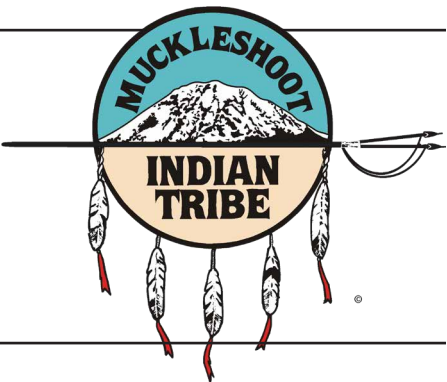


# MUCKLESHOOT MESSENGER

## October 2025 Edition



MUCKLESHOOT INDIAN RESERVATION — AUBURN, WA

## White River Bridge Repairs Near Completion

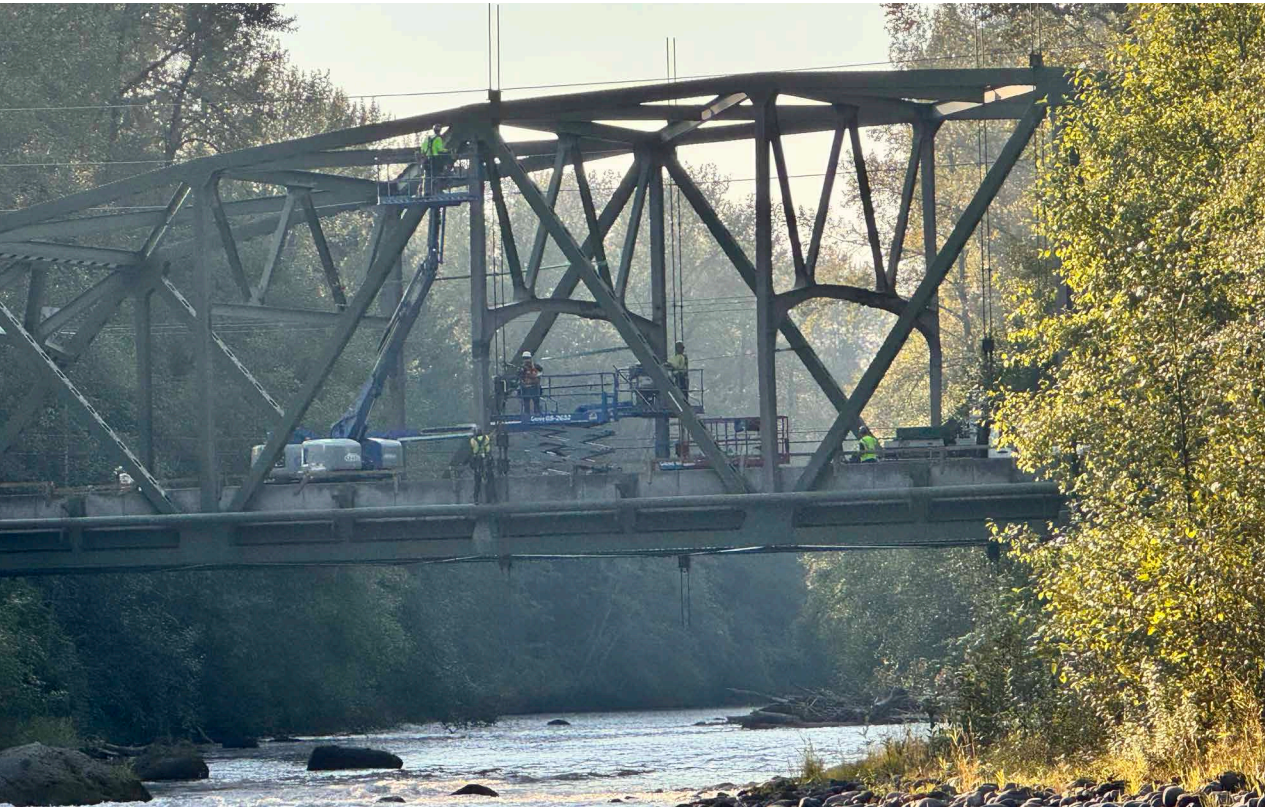
**ENUMCLAW** — It's been a long, frustrating hassle for Tribal members, students, workers, or anyone trying to come to Muckleshoot — or go home — over the White River Bridge on State Route 410 between Buckley and Enumclaw.

