LOWER ELWHA KLALLAM TRIBE

ʔəʔɬx̣ʷə nəxʷsƛay̓əm "Strong People"

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2026 Paddle to Nisqually Announcement

In honoring the seven (7) families who have experienced recent losses within our community, and in keeping with our cultural traditions and protocols, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe will be keeping our canoe tied up for the 2026 Paddle to Nisqually. As a result, Lower Elwha will not be participating on the water, and there will be no ground crew support during this year's journey.

Although our canoe will remain tied up, Lower Elwha will continue to welcome canoes ashore with landing speeches. We are grateful for the opportunity to continue extending our hospitality to those traveling on the journey.

Out of respect for those we have lost and their families, we are asking our song and drum group to keep our songs and dances off the floor until the appropriate services have been carried out. We appreciate everyone's understanding and support as we honor our loved ones and uphold the cultural teachings and traditions that guide us during times of mourning.

Sincerely,

Melissa A. Gilman, Tribal Chairwoman

Steve Robideau, Vice-Chair

Russell N. Hepfer, Council Member

Frances G. Charles, Council Member

Christia Skerbeck, Secretary/Treasurer