



Celilo Then and Now

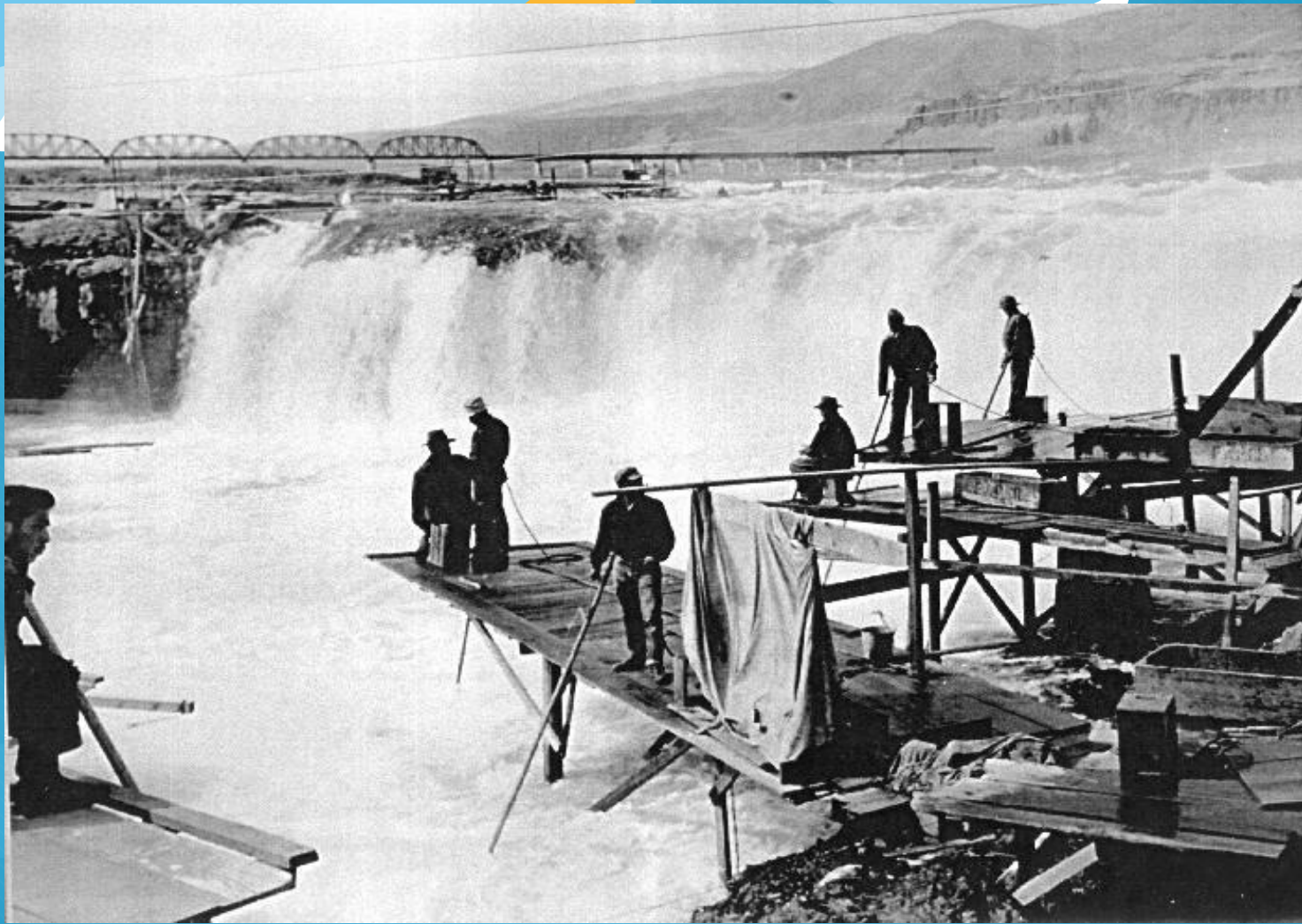
The largest gathering place in the tribal world.



Celilo Falls was a place where Native American tribal people would gather every year. The Wy' am tribe stayed there year round.



Tribes would come from all over the United States and Canada to gather, trade, celebrate and hold religious ceremonies. Sometimes more than 5,000 people were at Celilo.



Tribes have come to Celilo since the beginning of time. The words for this is “time immemorial.”



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Before things changed, there were so many big salmon that fishers would take turns on the scaffold and within minutes have a salmon in their nets.



March 15, 1957 ended Celilo Falls. The Dalles Dam flooded the falls, and now they are gone. This is what Celilo Lake looks like today.



There are a lot fewer fish and the fish are a lot smaller now. It is so bad that tribes are working to help make salmon come back better and stronger.

Here, Yakama men are tagging a fish to keep track of it and learn about how it spawns.



Here is a picture of Wanapum people in front of a tule mat longhouse. No one knows when this picture was taken, but it was before Celilo was flooded. Wanapum means “river people” in Sahaptin, the local Indian language.




Now there are not as many people who come to fish and trade, but the Wy'am people still live here and work hard to keep traditions alive. This is a tule mat longhouse from ten years ago.



This is a first foods ceremony from the 1950s. The woman is cooking salmon and lamprey, known as “eels.” She is cooking it over a fire. Many tribal people still prepare fish like this today.



Continued tradition of drying salmon-yesterday and today.

A stylized illustration of a bright yellow sun with a small blue circle in the center, partially obscured by light blue and white clouds. The background is a solid blue gradient.

Though Celilo Falls is now “Celilo Lake,” it is still very important to tribal people. They still gather, celebrate, and fish, but it will never be like it was before the falls were flooded.