The bridge has been closed since August 18 when an over-height, semi-truck struck several of the support beams on the bridge causing extensive damage and closing the structure to all traffic in both directions until the state completes repairs to the structure.

For more than a month, detours via state routes 164, 18, 167, and 410 around the bridge have been adding up to 45 to 60 minutes of travel during peak hours.

Following the accident, the Muckleshoot Tribal Council immediately began...

*Continued on P4 >*



*Construction on the White River Bridge*

## Seattle Art Center Partnership

**SEATTLE** — Muckleshoot's collaboration with Cannonball Arts helps bring attention to the Tribe and its ongoing support for Northwest cultural activities just a short distance from the Seattle Center. *Read on P5 >*

## Skopabsh Powwow: A Celebration of Culture

*View photos on P7 >*



## Local Native Writer Gains International Recognition for Indigenous Screenplay

**MUCKLESHOOT** — Tobi Iverson Halliday, a Tsimshian and Turtle Mountain Chippewa writer based in the Pacific Northwest, is gaining national and international recognition for her debut feature screenplay, *Wild Woman of the Woods* — a mythic Indigenous action-thriller set in the 1800s along the Northern Pacific Coast.

Married to Muckleshoot Tribal member John Halliday, Tobi has long dreamed of bringing the rich cultures, stories, and landscapes of Northwest Tribal nations to the big screen.

*“I want the world to fall into our world — to experience our myths, our legends, our canoes, totems, and button blankets. Hollywood has never shown the full beauty of our world. I want our ancestors to be seen with awe, dignity, and full humanity.”*

— Tobi Iverson Halliday

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# Tribal Councilwoman Garcia-Jones Meets with Congressional Leaders

Left to Right: Garcia-Jones with KY Governor Andy Beshear; and with her husband, Matt Jones, and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

**WASHINGTON DC** — Building and maintaining relationships with state and federal leaders is central to getting things done for Tribal government.

And it is not enough just to focus on our friends at the state, local, and federal levels in the State of Washington; we must expand our relationships beyond its borders and the borders of our ceded territory.

Secretary Jessica Garcia-Jones did just that this summer when she traveled to meet with several important political figures includ-

ing House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (NY) and Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear (KY), whose name has been mentioned as a potential presidential candidate in 2028.

The meetings gave her the opportunity to spread knowledge about the Muckleshoot Tribe and its Treaty rights while building meaningful relationships for the Tribe in the future. This sort of active diplomacy is at the core of Tribal sovereignty and it is something that every Tribal Councilmember does on a daily basis.



# Virginia Cross D.R. Hanford Award



Photos courtesy of Green River College

**AUBURN** — In August, Tribal Councilwoman Virginia Cross was honored with the second ever D.R. Hanford Leadership Award at Green River College. This award honors visionary leaders whose impact ripples through their communities, inspiring growth and opportunity for all.

Virginia Cross has been a champion of access and education from an early age, and pioneered a number of firsts as a

Muckleshoot Tribal Member. She was the only Muckleshoot student in her graduating high school class in Auburn, the first Muckleshoot Tribal Member to earn a college degree, the first Head Start Director of the Tribe, and the first Indian Education Coordinator in the Auburn School District.

Virginia has been a councilmember of the Muckleshoot Tribe for 40 years, and has been instrumental in the Tribe's path to

prosperity, and the ability to provide support for housing, healthcare, and education for Tribal Members.

Denton Hanford served on the Green River College Foundation Board for 15 years and was a devoted champion of education and community service. Denton and his beloved wife, Judy, established the Hanford Family Scholarship, which has been awarded more than 32 times over the past 15 years, empowering students to pursue higher education.

Congratulations, Virginia!





# City of Seattle Tribal Nations Summit



Donny Stevenson, Muckleshoot Tribal Council and Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) Board Member speaks during summit. Photo courtesy of the Mayor's Office.

