

EXHIBIT A

W. Bill, Ph.D., Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, *The Feast System* (2023)

**The Feast System – Adapted from “Indians of Washington State,”
Dr. Willard Bill, Publication of the Office of Native Education, OSPI,
Washington State**

The people of the Native tribes of Washington had and have frequent traditional gatherings to celebrate. Some of these ceremonies and religious practices are closely linked to seasonal cycles. The purpose of these gatherings are to give thanks, share foods, establish and strengthen social ties, and to have fun.

Potlatch

Potlatch gift-giving feasts were held by many tribes, although they were not as highly formalized among the Northwest Coastal tribes. The word “potlatch” comes from the Chinook word “patshall” which means “gift” or “to give.”

Gifts were given and feasts were held to mark special occasions such as marriages, puberty rites, the giving of a new name, when the annual salmon run begins, at death, reburial, celebrating a successful hunt, upon return from trading markets or meetings with outsiders such as other tribes or settlers. A major potlatch might last several days and involve years of planning. Potlatches distributed real property such as: surplus food, blankets, copper shields, cedar bark or cattail mats, canoes or carved items, to mark the transfer of intangible property such as names, crests, dances, songs, legends, and chants which were owned by families. Crests were hereditary privileges such as guardian spirits, special names, initiation into certain secret societies with the right to perform dances or other ceremonies, and family histories. Gift-giving at a potlatch was an important way Northwest Coast tribal families showed how much power, status and riches they had. It was also an effective way of sharing those riches and establishing social ties.

Some potlatches were held in large houses especially built for them. At large potlatches entire tribes came to visit and to give and receive presents, with the host always outdoing his guests. Between meals, guests and the host danced and sang, usually the songs taught to them by their spirit helpers, and the young men may have wrestled or held a tug-of-war match. Sometimes they played a game called shinny on a mile-long stretch of beach with a wooden ball and long, curved sticks of vine maple. Or canoe races might be held on the smooth water of the river at high tide. They came back ravenous for the daily feast and sometimes they held an eating contest.

Finally came the last day when the gifts were to be given out. This was the feast giver's great moment – the time when he made his speech and sang his songs. There is no doubt, but this was one of the grandest moments of a man's life. As governed by protocol, gifts were presented in amounts or values that varied according to the rank of the recipient and were distributed in the order of rank. It was an insult to give a gift of less value than the rank of the recipient entitled him to receive. The more the host gave, the more important everyone thought him to be. Sometimes the family would work and save for a year to make sure they had enough to give away to all of the guests. Sometimes they had very little or

nothing left for themselves when the potlatch was over. But, before a year passed, each guest had to give back twice as much goods as this host had given to him. So, before long, the host was rich again. Honor was very important to Native people. To keep your honor when you received gifts at a potlatch, you were expected to repay the giver by putting on another potlatch and giving gifts that were of greater value than those you had received. If you were unable to, you lost your honor, and persons complaining that they didn't receive as much or more than he had given would be ridiculed for being so greedy.

After the distribution of gifts, the guests went home. As they departed in their canoes, they sang goodbye.

With a few feasts like this behind him, a man could be sure of his position among the wealthy and influential. He would also be assured of the best possible start for his children, who would not otherwise be worthy of wealthy visions and of good marriages. If he thought of building a new house, he could get people to help him. If there was doubt as to who should be the next chief, a man of such wealth, status, and energy would have the best chance.

During the early contact period with Europeans, the focus of the potlatches shifted with the transferring of rights and crests which were, themselves, becoming less important than the value and quantity of property that was distributed to validate them. As the interest in social status and financial worth increased, the potlatches grew larger and a greater variety of goods, including European goods, were given away. Early Europeans eager to encourage the fur trade with local tribes also participated in potlatches distributing such items as Hudson's Bay blankets, jewelry, musical instruments, clothing, furniture, and sacks of flour.

