

Roslyn Cemetery

Lesson One – Grade Seven

Introduction: The land and location of the cemetery



Roslyn is a small recreation-centric community in central Washington, a favored destination for outdoor enthusiasts lured by the natural beauty of upper Kittitas County as well as visitors drawn by a more urbane brand of charm such as what is offered at civic festivals and nearby Suncadia Resort.

The town currently has approximately 900 residents, but in the earlier days of its nearly 140-year existence boasted a population more than triple that size. At that time Roslyn was the top coal-producing community in the state, and virtually all of its residents were tied to the mines that extracted this mineral from the ground for the benefit of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

This back-breaking work was primarily done by European immigrants, who lived, socialized, and worshipped with people who shared their backgrounds and beliefs. And the way they buried their dead was similarly arranged.

The Roslyn Cemetery reflects that structure – its hilly expanse comprises 27 separate cemeteries, the vast majority of which are ethnically distinct. It likewise serves as a tangible reminder of the cultural diversity upon which this community, and the United States as a whole, was built.

Historical Synopsis

The land and its native people

Long before the arrival of Anglo-American settlers, let alone Roslyn's establishment, what is now considered central Washington was the ancestral territory of indigenous people whose descendants are now part of the seven-band Yakama Nation. In contrast to settlers, the Yakamas were historically migratory, moving in sync with weather patterns and the associated resources (game, fish, berries, etc.) between the foothills of the Cascade Mountain range to the temperate lowlands of the Kittitas and Yakima River valleys. This expanse, along with other tribal lands east of the Cascades, was largely ceded to the United States by way of treaty in 1855, while the native populations, including the various bands that made up the Yakama Nation, were confined to reservations.

Arrival of settlers, the railroad and the discovery of coal

In the Washington Territory, Anglo-American settlement east of the Cascade Mountains was agriculturally driven, and began in earnest after the U.S. Army suppressed a unified uprising of tribes in what is now known as the Yakima War (1855-58). However, the arrival of the railroad in the region was ultimately responsible for Roslyn's genesis. With the Northern Pacific Railroad looking to complete its transcontinental line by finishing a roughly 100-mile gap between the Columbia River and Puget Sound – most significantly by constructing a 1½-mile tunnel under the Cascades – the discovery of bountiful coal deposits proved beneficial to that cause. Coal was first detected in the Roslyn area in 1883, a large seam of bituminous coal was found by surveyors in 1885, and development soon followed in 1886. Coal was the lifeblood of the railroad industry, used to fire its steam engines as well as machinery used in the construction of the rail lines, so the Northern Pacific eagerly tapped into a supply that was located less than five miles from its designated east-west route.

Establishment and evolution of Roslyn

The Northern Pacific Coal Company, a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific Railroad, opened its first mining operation, suitably titled No. 1, in 1886, and platted Roslyn soon thereafter. Like the other eight numerically identified Northern Pacific mines that followed it, No. 1 was a slope-incline operation, with its tunnels following the contour of the coal seams from the surface to underground depths of up to several hundred feet. Smaller, privately owned mines also cropped up in the region, but Northern Pacific mines, which eventually were operated under the title of Northwestern Improvement Company, provided the economic backbone of Roslyn, giving it the character of a “company town.”

In assembling the hearty labor force needed to perform the treacherous task of extracting, processing and transporting coal, NWI actively recruited men familiar with this type of work – most of whom were of European descent, if they did not come directly from the so-called “Old Country.” Roslyn's first residents were an

amalgamation of, among others, Britons, Slavs, Italians, Germans and the Baltic states. Then when organized labor movements threatened production, NWT management introduced other ethnic influences into Roslyn's cultural mix – notably, it brought African American miners from the Midwest and Appalachia to serve as strikebreakers, many of whom remained when labor tensions eased.

Roslyn's population grew commensurately with the demand for coal, and it became one of the most essential coal-producing communities in the Western U.S. At the height of its production, in 1910, Roslyn turned out nearly 2 million tons and was home to 3,100 residents. But that burgeoning prosperity would be short-lived. The advent of the diesel engine cut into the need for coal, and Roslyn's mining production and population embarked on gradual but steady decline.

The last of NWT's mines, No. 9, shut down in 1963, by which time Roslyn's population had dwindled to 1,300. The timber industry, which had been a supplemental profession to the mines throughout the latter's heyday, served as Roslyn economic lynchpin for 30-some years, but slipped back into an ancillary role as evolving forest practices severely curtailed harvest and the corresponding jobs. By 1990, Roslyn's population dipped below 900 for the first time in more than 100 years.

The number of Roslyn residents has remained relatively constant since, with the town's economic focus shifting to recreation and tourism. That, however, is not to be confused with the number of *residences* in upper Kittitas County – including both fulltime and secondary homes – which has grown exponentially outside the incorporated city limits. Roslyn's downtown, which includes a three-block stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue and features several buildings more than a century old, is a hive of activity on weekends year-round and daily during the summer months. The character of Roslyn has clearly changed, but its most notable historic feature has not.

A Reflection on Roslyn's Past and Connection to Present Day Roslyn

Roslyn's Cemetery, or to be more precise its 27 cemeteries, offers a glimpse into the community, the people who have inhabited it, the cultures from which they hailed and the hardships they endured. The Old City Cemetery is adorned with weather-worn wooden picket and wrought iron fences that surround gravesites identified with crumbling headstones and covered with pine needles fallen from sizable Ponderosas. This stands in direct contrast to the carefully manicured Veterans' Cemetery, with its rows of uniform white markers, and to the plot dedicated to the Catholic St. Barbara Lodge, which features concrete-terraced borders that level the surface of hillside graves. Adjacent to St. Barbara is Croatian-based Dr. John Starcevich Lodge No. 1, which includes the graves of several children who died from Spanish Flu in 1918, while down below in the Old Knights of Pythias Cemetery (the New Pythias plot is located directly across Memorial Road) is the final resting place of some victims of Washington state's worst mine disaster, an explosion that killed 45 persons in 1892.

