
Lummi Nation: Our Future

Narrator: The Lummi people revived a tradition called the First Salmon Ceremony. The children at the Lummi Nation School prepare for weeks for the ceremony. They create special art projects. They also make the special sticks that salmon are cooked on, and give them to elders and people in the community.

James Hillaire, Director, Lummi Nation Culture Department: We recently revived what we call the First Salmon Ceremony, where we pay respect to the salmon.

Cynthia Wilson, Culture Teacher, Lummi Nation School: I think the Salmon Ceremony is so important because it identifies us as Native people. And I think it helps us build that strong foundation for our children, and allows us to have the children understand the identity and the purpose for their life, and to be strong leaders for us.

Doralee Sanchez, Culture Education Coordinator, Lummi Nation School: There's going to be a lot of changes with this time period when, you know, we don't have the salmon. It can never go back to where we were. But when they bring up the questions, and then it pulls a piece of history out, and then people will tell them. They ask the questions, and then it reminds them of where we come from and who we are, because we are salmon people, and we will always be salmon people.

Narrator: The Lummi people are very hopeful that their hard work to save the salmon will be successful.

Merle Jefferson, Director, Lummi Natural Resources: Well, I think that people got to understand, you know, that you must protect and respect the Mother Earth. You've got to respect the water and the earth, and if you go out there and start destroying the Mother Earth, you know, it's going to turn and it's not going to produce. I think that it is going to come back. I think that it is going to take time.

James Hillaire: For our young people that are growing up in this nation, great nation of ours, that I hope that they grow up and learn to be responsible citizens. Responsible by taking care of the environment which gives us our very breath of life. Clean air, clean water, clean oceans, clean lakes—we need to clean up our act as human beings. We need to do our part in order to have these beautiful animals for the future.