As more Europeans arrived following the original fur traders, permanent settlements were established and the power and influence of these white settlers increased. These later arrivals, not understanding the significance of this ceremony, did not approve of potlatches since they felt the Indians spent too much time preparing for feasts and that they should learn to save things for themselves rather than give them away. In Canada, whites outlawed potlatches and Indians were arrested and put in jail for holding them. Today, however, Indians are reviving the traditional potlatch custom and non-Indians are more understanding of the reasons and purpose of the potlatch. Not only is this ceremony important for passing on rights and wealth, but it also gathers people together and unifies them.

First Salmon Ceremony (Coastal, Salish Sea, and Plateau Regions)

A ceremony over the first salmon taken in a run of a fishing expedition is an important event celebrated by tribes throughout Washington. There is a wide range of variations of this ceremony, but the protocols were/are similar. In the traditional ceremony, the first caught salmon of the season was brought home by a fisherman and laid aside for special preparation. Traditionally, it was the role of women in the home to prepare the fish in a customary fashion taught to her by the Salmon Chief for the First Salmon Ceremony. The

Salmon Chief also directed and controlled the rituals of the ceremony. Everyone in the village attended the feast and gave thanks. Since time immemorial, the bones of the salmon are carefully returned to the water, making sure the head is pointed upstream. The rite is believed to insure the salmon run for the future and honors the place in which the salmon was caught.

The spring or Chinook salmon, the first run of the year, came in for special regard, and Native people were very particular about how this fish was caught. No one could talk casually or carelessly about it. In rivers in which several species ran, the first of each species might be given identical treatment, or the earliest species might receive the most elaborate attention while others would receive less elaborate handling. All were treated with respect.

Many tribes have yearly First Salmon Ceremonies following the traditions of their ancestors honoring the special relationship Indian people have with salmon and with fishing. Also, due to the placement of dams and reduced runs, several tribes, especially in Eastern Washington, have been unable to practice the First Salmon Ceremony since the salmon does not reach them anymore.

First Root Festival (Plateau Region)

In the Plateau area, First Root ceremonies are conducted in the spring of each year, perhaps in late March or early April. Before gathering the first roots, Plateau people fasted and purified themselves in sweat-lodge rituals. The sacred root festival ceremony occurs after the first roots are harvested, and the event is a solemn occasion.

Traditionally, the women of the tribe prepare the roots for the ceremonial meal. Although the men of the tribe do not do any of the cooking, they do help prepare the venison meat for the festival. The roots of the bitterroot and camas are the main dishes.

Sacred mats are always used during the root festival feast. These mats are used only for the festival and placed on the ground where meals are eaten. The serving of food on the ground is symbolic of the gathering of roots from the Earth.

EXHIBIT B

Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, *X^o Salik^o Code*

SAUK-SUIATTLE INDIAN TRIBE

X^wSALIK^w CODE

Enacted: Res. No. 07/11/2026 (7/10/2026)

SAUK-SUIATTLE INDIAN TRIBE

X^wSALIK^w CODE

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X^wSALIK^wCODE

of the

SAUK-SUIATTLE INDIAN TRIBE

A Code

To protect the Free Exercise of Religion; and to prevent the taking of tribal property.

Now therefore be it enacted by the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribal Council of the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe in Tribal Council as assembled;

CHAPTER ONE GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1.010 Title

This Code may be cited as the “X^wsalik^w Code.”

Section 1.020 Findings¹

The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribal Council finds that—

- (1) Since Time and Immemorial, the Sahkuméhu People, now organized as the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe (Tribe), have practiced X^wsalik^w.
- (2) X^wsalik^w (or “Potlatch” in English) is a sacred religious practice of the Tribe.
- (3) Passed down by the Creator, X^wsalik^w forms the foundation of the Tribe’s religion and is embedded into the very fabric of the Tribe’s unique ceremonial practices.²

The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribal Council further finds that—

- (4) The Free Exercise of Religion is a fundamental and inalienable right.

¹ Tribal law made pursuant to the Treaty of Point Elliot is the “Supreme Law of the Land,” Art. VI, cl. 2, and has the same force and effect as federal law, which is binding on the states, as well as the United States, and applies to individual members of the Tribe as if they were named on the Treaty itself.

