

Celilo / Celilo Falls

I am very thankful to Cheri who was the prior coordinator.

History



Of all locations along the Columbia Gorge, what was once known as Celilo Falls is undoubtedly the one most mourned by Native Americans. The photo above tells the story fairly well: Celilo was the best fishing hole for many miles along the Columbia River and local Indian tribes had used it for several generations to provide them with vast amounts of fish. Many crudely-built platforms provided a way for fishermen to stand or lie down to lean out as far as possible over the Columbia's treacherous waters: cables strung across the river also enabled use of cable cars for hauling fish and people back and forth. This resource ceased to exist after the Columbia was dammed in the 1950s.

According to the 1910 Polk City Directory: "Population 20, A postoffice and station on the O.R. & N. and the Columbia river. First settled in 1883, one hundred miles east of Portland and twelve east of The Dalles, the banking point. Salmon canning is the chief industry. Private telephone connection. Boats come and go weekly from Lewiston, Idaho, and all towns enroute. Mail, daily."

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