



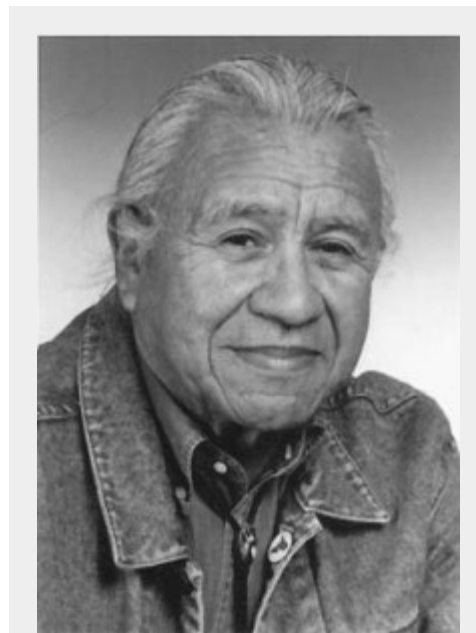
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Remembering Billy Frank Jr.

The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission announced this morning the death of its founder and chairman Billy Frank Jr., an iconic champion of tribal fishing rights and a leading advocate for salmon and the environment.

The commission was closed for the day, and the news of Frank's death at 83 has resonated throughout the Pacific Northwest.



— Billy Frank Jr. Photo courtesy of Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

"Billy Frank Jr. was an inspirational leader in the Puget Sound region and nationwide for over 70 years," said Puget Sound Institute Director Joel Baker. "Much of what we do at PSI and

CUW began with Billy's determination and bravery in the face of incredible obstacles. His commitment to his people, to Coast Salish tribes and First Nations, and to his beloved salmon will never be forgotten."

Frank was one of the leaders of what were termed the "Fish Wars" of the 1960s and 1970s to retain the rights of tribes to fish historical waters. He held "fish-ins" and was arrested more than 50 times to protest government prohibitions on fishing that were later overturned by the Boldt decision. In 1974 U.S. District Court Judge George H. Boldt ruled in favor of the Treaty Tribes, allowing them to co-manage and retain 50% of the salmon harvest in Washington.

Frank founded the [Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission](#) following the Boldt decision and served as its chairman for close to 40 years.

Links:

[An oral history of Billy Frank Jr.](#)

[*Billy Frank Jr. on History Link.](#)

[*The Boldt decision and the establishment of the Northwest indian Fisheries Commission.](#)




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About Jeff Rice

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