² For Lushootseed People, like the Sahkuméhu, giving away tribal property (*i.e.* offerings) at ceremonial events is required by the laws of the Creator.

- (5) Over the years, governmental agencies have sought to suppress the Tribe's religion which has resulted in the unlawful taking of tribal property and the unwarranted intrusion into the Tribe's internal affairs.
- (6) Taxing tribal property and denying access to social welfare programs, based on the Tribe's religious beliefs, substantially interferes with the Tribe's ability to practice its religion.
- (7) There is no interest more important to the integrity and continued existence of the Tribe than protecting X^wsalik^w.

Section 1.030 Purposes

The Purposes of this Code are—

- (1) To protect the Free Exercise of Religion;
- (2) To codify the Tribe's customary laws in order to prevent the unlawful taking of tribal property;
- (3) To protect against the unwarranted intrusion into the Tribe's internal affairs;
- (4) To ensure tribal property is nontaxable and does not affect tribal members' access to social welfare programs and/or otherwise limit or reduce the benefits provided by such social welfare programs; and
- (5) To promote, preserve, and transmit the Tribe's religion to future generations.

Section 1.040 Definitions

When a term is not defined in this Code, it shall be given its ordinary meaning. Terms used in this Code shall have the following meaning except where otherwise defined within this Code or where context clearly indicates otherwise:

- (1) "Administrator" means the General Manager or other authorized designee.
- (2) "Approve" means by Tribal Council in accordance with the Tribe's customary laws.
- (3) "Competent Jurisdiction" means the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribal Court.
- (4) "General Welfare" means tribal property used to improve the Tribe's housing, education, transportation, employment, health care, entrepreneurship, child care, elder and/or disabled care, cultural

preservation, to fulfill other unfulfilled promises in the Treaty of Point Elliott, and to provide for the welfare of the Tribe.

- (5) **"Governmental Agency" or "Governmental Agencies"** includes the United States, a branch, department, agency, instrumentality, or official (or person acting under the color of law) of the United States, including a State, branch, department subdivision or official (or person acting under the color of law) of the State.
- (6) **"Government-to-Government Basis"** means a written invitation or written consent by Tribal Council to meet with Tribal Council on the Sauk-Suiattle Reservation.
- (7) **"Includes" or "Including"** shall be read as if it is followed by the phrase "but not limited to."
- (8) **"Lavish and Extravagant"** shall be defined in accordance with the Tribe's customary laws.
- (9) **"Proceeding"** means any governmental action taken against the Tribe that involves tribal property and includes administrative and/or judicial actions.
- (10) **"Social Welfare Program(s)" or "Entitlements"** includes any nontribal governmental programs which provides Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Rental Assistance Programs, Low-Income Housing Programs, foster care support programs or any other social welfare program.
- (11) **"Tribal Council"** means the dually elected governing members of the Tribe.
- (12) **"Tribal Property"** includes yəsáwi, sc'vəq'álc, yəx'wəd, qəbətəd, čəá?, bálbai?, sv'yíq'ib, ləmi?, sv't'əqáx'w, piit, λ'ac'ap, sv'k'ák'ax'w, səx'wəs'v'q'wú'il, sk'wə'v'k'w, sv'xəg'wəd, sv'pá?c, qəlík'w, sv'c'əbáy?us, búl'cəb, p'əč'əb, c'á?suč, dx'v'lidic, č'álas, c'q'wət', c'apx, c'ábid, sv'xəd'əd, ?əs'v'húdq, qíqg'it, ci'v'cəl'šáad, ?úlal, súk'wəb, plíla, l'x'áyl, sv'áx'wú?, λ'álic'á?, sv'xəq'áb, t'álig'w, kəpúkú'v'kpi, sv'k'w'x'ic, q'wədi?q'w, λ'ələ, səsq'w, xəlrəd, húpt, k'w'tilšəd, p'ic'ik'w, č'əwəy?úlč, dx'v'c'əg'wúlc, v'č'k'w'ac', sv'k'w'ac', yaxad, k'wút, tsadi?, lúk'w, sλ'i'v'álqab, č'əbs, c'ík'ik'w, k'wág'icəd, k'wag'icədálx'w, k'wág'icədalcí?, c'ic'al, čup, sv'x?uládx'w, sv'x'í?ap, čəx, x'lidup, p'uáy', səpləl, aliləd, t'ábid, xəd'xəd, g'wídəq, dx'š'i?v'š'ibed, ds'w'tál(ə)alus, yəlač'i?, sv'x'w'íl'əy?, c'áq'ab, sv'təx'əb, x'wəltəbalc, sv'č'út'x, hameə, sv'tá?l, sk'w'ik'w'qəb, sv'x'á, sáxy?s, sv't'ú?əl, q'əx'bid, yəydú?, sv'tiqi'w, há?əc, sv'wədá?x, sá?v'sx'wəbik'w, tu?álad, q'w'á?əb, yúbəč, sv'dúuk'w, ləxšád, sv'q'ic'əy, cág'w'icəd, p'əč'əb, pəpəč, č'ú?lac, sv'q'w'iq'wəd, sq'í'v'q'əlat, p'íq's, alc'i?, sv't'əljix'w, sv'qəbú?, c'əbal'qid, yəlač'i?, yalšəd, v'túlc'ə, q'əl'q'əl, tulq'w, fičá?ə, čá?ad', ləlab, sv'qələč, q'wəbq'w'ebč, λ'úx'w'λ'ux'w, cqíws,