Then there is the dichotomy of the Mt. Olivet Cemetery, the plot dedicated to Roslyn's African American residents. Along with containing 100-year-old graves of Black

miners and their families, it houses a memorial honoring Tom Craven, a fourth-generation Roslyn resident who was killed in a forest fire in 2001. Tom is the son of Willie Craven, who in 1975 became Washington's first black mayor, and in that capacity was instrumental in getting the Cemetery, indeed the entire town, placed on the National Historic Register in 1978.

State Standards

G1.6-8.3 Analyze maps and charts from a specific time period to understand an issue or event.

G1.6-8.4 Explain how human spatial patterns have emerged from natural processes and human activities.

G2.6-8.3 Explain and analyze how the environment has affected people and how human actions modify the physical environment, and in turn, how the physical environment limits or promotes human activities in Washington state in the past or present.

H1.6-8.5 Explain how themes and developments have defined eras in Washington state history from 1854 to the present:

- Territory and treaty-making (1854-1889)
- Railroads, reform, immigration, coal mining and labor (1889-1930)
- Decline of mines, economic transition (1930-present)

Essential Questions

- Before the town of Roslyn was born, what people were there and how did they use the land? (e.g., Yakama Indians had temporary camps in what is now Upper Kittitas County, where they fished and hunted during the summer. They moved South for the colder months).
- Why was the land important for Roslyn? (e.g., the Transcontinental Railroad would pass through Cle Elum and a railroad spur line to Roslyn provided access to the coal needed for railroad construction and train fuel; Roslyn became home for the hundreds of people who moved into the area to help build the railroad and work in the coal mines.)
- What was required to use the land for the railroad? (e.g., a treaty between the United States and the Yakama Indians, in which the land was ceded to U.S.; government subsequently deeded land to the railroad.)
- What is the Transcontinental Railroad and why was it built? (e.g., Congress funded the construction of a railroad that would link the East and West coasts of the continent, opening lands for farming, mining, settlement, etc.)
- Why was the discovery of coal important to the Transcontinental Railroad and Roslyn? (e.g., coal fueled steam locomotives, and a rich supply of coal was discovered near the transcontinental line; development of the coal industry and the jobs it created lured men and their families to what became Roslyn.)

Essential Understandings

- Students will understand how treaties were used to establish land use by industry and settlers
- Students will understand how immigrants came to Roslyn to work the mines
- Students will understand how railroad construction happened, with what labor and resources were required
- Students will understand how coal was discovered and why the discovery was critical to the railroad and the community

Primary Sources

Maps

Photograph Collection

Secondary Sources

Contextual readings on background and immigration in Roslyn, railroads and the discovery of coal, refer to the list of linked additional resources at the end of the lesson overview.

Materials

3 Map sets for topic focus – tribal lands and treaties, coal, and railroads

Maps analysis worksheet

Links to related resources

Exit slip (if using)

Teacher Prep

Roslyn and the history of immigration

<https://historylink.org/file/9239>

The discovery of coal

<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/programs-and-services/geology/energy-mining-and-minerals/coal-metallic-and-mineral-resources#coal-in-washington.3>

The expansion of the railroads in Washington

<https://www.historylink.org/File/5139>

There are three map sets – tribal lands and treaties, coal, and railroads. Print out map sets so that when divided into three groups each group will have a full set of their relevant maps.

Print out enough copies of the “Maps analysis worksheet” for each student.

Lesson Plan

WORD	DEFINITION
Amalgamation	
Ancestral	
Ancillary	
Anglo-American	
Bituminous	
Burgeoning	
Ceded	
Commensurately	
Comprises	
Genesis	
Indigenous	
Lynchpin	
Migratory	
Subsidiary	
Suppressed	
Temperate	
transcontinental	
urbane	

Part I

Begin the class by briefly asking students what they already know about the land where they live. Who were the original people? What do the students know about them? What are some of the important historical events that shaped the area? Invite ideas from students and record their answers on the whiteboard/overhead/document.

To introduce the topic of the Roslyn Cemetery, use the photos as an aid and provide a brief overview. Explain to students that over the next few classes they will be learning about a historic cemetery in Roslyn, Washington. Describe how the Roslyn area was originally part of the Yakama tribal lands. In the 1855 treaty with the various Yakama bands, 11.5 million acres were ceded to the United States but rights to fish and gather food in those ceded areas was reserved for tribal members. Explain to students that settlers began coming to the Roslyn area after coal was first found in 1883 and that soon many people, especially European immigrants, came to work the area's coal mines. Describe for students the connection between the discovery of coal, the expansion of the railroad and the development of Roslyn and how both these things

brought drastic changes to the landscape as well as to the socioeconomic and cultural makeup of the area.

Part II

Break the class into three groups (within these main three groups you could break students into even smaller groups or pairs depending on class size). Each of the groups will examine maps pertaining to one of these historically defining factors: tribal lands and treaties, coal, and the railroads. Provide each group with a set of printouts of the relevant maps for their group's focus area

Explain to students that they should observe the details of various maps and think about what they are seeing: ***What do you notice? What is interesting? What is similar in these maps, and what is different? What parts of the map are you familiar with?*** Give them some time to look at the maps, then ask them to discuss these questions within their groups.

Part III

After giving groups time for brief discussion, distribute the “maps analysis worksheet” and go over the instructions with the class. In their groups, students should use the worksheet to analyze their maps more carefully, making notes for each question on the worksheet.

- If you assign roles to each member of the group (recorder, presenter, task manager, etc.), then you will have everything set up for Part IV. The presenter would be able to present learning to whole class.
- A Google Slides presentation with the images of the maps/ questions would provide a ready made presentation to share out with the class, complete with images.

Part IV

After groups have worked through the worksheet and taken notes, they should then share what they have learned with students from other groups. While this could be organized in various ways, here are two suggestions to consider based on class dynamics and time:

- Count off students or otherwise rearrange the grouping so that there are new groups which consist of at least one student from each of the original three focus areas (tribal land and treaties, coal, railroads). Then have each student go around using their worksheet and maps to explain what they learned and talked about in their groups.
- Have groups prepare a quick mini-presentation for the rest of the class.