**SEATTLE** — On September 16th, Mayor Harrell joined Tribal leaders, City officials, and community partners at the second Biennial City of Seattle and Tribal Nations summit — a gathering where Tribal leaders engage directly with city officials to uphold sovereignty and Treaty rights, strengthen government-to-government relationships, and set shared priorities for the future.

The day’s agenda included a listening session with Mayor Harrell and City leadership, as well as moderated discussions shaped by priorities identified by Tribal leaders focused on practical actions to strengthen collaboration across governments and improve outcomes for the more than 46,000 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian residents who call Seattle home.

*“The investments in my proposed budget reflect what we’ve heard — support for housing, cultural space, and health care — and reflect our commitment to supporting Tribal Nations and Native communities in ways that strengthen families, culture, and community.”*

— Mayor Bruce Harrell

Mayor Harrell previewed more than \$9 million in new investments in his proposed 2026 budget — supporting affordable housing, cultural preservation, and behavioral health care.

## KEY PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- **Thunderbird Treatment Center Renovation – \$1.8 million:** supports the reopening of the Seattle Indian Health Board’s Thunderbird Treatment Center, a 92-bed residential treatment facility offering expanded behavioral health services rooted in cultural traditions. The Center will provide treatment for substance use disorders, including dedicated beds for pregnant and parenting adults.
- **Waterfront Operations and Tribal Interpretive Center – \$7 million:** provides resources to upgrade the Bakun Building, ensuring it can house both Seattle Center’s waterfront operations and a permanent Tribal Interpretive Center on the Seattle Waterfront, making progress towards fulfilling commitments made through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe during the Elliott Bay Seawall construction.
- **Pearl Warren Building Redevelopment – \$500,000:** creates a one-time reserve for the demolition of the Seattle Indian Services Commission’s Pearl Warren Building as part of a new transit-oriented development in the Little Saigon neighborhood with affordable housing and commercial space.

Hon. Donny Stevenson, Muckleshoot Tribal Council and Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) Board Member, attended the summit and shared his perspective on these investments.

“The vital importance of the tangible investment of real resources in Tribal and Native priorities with the City of Seattle’s budget, helps to directly serve Indigenous people by honoring legal obligations, addressing historical injustices, and fostering mutually beneficial economic growth between the City of Seattle, Indigenous people, and Tribal Nations. The policy of investing in self-determination, rather than relying on systems of external control, has always led to demonstrable positive outcomes for Native populations, Tribal communities, and surrounding regions. The legitimate commitment to Native priorities within the budget, should be applauded.

The City of Seattle’s Tribal Nations Summit is becoming a meaningful, legitimate forum where federally recognized Tribes, City and urban Native leadership can regularly come together in a spirit of collaboration to strengthen our regional community and better achieve mutual goals through authentic, collaborative government-to-government engagement with federally recognized Tribes and effective dialogue with urban Native leadership.

This is especially powerful and important given some of the challenges which history bears witness to in our region. The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe is proud to help host this Tribal Nations Summit in our homelands and supports the important step forward of keeping the lines of communication open for finding innovative solutions together in the present and for future generations.”



Continued from P1:

# White River Bridge Repairs Near Completion

... engaging with our state and federal partners to advocate for an expedited resolution that would restore this important connector for our communities. It was important that the Council share how essential this bridge is not just to the Muckleshoot Tribe, our economy, and community; but also to the broader regional economy and non-Indian communities that are our neighbors.

On Aug. 27, Governor Bob Ferguson issued an emergency proclamation in response to the closure of the bridge allowing the state to seek federal funds to reimburse the cost of the repairs.

