



COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

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N. Kathryn Brigham Chairwoman Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

N. Kathryn “Kat” Brigham is a passionate advocate for salmon and the protection of tribal treaty fishing rights. She is the current chairwoman of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and serves on the Board of Trustees for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR). First elected to the Board of Trustees in 1995, Mrs. Brigham has spent 16 years on the Board of Trustees. She is currently the Board of Trustees Secretary and serves on the Fish & Wildlife Commission and the Umatilla Tribe’s Alcohol and Drug Task Force.

Born and raised on the CTUIR near Pendleton, Oregon. Kat didn’t begin fishing until she got married to her husband Robert, although her immersion in salmon issues and tribal treaty fishing rights can be traced back to her grandfather, Sam Kash Kash. A respected tribal leader and elder, Sam Kash Kash taught her about the importance of Tribal Treaty Rights for our salmon, Percy Brigham taught her the importance of fish for the fishers and the CTUIR Longhouse taught her the importance of salmon to our tribal culture as one of the tribe’s first foods. She would ask her grandfather and father-in-law questions while driving them to meetings. Kat was among tribal leaders who walked through anti-Indian picket lines that would form outside of meeting locations after Judges Belloni and Boldt ruled in the *US v. Oregon* and *US v. Washington* court decisions.

Appointed to the CTUIR Fish and Wildlife Commission in August 1976, Kat was one of the initial commissioners to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission when it was created in 1977. As a CRITFC commissioner, she has been a strong advocate for cleaner water, working to secure a fish consumption rate in Oregon that protects tribal members and those who eat fish. She is an advocate for a Columbia Basin hatchery strategy, and represented the Umatilla Tribe’s interests in the negotiation of multiple *US v Oregon* Columbia River Fish Management Plans.

Kat has been widely recognized for her dedication to her various causes. The League of Women’s Voters of Oregon, Pacific Salmon Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, CRITFC, and her own tribe have honored her for her work.

Kat and her husband lived along the Columbia River in Cascade Locks, Oregon for 30 years and returned to the reservation when she was elected to the Board of Trustees in 1995. They return to the Columbia River every year to exercise their tribal treaty fishing rights. Kat and Robert have three daughters, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren, all of whom fish the Columbia River.