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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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### *COLVILLE LEADERS OPPOSE PENDING CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION*

*NESPELEM, Wash.*-“Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) claims the Army Corps of Engineers is being irresponsible and trying to find a way around the will of the people,” said Chairman Joseph A. Pakootas. “From our perspective, his statements are far from the truth.”

“We met with the Army Corps of Engineers earlier this week here at Nespelem and were assured that the Corps would move ahead with their plans to cover the site where the so-called Kennewick Man was found along the Columbia River,” stated Pakootas. “We, meaning the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, believe that the site is a burial ground for ancient Native Americans who could very easily have been some of our ancestors.”

“We want this site protected from erosion and more importantly, looters and grave robbers,” stated Pakootas. “We want the remains of those individuals buried at the site to be covered up so that they may rest there for eternity. This is the will of our people.”

“It appears that there was a last minute effort by Rep. Hastings, who is obviously following in the footsteps of Sen. Slade Gorton (R-Wash.), to ramrod a law through Congress about the site protection work that has put the project on hold,” said Pakootas. “So now, we are awaiting the final version of H.R.-3579 and S. 1768 which will be sent to the President for signing. This bill is a travesty. We are voicing our opposition to it directly to the President of the United States, he concluded.”

Leaders of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation are intensely involved in a coordinated effort by several Indian tribes from the northwest who are demanding that the remains of the 9,200-year-old “ancient one” be reburied and the site covered as quickly as possible.

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