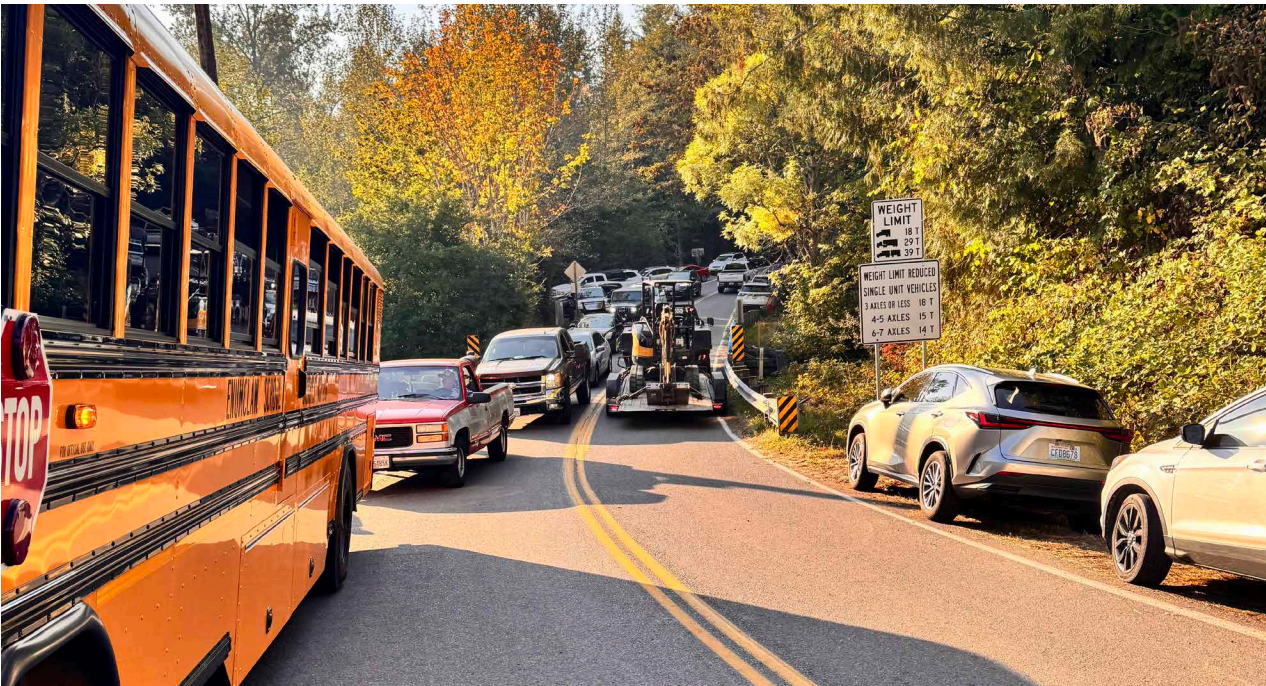


We are pleased that the bridge should be reopened sometime between October 31st and November 15th of this year thanks to the quick work and advocacy of Ferguson, Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, and Rep. Schrier.

We would like to extend our gratitude to them. These sorts of situations show why it is so important to continue to cultivate relationships with our state and federal partners. We must have positive existing relationships in the good times and not just when we are seeking help in times of need. The Tribal Council stresses this sort of active government-to-government engagement as a way of being not just a good neighbor but as an active exercise of the Tribe’s sovereignty.

The Washington State Department of Transportation expects the Bridge will remain closed until mid-November, when permanent repairs are completed.

The White River Bridge is a steel truss bridge built in 1949. It carries an average of 22,099 vehicles each day. WSDOT estimates repairs will cost \$5 million - \$6 million.



Continued from P1:

# Local Native Writer Gains International Recognition for Indigenous Screenplay

Since May, Wild Woman of the Woods has built serious momentum on the international film festival circuit. The script was recently named a semi-finalist at the Oscar-qualifying Rhode Island International Film Festival, a winner of the Best Diverse Writer Award at the Santa Barbara International Screenplay Awards, and a finalist at both the Cambridge Script Festival in England and the Toronto International Women Film Festival.

Tobi also earned a coveted spot as a “Second Rounder” (quarter-finalist) at the prestigious Austin Film Festival, widely regarded as the most competitive screenwriting contest in the world. She will attend the festival and participate in its pitch sessions this October.

In addition, Tobi was recently selected as one of just 40 filmmakers invited to the Bend Film Festival’s Basecamp Retreat, where she will work closely with respected Hollywood professionals to further develop her script for production.

