



NAPT

NEWS RELEASE

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STORY OF IMPACT OF MULTIMILLION DAMMING PROJECT ON INDIAN LAND AND CONTINUED LOSS SUBJECT OF NEW DOC

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LINCOLN, Neb.—Oct. 10, 2008— In 1947, when the dust started to settle after World War II but animosity with Korea and Russia began, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began a \$249 million, multi-damming project in North Dakota unknown to the rest of America. Thousands of acres of farmland were seized, hundreds of families were displaced and nearly 90 percent of the Fort Berthold Reservation was going under water.

The aftermath of the largest project, the Garrison Dam, a more than two-mile long earthen structure named fifth largest of its kind in the world, is the subject of a new documentary, **Waterbuster**, presented by **Native American Public Telecommunications** and **American Public Television (APT)**.

The story is a personal tale of how the dam has affected **Producer J. Carlos Peinado** and his family, all members of the Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara Nation. Returning to Fort Berthold to search for answers to why his grandmother left the reservation when she was young, Peinado discovers the origins of his kinship within the Waterbuster Clan. He also realizes that the glistening water of the former Missouri River that federal officials turned into Lake Sakakawea has caused much pain among his relatives that resonates today.

“Here were World War II veterans serving in the United States Army and then they come back, you know, and the country that they fought for is systematically relocating their families, taking them away from their homelands for this Garrison Reservoir,” said Calvin Grinnell, Peinado’s great uncle. “So we have a long history of our service to this country and in return for all that we have our lands taken from us.”

The project, while slated to create hydropower for thousands in the Midwest who had no electricity at the time, displaced thousands of Native American and non-Native American families and flooded several reservation and non-reservation towns.

With much of the tribe in turmoil, many tribal members chose a federal program referred to as the relocation program that promised job training in cities. Peinado’s grandmother went to Los Angeles to elude another cold winter in North Dakota. She later moved to Arizona to raise her children.

“I will never know the towns of Independence or Elbowoods, except in story,” Peinado said. “My grandmother rarely spoke of the days of the Garrison Dam and the flooding of our ancestral lands, but when she did, she always spoke of what lay below as her true home. I have come back here to reclaim that home and what was denied to my generation and all the generations that will follow.”

Waterbuster, a selected project of **Tribeca Film Institute’s All Access program**

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and an official selection for the 2006 **Tribeca Film Festival**, will be released for Native American Heritage Month in November. Check local listings for times and dates. Program information about *Waterbuster* is available at www.nativetelecom.org.

Ronnie Scheib of *Variety Magazine* called *Waterbuster*: “A lyrical, haunting account of loss of community and cultural identity...vividly reimagines the fabled towns and rich bottomland from which the North Dakota Indians were evicted by the damming of the Missouri River.”

About NAPT:

NAPT shares Native stories with the world through support of the creation, promotion and distribution of Native media. **NAPT** support makes it possible for public television audiences to view such quality programs as *Way of the Warrior* and the upcoming documentary about the economics of weaving in the Navajo Nation, *Weaving Worlds*. Other NAPT products include **AIROS.org**, and **VisionMaker Video**, a distributor of *Waterbuster*, *Weaving Worlds* and other documentaries by and about Native Americans.

NAPT one of five members of the **National Minority Consortia** chartered by the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting** to provide diverse programming to **PBS** and other public broadcasting systems. For more information on NAPT, go to www.nativetelecom.org.

About APT:

With more than 10,000 hours of programming in its library, **American Public Television** (APT) has been a prime source of programming for the nation's public television stations for 47 years, distributing more than 300 new program titles per year. In 2006, **APT** launched **Create**—the TV channel featuring the best of public television's lifestyle programming. Known for its leadership in identifying innovative, worthwhile and viewer-friendly programming, **APT** has established a tradition of providing public television stations with program choices that strengthen and customize their schedules, such as *Rick Steves' Europe*, *Worldfocus*, *Globe Trekker*, *Simply Ming*, *Sara's Weeknight Meals*, *America's Test Kitchen From Cook's Illustrated*, *Doc Martin*, *Broadway: The Golden Age*, *Lidia's Family Table*, *Rosemary and Thyme*, *P. Allen Smith's Garden Home*, *The Big Comfy Couch*, *Celine Dion: A New Day*, *Queen Rock Montreal*, *Monarchy With David Starkey*, *Spain...on the Road Again*, and other prominent documentaries, dramatic series, how-to programs, children's series and classic movies. For more information about APT's programs and services, visit www.APTonline.org.

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