them wrong. If they've never had these kind of jobs before, why don't you get people out of Spokane who already worked in bingo halls and let them do it.” Some of our own people were telling me that, too. I just figured, I don't think that can be true. It's not brain surgery. It's not rocket science. If we believe in them, they know we believe in them. They're not feeling like I can't do it because people are treating me like I'm stupid, but we treat them like they're intelligent, like they have a reason to have pride and try hard and encourage them. Where we see they're weak in an area, we train them in that area and it worked. We're known around here as being the operation with the greatest level of customer service in gaming, bingo, or maybe just about anything. It's because our people who work here are primarily tribal members or other tribes married in. They've done an excellent job.

After that, after this is all done and set and we're moving and going, the way I run it here, there are no titles. Nobody has got to come in and call me, “Mr. . . .,” or anything. We're all first name. I try to tell them we're a team, we're a family. We're like a band or a war party or a hunting party. We've been sent out to do something. This is what we're doing. If we succeed, then our people are going to be protected. Elders are going to have care. The children are going to have a future. That's the way we have to look at it. We're on an expedition. We have to do something here. We have to be careful. We have to be alert. We have to be on time. Put it in those kinds of context. The Indian mind, our employees here, can see that. They can understand that's what's at stake. That's what it's all about. (From an interview conducted on May 24, 1996.)

The Coeur d'Alene Tribal Bingo and Casino was established in 1993 at a initial cost of \$2.7 million. Deliberately electing to forgo an outside financial partner and within three years of very profitable operations, its ten-year mortgage was paid off. A 14 million dollar expansion soon followed and, by 1998, the additions were completely paid for and the net profits from the gaming operation totaled \$9.2 million. Following a decision involving the entire tribe, profits

from the revenues of the Casino have gone back into such endeavors as education, both for the Plummer-Worley School District (publicly funded and administered elementary and senior high schools) and the Coeur d'Alene Tribal School (a tribally-operated K-8 grade elementary school), into the *Schitsu'umsh* language programs, and, most importantly, into the purchase of land, especially forest and farming lands, to help enhance and eventually sustain future tribal economic independence. Additional funding would also be directed toward neighboring school districts. In 1999, for example, \$794,000 was given to various educational endeavors - \$255,000 for the Plummer-Worley School District, \$394,000 for the Coeur d'Alene Tribal School and Department of Education, \$40,000 for the American Indian Art Institute in Santa Fe, \$30,000 for North Idaho College, and, to White communities just off the reservation, \$20,000 for the St. Maries School District and \$10,000 each to the Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai and Post Falls School Districts. Additional funding was also distributed to area libraries. The funding was designated to be used entirely at the discretion of each school's administration. Since its inception, the Casino has thus generated of over \$2.5 million for educational endeavors. According to Tribal Chairman Ernie Stensgar, "This is not a donation; rather it is an investment in our Indian and non-Indian children." In 1999, the Coeur d'Alene Casino, as it is now called, embarked on an ambitious 32 million dollar expansion, which includes a 5,000 seat arena for boxing, concert and rodeo events, a 27 hole golf course (including a 9 hole "executive course"), an RV park, and a 104-room motel and conference center.

The leadership for the various tribal initiatives has come from such individuals as Ernie Stensgar, a descendant of Circling Raven, who has been Tribal Chairman since 1986, and David Matheson, who was Tribal Chairman from 1982 through 1984. Matheson served at the national level as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs during President George Bush's Administration, and has been the Chief Executive Officer for Gaming at the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Casino since its inception. As of 1999, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, in all its operations, had become one of the largest employers in the region, with over 700 employees. With the *Schitsu'umsh* language now being taught in elementary, high school and college-level classrooms, the uniquely *Schitsu'umsh* names for their landscape are now once again beginning to be spoken aloud - *Q'emiln*, *Hnt'aq'n*, *L'lkhwi'lus*, *Alkwari't Hnch'mqinkwe'*, *Stseghwlkwe'*, and *Hnch'emtsn*. These efforts are being

greatly assisted by such linguists and teachers as Raymond Brinkman, who is teaching and developing a college-level language curriculum, Ivy Doak, who is updating and expanding the *Schitsu'umsh* dictionary, and Reva Hess and Jill Wagner, who are teaching and developing a high-school level language curriculum. A strong advocate for such endeavors has been Dianne Allen, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's Director of Education. At all levels of instruction, the ninety-year old Lawrence Nicodemus continues to guide and inspire the *Schitsu'umsh* language revitalization.

In coordination with various state and federal agencies and led by the efforts of such individuals as Henry SiJohn and Alfred Nomee, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe is in the forefront of mining pollution clean-up efforts throughout the Coeur d'Alene river-basin.⁶ "We want a clean and pristine and healthy lake for our children and their children's children, for all the peoples of this region." In July of 1998, United States District Judge Edward Lodge ruled that the tribe was "entitled to exclusive use, occupancy and right" to the bed and banks of the southern third of Lake Coeur d'Alene. His ruling was based upon the agreement of 1873. In so doing, the *Schitsu'umsh* add claim and further legitimacy as stakeholders in the Coeur d'Alene river-basin clean-up efforts, and their desire to nurture and restore to health all the members of the *Schitsu'umsh* family - human, animal and plant.

Despite the strong winds which have blown a freezing chill over the landscape - disease, conversion, war, executive orders, allotment, pollution, as well as the secularization and economic and legal commodification of the land - the teachings of the *Schitsu'umsh* continue to flower, helping contour and animate a landscape. Many of the holes in the *Schitsu'umsh* flag are, in fact, being mended. And as a testament to a people's particular perseverance against overwhelming odds, their "Indian flag" flies strong with the stars and strips of the United States and crucifix of the Jesuits patched along side the stories of Crane and Coyote. While retaining their core values, their teachings, the *Schitsu'umsh* have flourished not by attempting to exclude but by embracing aspects of educational, health care, economic, political and religious institutions once alien to their own society. In turn, these institutions are given a uniquely

⁶Henry SiJohn served on the Tribal Council until his death in 1999, while Alfred Nomee is the Director of Natural Resources for Coeur d'Alene Tribe.

Schitsu'umsh orientation, as they are integrated into their society. Ruling by the consent of the people, a tribal chairman embraces the very same values that would have elected a traditional chief, and a multi-million dollar gaming operation is run as a hunting expedition, for example.

“From where we stand [be it Plummer or DeSmet] we once could see the dust rising from the feet of our grandmothers as they walked the trails over the hills and into the distant mountains.” Much of the *Schitsu'umsh* landscape is no longer accessible, incorporated into another's landscape or rendered diseased and inhospitable. While the dust is no longer seen rising today, the trails through the *Schitsu'umsh* landscape are nevertheless still traveled. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe, as its highest priority, is attempting to regain tribal and economic sovereignty within their landscape. Leadership is again by consent of the people and spearheaded by astute and visionary *Schitsu'umsh*. New gifts have been discovered and are being brought forth from the landscape, providing expanded economic opportunities. At the same time, when the story of Crane or Coyote is told, or a Memorial Give Away is held, the landscape is also re-invigorated.