s/kwəbšəd, səpkʷ, s/gwəlúb, kəšú, ʔəwəl't, ʔəwəl't(t)əd, č'sič, s/xəláʔs, ʔw'ič'dup, xw'x'alap, s/qáwc, səsq,c'uqʷəb, k'wəčdīʔ, ʔáʔ/xalus, čəlqʷúbəʔ, s/čadʔuʔ, s/xúsbəd, səxw'vʔ ʔ'u, ʔw'ilali, ʔəs/čúl'txʷ, t'úkʷ, qʷib(i), šqálatxʷ qʷib(i), t'áligʷs, qʷəbəláxʷ, t'áqa, qəlítxʷə, qəc'áp, ʔ'átəb, s/qibk'ʷ, tálə, ʔalalʔtxʷ, təjábac, s/k'w'ic'I, pədálikʷ, w'úvʔt'əbikʷ, qʷiʔšəd, s/ʔ'álšəd, s/č'áyəp, s/čəqiʔ, c't'úsəd, s/łágw'idac, qíw'x, hudali, t'iləqʷ, s/k'áʔwač, ʔaqəʔ, šúkʷə, tálə, xʷsʷv(h)ədálqʷuʔ, səxw'vʔxʷudxʷud, s/k'wəspt, gʷədíc'aʔ, sʔabyid, alqʷuʔ, bedúl, čí/čcyusac, s/t'ək'wəb, ʔw'íʔəyʔalqíd, -a' s/łábigʷs gʷəl q'əlúsəd dxʷ. ʔəčusadad gʷəl syəyəhub gʷəl k'w'íʔát yəw'deb/pigʷəd.

- (13) **"Tribal Member" or "Member"** means an enrolled member of the Tribe, his or her spouse, extended family members and includes people to whom the Tribe owes a traditional duty of care.
- (14) **"Tribe"** means the members of the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe.
- (15) **"Xʷalikʷ"** (or "Potlatch" in English) is a religious practice of the Tribe.

Section 1.050 Applicability and Preemption

This Code shall apply and expressly preempt all federal and state laws, and the implementation of that law, whether statutory or otherwise, and whether adopted before or after the enactment of this Code.

Section 1.060 Liberal Construction

The provisions of this Code shall be liberally construed to give effect to its purposes. Any ambiguity shall be interpreted broadly in favor of the Tribe.

Section 1.070 Amendments and Severability

Tribal Council expressly reserves the right to amend this Code at any time. If any provision of this Code is held to be invalid, or the application of any such provision to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Code and the application of such provision or amendment to peoples or circumstances other than those to which is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

Section 1.080 Sovereign Rights Unaffected

Nothing in this Code shall be interpreted to limit; alter, or diminish the inherent sovereign authority of the Tribe. This Code shall not be construed as creating new rights but is intended to codify the customary laws of the Tribe.

