



PRESS RELEASE
North Olympic Library System
2210 South Peabody Street
Port Angeles, WA 98362

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 24, 2024
Contact: Jennifer Smathers, West End Adult Services Library Service Specialist
360-374-6402 x7794; JSmathers@nols.org
Re: Free in-person Humanities Washington talk, "Hunting, Fishing, and Native Sovereignty"
Attached: *AaronWhitefoot.jpg*

Yakama hunter and fisherman Aaron Whitefoot discusses the history and tensions that linger from the Treaty of 1855 in his talk "Hunting, Fishing, and Native Sovereignty," hosted by the North Olympic Library System in collaboration with Humanities Washington. There are two opportunities to attend the free public talk and registration is not required. The first event is offered on Friday, Nov. 1, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Sekiu Community Center, 42 Rice St. A second event will take place on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the Forks Branch Library, 171 S. Forks Ave. Visit nols.org/hw for event details.

The Treaty of 1855 is a document signed by Native American leaders, Washington Territory's Governor Isaac Stevens, and Oregon Territory's Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer. Palmer and Stevens pushed for "exploitative treaties" by "cajoling and threatening the delegates," according to historians at the National Park Service. Despite resistance from Yakama Chief Kamiakin, Nations were confined to reservations and other areas were opened for white settlement, including "ceded land." While the Yakamas could continue to hunt and use this land, the treaty removed the Yakamas' exclusive use of it, granting wide access of the land to white settlers.

Northwest treaty rights continue to be frequently discussed in communities and courtrooms. In his talk, Aaron Whitefoot discusses the history and tensions that linger from this treaty. While exercising the hunting and fishing rights reserved for him by the treaty, Whitefoot often clashes with state game wardens trying to implement state laws on ceded land. Learn how this struggle is emblematic of the larger history of colonialism, sovereignty, the value of nature, and traditional cultures.

About the Presenter

Aaron Paul Whitefoot (he/him) graduated from Haskell Indian Nations University. Whitefoot served as a tradition bearer in the Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program from the Center for Washington Cultural Traditions, teaching hunting, fishing, tying nets, and cutting and processing elk. He runs the Yakama Nation Hunters and Gatherers Facebook page and a YouTube channel where he demonstrates his craft.

About Humanities Washington

Humanities Washington is a nonprofit organization dedicated to opening minds and bridging divides by creating spaces to explore different perspectives. For more about Humanities Washington, visit humanities.org.



Aaron Whitefoot, Yakama hunter and fisherman, discusses “Hunting, Fishing, and Native Sovereignty” at Sekiu Community Center on Nov. 1 and Forks Library on Nov. 2.

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