Industry veteran Wally Lane, former chair of the Northwest Screenwriters Guild, has mentored Tobi throughout this journey, calling Wild Woman of the Woods “one of the best historical dramas I’ve ever read.”

What began as a personal passion is quickly turning into a promising career. A graduate of the University of Washington in Native American Studies and Anthropology, Tobi is committed to creating authentic roles for Indigenous actors and filmmak-



Tobi Iverson Halliday

ers — and to showcasing the matriarchal cultures, shamanic traditions, and warrior histories of the Pacific Northwest on a global stage.

Her story is just beginning.





# Seattle Art Center Partnership

**SEATTLE** — Pedestrians and visitors will have the opportunity to witness Muckleshoot carvers craft a traditional dugout canoe, thanks to the Tribe's partnership with a new contemporary art center located in the heart of downtown Seattle.

Led by Tribal Members Tyson Simmons and Keith Stevenson, carvers will visit the space periodically to make progress on the cedar canoe. Visitors will see the progression of this centuries-old practice over time, from tree to sea.

Muckleshoot Tribal Council Member Donny Stevenson provided a blessing during the Cannonball Arts ribbon cutting ceremony in August.

Cannonball Arts exhibits and celebrates artists working across disciplines, mediums, and genres, and is possible thanks to the producers of Bumbershoot Arts, in partnership with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.



# Waterfront Grand Opening

**SEATTLE** — On Saturday, September 6th, Waterfront Park celebrated its historic grand opening. What was once the noisy Alaskan Way Viaduct is now a 20-acre civic waterfront — built for joy, connection, and community.

For the first time, the full 20 acres of Waterfront Park was activated and accessible to the community to enjoy. The day featured performances, art, family activities, and open space to celebrate the rich and vibrant history of the Seattle waterfront.

Tribal Council Chair Jaison Elkins attended and spoke at the ribbon cutting ceremony. The new park includes work by Muckleshoot artists and carvers, as well as Pioneer Square Habitat Beach — a space where the Tribe can hold cultural events in the future.

The Friends of Waterfront Park — the non-profit responsible for fundraising, stewarding, and programming at Waterfront Park — hope that the park becomes a place for the community to rest, to play, to gather with loved ones, and to connect with the natural beauty of Elliot Bay.



Above: Mayor Harrell cuts the ribbon at the Waterfront Grand Opening  
Below: Tribal Council Chair Jaison Elkins addresses the audience





# Muckleshoot Fisheries Meets with Seattle Public Utilities

Members of the Muckleshoot Fish Commission met with Seattle Public Utilities General Manager Andrew Lee and his leadership team to tour the Cedar River Hatchery and discuss collaboration opportunities. Also present was Francesca Murnan, Director of Tribal Relations, City of Seattle.



Photos by Brad Wong

# Federal Hatchery Funding Restored

**MUCKLESHOOT** — As we officially enter autumn, the season of harvest and preparation for the colder months that follow, we know that many in the community are busy exercising our Treaty-protected rights to fill their freezers with fish and game to carry us through the year.

The Tribal Council has similarly been hard at work protecting our Treaty rights, ensuring our people have the services we need to succeed and thrive, while also confronting an ever-changing world where new threats and opportunities seem to appear daily.

Tribal Council would like to thank Senator Cantwell for helping to unfreeze \$2 million in hatchery funding for the Tribe that was caught up under Executive Order 14154. The Senator was instrumental in creating that

funding through the Inflation Reduction Act and now getting it released. The Tribe plans to use the funding at the White River Hatchery to address six urgent infrastructure projects, including raceway repairs, electrical modernization, water system assessments, and new circular tank designs. These improvements will help sustain and protect healthy salmon runs for generations to come.

The Tribal Council is also working with Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, Rep. Schrier, and the Trump Administration to obtain the release of fishery disaster funds that the Tribe was awarded under an October 6, 2023 fishery disaster determination for the 2019 Green River/Duwamish River fisheries and 2017 Green River/Duwamish River fisheries. These funds have been held up pending the approval of the Tribe’s spend plan. The Tribal Council is actively pushing and advocating for the release of these funds to assist our fishers.