Closing and Self-Assessment

Ask students to again consider the introduction questions, this time specifically focusing on the Roslyn area. Who were the original people in this area? What do you know about them? What are some of the important historical events that shaped the area? Distribute an exit slip for students to write their answer to this question based on the day's content. Collect these slips as students leave for the day to evaluate their understanding.

Enrichment Activities

Write a description of how Roslyn's beginnings and the Roslyn Cemetery were tied to coal mining and railroad expansion.

Engage in research/additional reading on one of the three main topics.

Draw or otherwise create a map of Washington that incorporates important elements from all three focus areas.

Additional resources

Yakama Nation:

<https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/ellensburg/id/223/>

Coal:

<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/programs-and-services/geology/energy-mining-and-minerals/coal-metallic-and-mineral-resources#coal-in-washington.3>

<https://voiceofthevalley.com/2018/05/15/roslyn-no-9-coal-mine/>

Railroads:

<https://www.historylink.org/File/5139>

<https://www.american-rails.com/np.html>

<https://www.discovercleelum.com/history/cle-elum-firsts-washington-state-history/first-train-in-cle-elum/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Pacific_Railway

<https://www.legendsofamerica.com/northern-pacific-railroad/>

<https://www.si.edu/exhibitions/forgotten-workers-chinese-migrants-and-building-transcontinental-railroad-event-exhib-6332>

<https://www.threeriversrambler.com/steam-engines-101>

<https://www.american-historama.org/1801-1828-evolution/railroads-in-the-1800s.htm>

<https://www.american-rails.com/1840s.html>

(videos)

(What do steam locomotives look like? Sound like?)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6U8f5TrfA>

(How do steam locomotives work?)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZSoMxTb1ZM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GljDW8qR2vs>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nd2li4OGQ4k>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHQ3F07RTjA>









