



Nez Perce

TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Statement of Silas Whitman, Chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive
Committee Regarding the Court's Issuance of an Injunction on the Transport of
Megaloads

For Immediate Release
September 13, 2013

The Nez Perce Tribe and its people commend today's federal court decision that affirms that the Forest Service—under its own authorities—must close U.S. Highway 12 to mega-load transports by Omega Morgan until the Forest Service has completed a corridor study and then consulted with the Tribe.

The Tribe is pleased the Court's decision recognizes the Tribe's sovereignty, and its rights and interests. As the Court's decision states, the Nez Perce Tribe is simply seeking to "preserve its Treaty rights along with [its] cultural and intrinsic values that have no price tag." This speaks to the truth regarding the heart of the Nez Perce people and our connection to our homeland.

The Tribe will not let U.S. Highway 12—both through the National Forest and Wild and Scenic River corridor and the Nez Perce Reservation—be transformed into an industrial corridor. Many of the values and uses the spectacularly beautiful and wild Clearwater-Lochsa River country hold for our Nez Perce people—fisheries, wildlife, recreation, culture, history, solitude, or tourism—are values that the United States shares and protects. In addition to our Treaty with the United States, Congress has spoken to uses and values in this area through the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the designations of the Nez Perce National Trail, the Lolo Trail, and the Lewis and Clark Trail.

The Tribe will continue to consult with the Forest Service, under the Forest Service's obligation as a trustee, to ensure this unique area of the country and our homeland is not transformed into an industrial corridor.

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