Inside the Cedar River Hatchery



# Skopabsh Powwow: A Celebration of Culture

Muckleshoot and Tribes from around the region danced, drummed, sang, and celebrated over 3 days at the Skopabsh Powwow in late August.

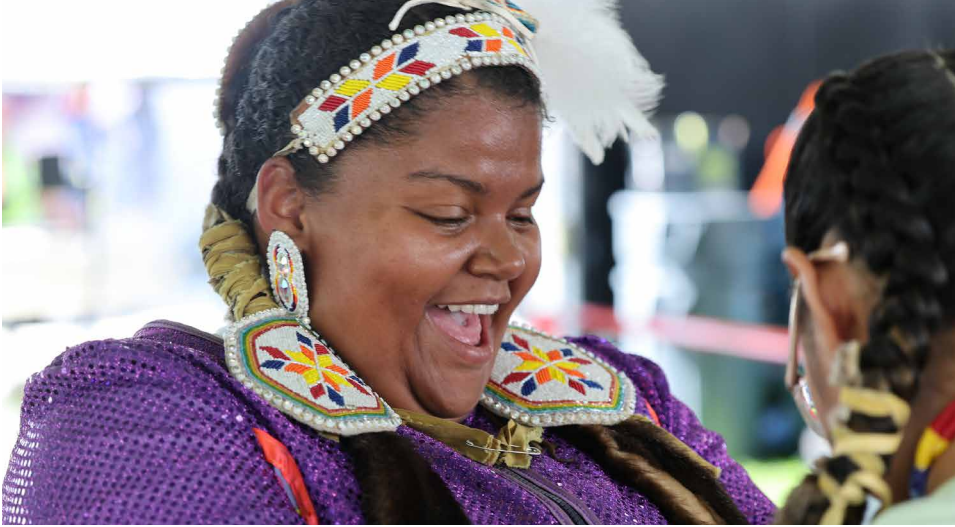
The event featured traditional dance, drumming, special contents, and great prizes, hosted at the Muckleshoot Powwow Grounds. Thanks to everyone who took part in another successful Powwow.

View more Skopabsh Powwow photos  
at [muckleshoot.nsn.us/messenger/skopabsh-powwow-2025](https://muckleshoot.nsn.us/messenger/skopabsh-powwow-2025)





# In Pictures: August 2025 Skopabsh Powwow



## Upcoming Events

THURSDAYS, 9/4 – 10/23

### Positive Indian Parenting

5-6:30pm. Honoring our children by honoring our traditions. Open to the community, dinner provided.

TUESDAYS FROM 9/23 TO 10/21

### Healthy Relationships Women’s Group

10-11:30am. Learn about building and sustaining healthy relationships and effective communication, and connect with like-minded women.

FRIDAY, 10/3 AND SATURDAY, 10/4

### Muckleshoot Behavioral Health Family Village Camp

9am-3:30pm. A 2-day seminar filled with keynote addresses, break-out sessions, and a family village camp full of interactive activities centered to families, youths, and individuals in recovery.

SUNDAY, 10/5

### Canoe Family End of Season Appreciation Dinner

11am-2pm. Celebrate at the end of season appreciation dinner.

SATURDAY, 10/11

### Culture Saturday

Keep an eye on the event calendar for more details about the re-scheduled Culture Saturday!

SATURDAY, 10/11

### Free Seahawks Youth Football Clinic

9:30-11:30am. The Seahawks are celebrating Native American Heritage Month with a FREE Youth Football Clinic at the Seahawks practice facility.

THURSDAY, 10/16

### Canoe Family at Cannonball Arts

10am. Join the Muckleshoot Canoe Family at Cannonball Arts for an opening song performance.

SUNDAY, 11/16 – FRIDAY, 11/21

### National Congress of American Indians

Tribal leaders, NCAI members, Native youth, and allies from across Indian Country will gather to tackle critical issues, strategize for the future, and strengthen nation-to-nation relationships. The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe is a major sponsor of this important event.



Don't Miss Out on Future Events  
View the full community event calendar at  
[Muckleshoot.nsn.us/Member-Portal/Calendar](https://muckleshoot.nsn.us/Member-Portal/Calendar)