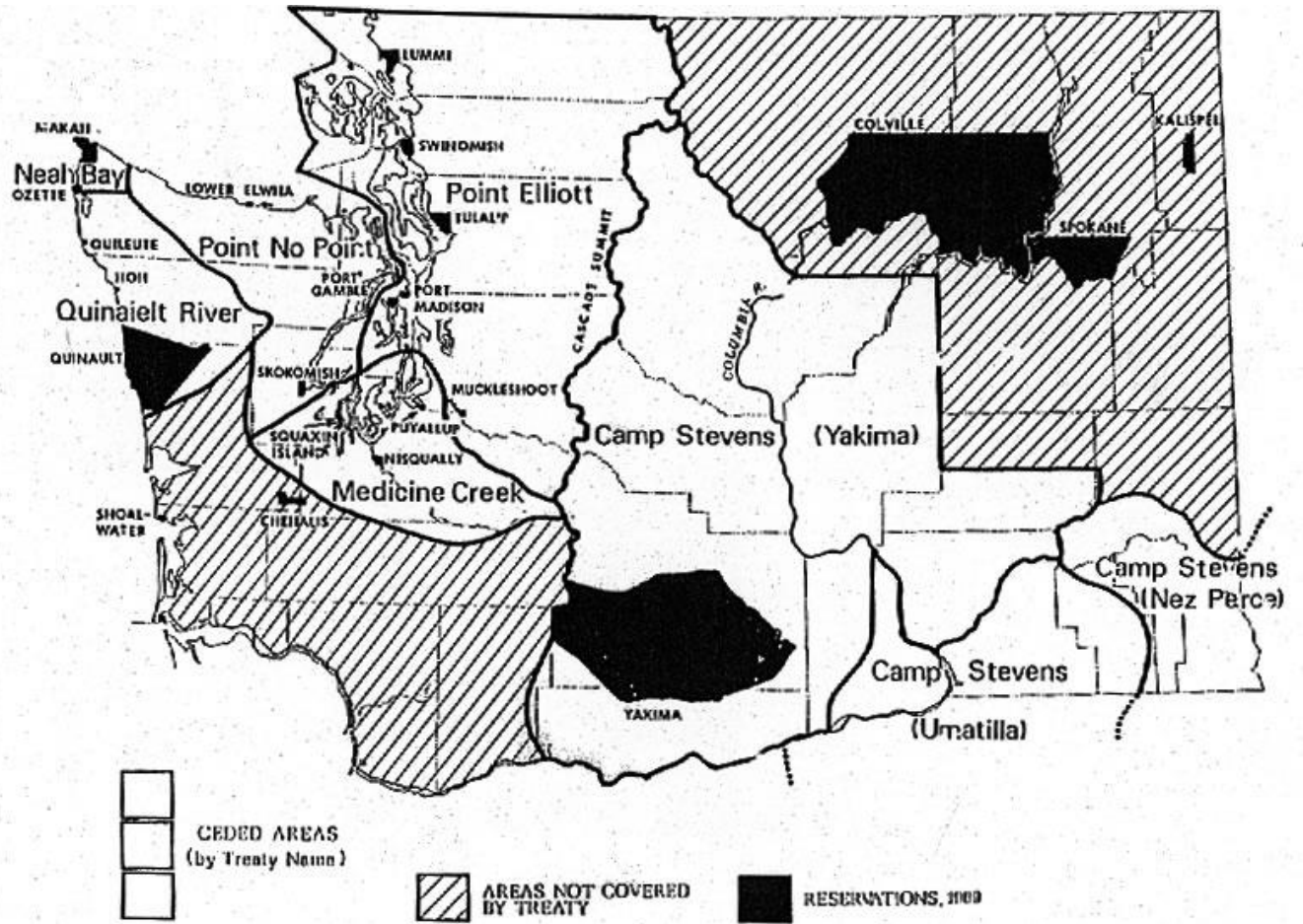
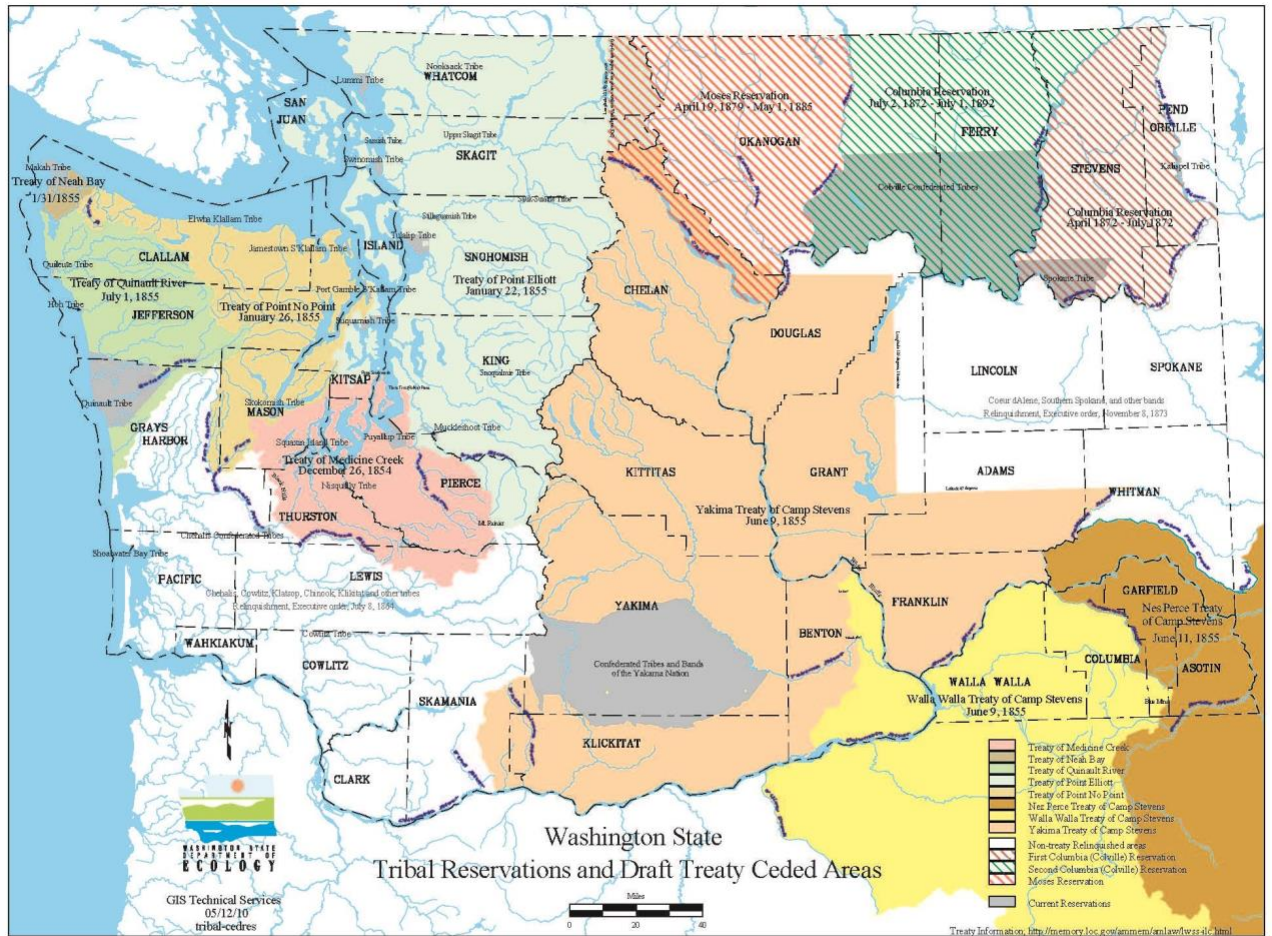