Section 1.090 **Ratification of Prior Acts**

Any tribal property distributed prior to the enactment of this Code, or any amendments hereto, are hereby ratified and confirmed by virtue of the Tribe's inherent sovereign authority, as guaranteed by the Treaty of Point Elliot, and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Tribe, as approved by the United States Secretary of Interior, September 17, 1975.

Section 1.100 **Prior Inconsistent Codes, Acts, or Ordinances**

This Code shall supersede any conflicting or inconsistent provisions of any other Code, Act, or Ordinance.

Section 1.110 **Nonwaiver of Sovereign Immunity**

Nothing herein, whether express or implied, shall be interpreted to waive the sovereign immunity of the Tribe nor does it waive any rights or benefits to which the Tribe is entitled.

CHAPTER TWO ADMINISTRATION

Section 2.010 **Authority of the Administrator**

The Administrator, in conjunction with Tribal Council, shall have the authority to carry out the provisions of this Code. In carrying out the provisions of this Code, the Administrator may (A) consult with other governmental agencies, (B) waive any requirements established under this Code, and (C) establish any terms or conditions necessary to carry out the provisions of this Code: *Provided*, That the Administrator shall not establish any terms or conditions that discriminate in favor of the legislative body.

Section 2.020 **Distribution Plans**

Tribal Council may approve distribution plans in accordance with the provisions of this Code. All distribution plans shall, to the extent feasible, use traditional resources and be designed to improve the general welfare of the Tribe. If traditional resources are unavailable any other tribal property may be used: *Provided*, That all tribal property distributed under the provisions of this Code shall be limited to unrestricted property owned by the Tribe (*i.e* no property which originates from federal, state, or local agencies including grants and/or gaming revenue shall be used or distributed under the provisions of this Code).

Section 2.030 **Eligibility**

All tribal members shall be eligible to receive distributions under this Code.

Section 2.040 **Distribution Center**

All distributions shall be processed and distributed on the Sauk-Suiattle Reservation.

Section 2.050 **Effect**

Tribal property distributed in accordance with the Tribe's customary law shall not affect or impair a tribal recipient's ability to access social welfare programs and/or otherwise limit or reduce benefits provided by such social welfare programs.

Section 2.060 **Authorized Use**

All tribal property shall be used by the recipient to promote the general welfare of the Tribe and, to the greatest extent feasible, be used in a manner which benefits the Tribe.

Section 2.070 **Unauthorized Use and Non-Resource Designation**

No tribal property shall be used for the sole and exclusive use of the individual recipient. Any tribal member who utilizes tribal property in a manner inconsistent with the customary laws of the Tribe shall be subject to having their share of communal property suspended. Because tribal property can only be used in a manner that benefits the Tribe (*i.e.* restricted) it shall not be considered a resource, income, unearned income, or asset of an individual tribal member by any governmental agency.

CHAPTER THREE MISCELLANEOUS

Section 3.010 **Federal Responsibility**

Nothing in this Code shall be construed or interpreted to waive, alter, diminish, or relieve the United States of its contractual and/or other responsibilities owed to the Tribe.

Section 3.020 **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

All information regarding the Tribe's religion shall be confidential. No tribal member shall be required to report any tribal property received to any governmental agency. Only Tribal Council shall, after meeting on a government-to-government basis, have the authority to release any information related to the provisions of this Code to any governmental agency.

Section 3.030 **Exclusive Jurisdiction**

The Tribe has exclusive jurisdiction over any proceeding involving tribal property. Any proceeding involving tribal property shall be immediately transferred to the Tribe.

Section 3.040 **Governing Law**

This Code shall be governed by the laws of the Tribe.

Section 3.050 **Full Faith and Credit**

Full faith and credit shall be given to this Code, records, and judicial proceedings of the Tribe.

Section 3.060 **Non-Waiver of Refund**

By enacting this Code, the Tribe does not waive its right to any refunds that have been unlawfully collected by any governmental agency (such as the Internal Revenue Service).

Approved July 10, 2026