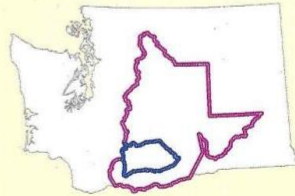
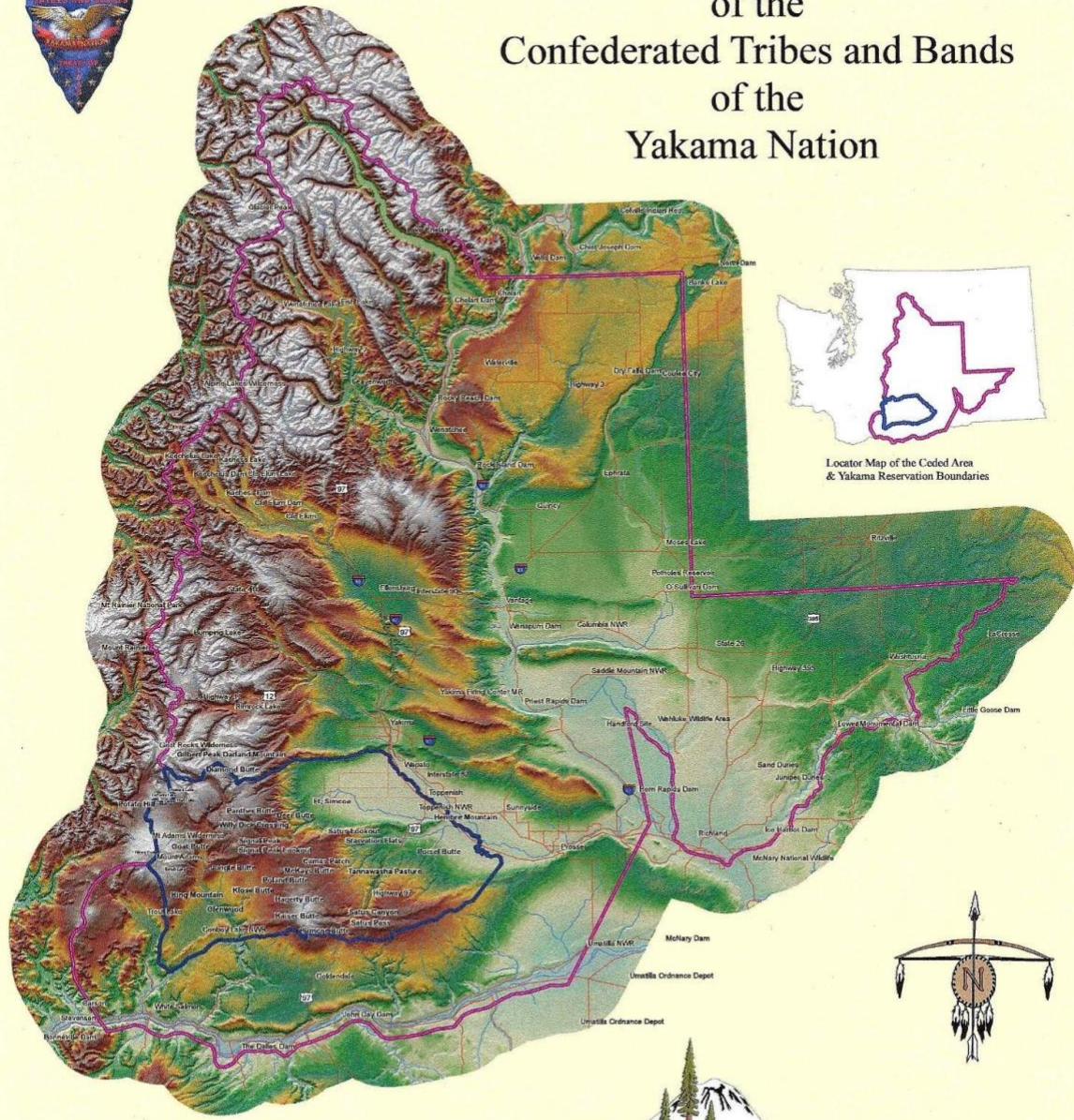


Fig. 2.4. Treaty cessions and reservations (American Friends Service Committee 1970:22).



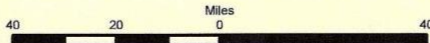
Ceded Area and Reservation Boundary of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation



Locator Map of the Ceded Area & Yakama Reservation Boundaries



This Map was produced by GIS staff from the BIA Branch of Forestry, DNR Water Resources and DNR Wildlife programs. The data for the map was derived from a 1:250,000 Digital Elevation Model. The forest vegetation was digitized from 7.5 minute USGS Quad sheets. A compiled list of Tribal names for various features was supplied by the Cultural Resources program. This list was derived from many sources, including Tribal elders and other participants.

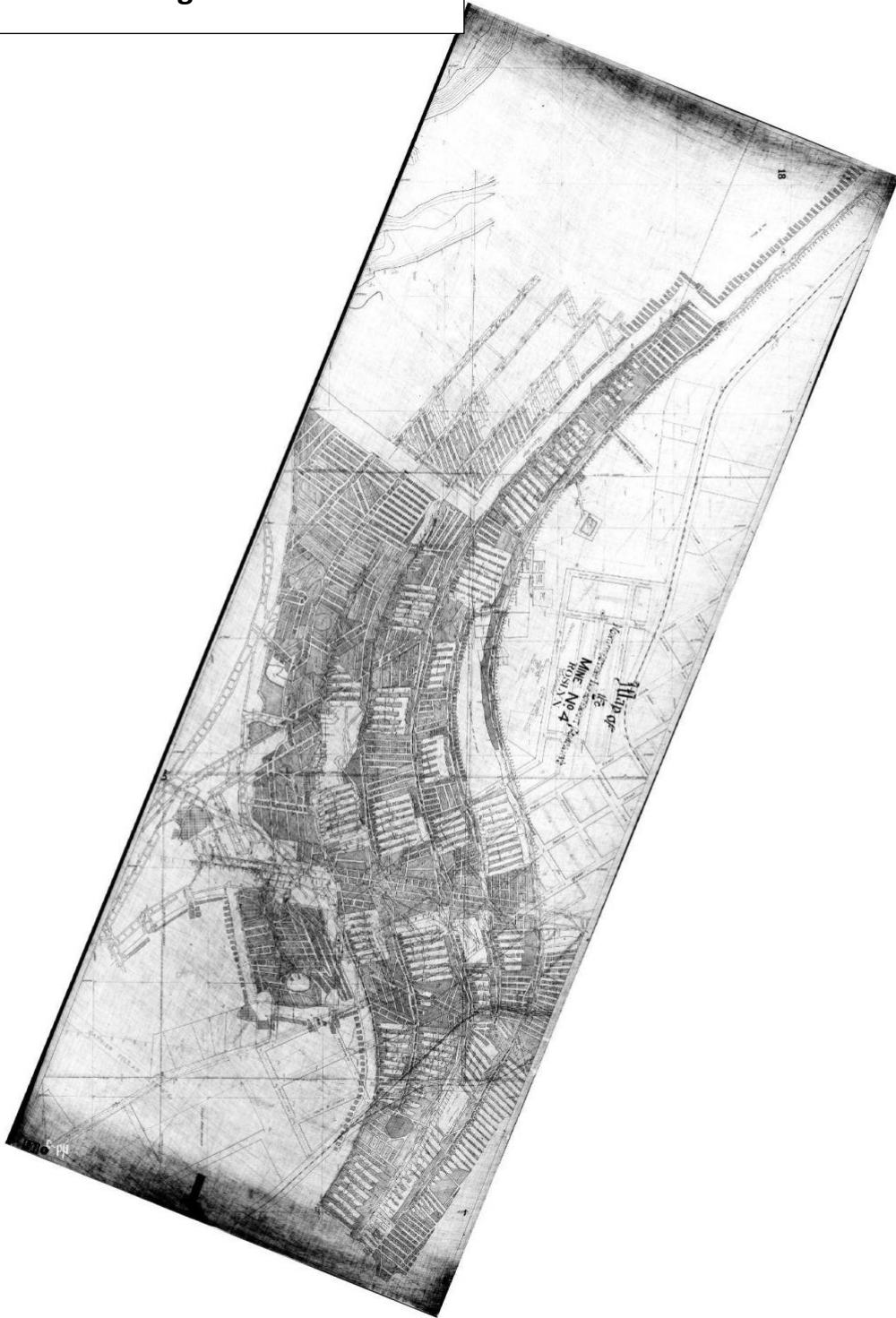


Scale 1:700,000 in or 1:11mi

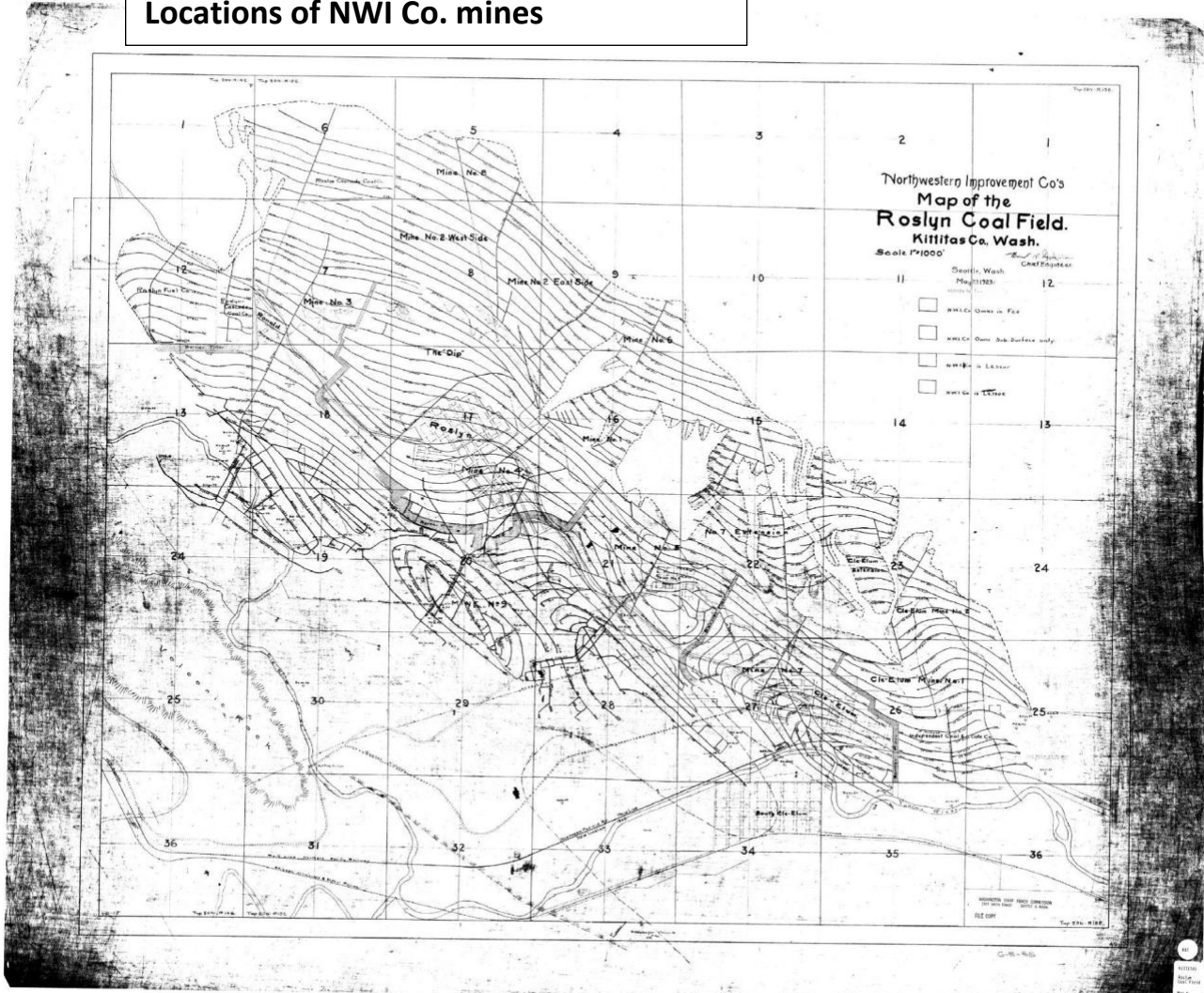
Legend

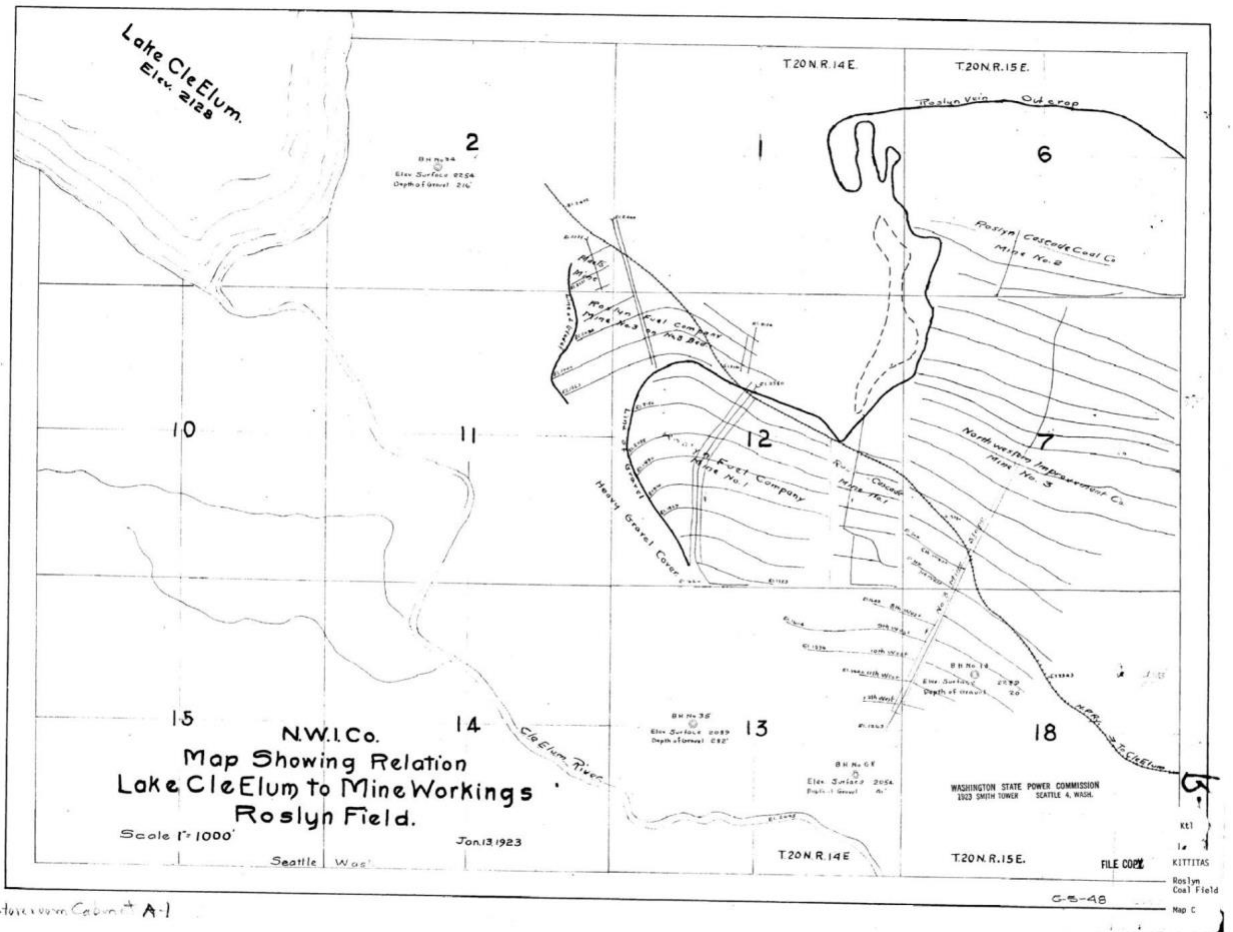
- Yakama Nation Ceded & Reservation Boundaries
- Yakama Nation Ceded Area
- Yakama Nation Reservation
- Lakes & Reservoirs
- Rivers & Streams
- Major Roads

Excavation diagram of Mine No. 4



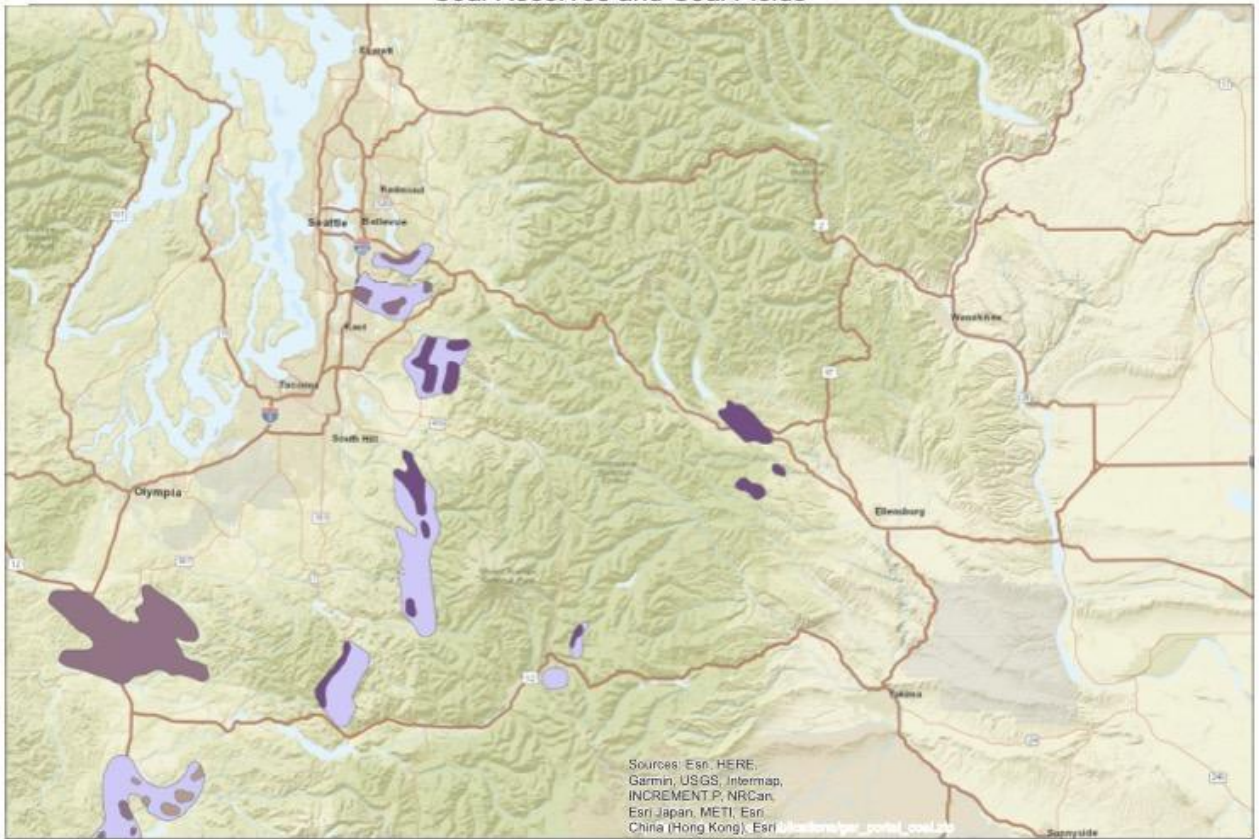
Locations of NWI Co. mines





State room Cabinet A-1

Coal Reserves and Coal Fields

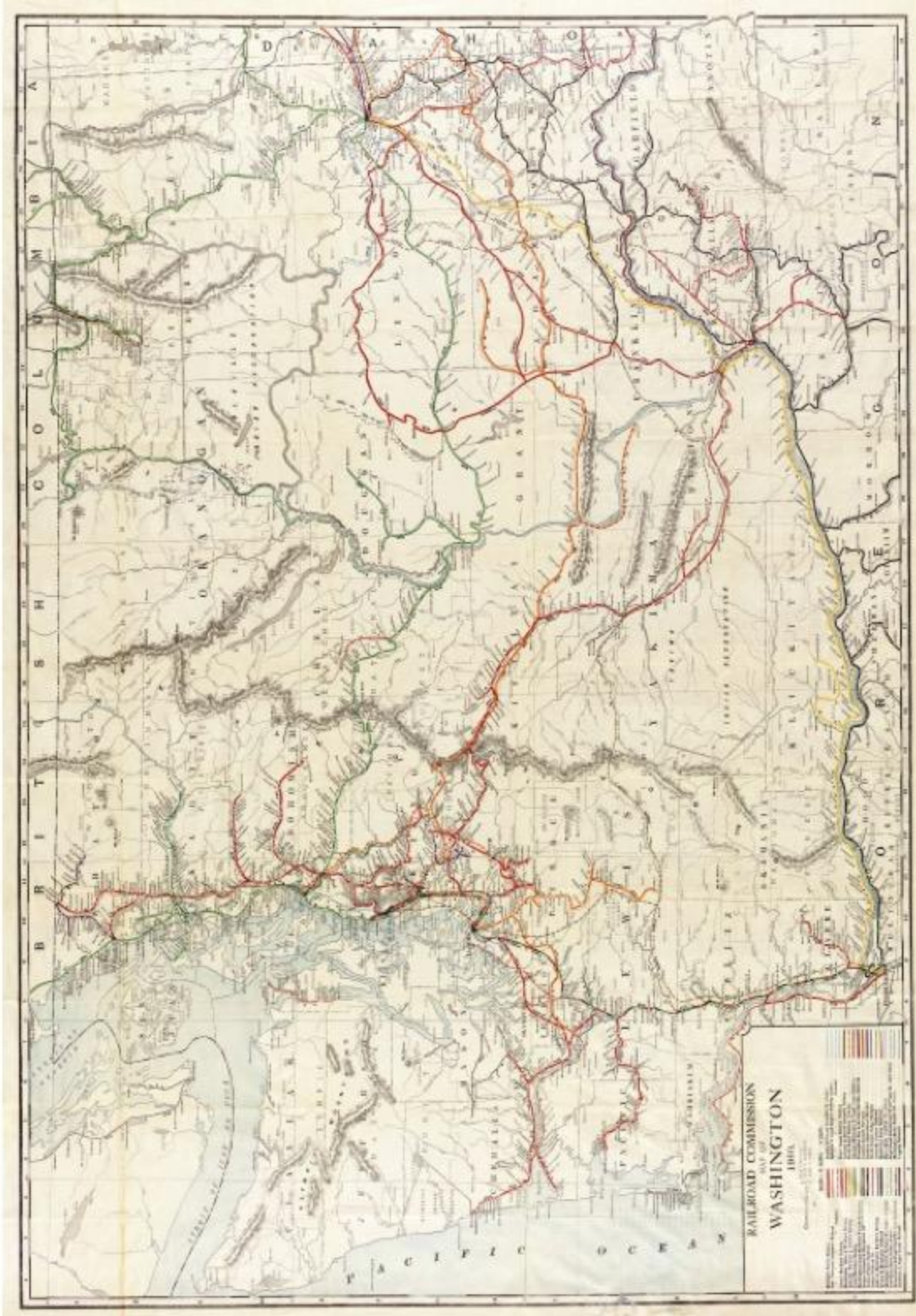


WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
WASHINGTON GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Geology Portal

0 10 20 40 Miles







98-1045026

G4269 1/4 in. 1871. CT RR 311
May 7 1881

WASHINGTON
EXPLANATION.

1/2 in. (1000 ft.)	1/4 in. (2500 ft.)	1/8 in. (5000 ft.)	1/16 in. (10000 ft.)
1/32 in. (15000 ft.)	1/64 in. (30000 ft.)	1/128 in. (60000 ft.)	1/256 in. (120000 ft.)
1/512 in. (240000 ft.)	1/1024 in. (480000 ft.)	1/2048 in. (960000 ft.)	1/4096 in. (1920000 ft.)
1/8192 in. (3840000 ft.)	1/16384 in. (7680000 ft.)	1/32768 in. (15360000 ft.)	1/65536 in. (30720000 ft.)
1/131072 in. (61440000 ft.)	1/262144 in. (122880000 ft.)	1/524288 in. (245760000 ft.)	1/1048576 in. (491520000 ft.)
1/2097152 in. (746880000 ft.)	1/4194304 in. (1493760000 ft.)	1/8388608 in. (2987520000 ft.)	1/16777216 in. (5975040000 ft.)

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Maps analysis worksheet

Analyzing your maps

Washington



What are the titles of your group's maps?

Are there scales and compasses on them? Are there map legends? What is in the legends?

What type of maps are you looking at? (check all that apply):

- Political
- Topographic/Physical
- Aerial/Satellite
- Relief (Shaded or Raised)
- Exploration
- Survey
- Natural Resource
- Planning
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Military
- Population/Settlement
- Census
- Other

Observe its parts

What place or places are shown?

What is labeled?

If there are symbols or colors, what do they stand for?

Who made them?

Where are they from?

Try to make sense of it

What was happening at the time these maps were made?

Why were they created? List evidence from the maps or your knowledge about the mapmaker that led you to your conclusion.

Write one sentence summarizing these maps.

How do they compare to a current map of the same place?

Use them as historical evidence

What did you find out from these maps that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents or historical evidence would you want to use to help you understand this event or topic?

