

NATIVE WATERS:

A CHITIMACHA RECOLLECTION



There are different means of knowing and remembering, and they are not mutually exclusive.

Through a small tribe known as “*the People of Many Waters*,” we offer an alternative way of recalling Native American history – Chitimacha history - These Native Americans are among the first people of Louisiana, heirs of an unbroken 8,000 year past in their native coastal region of the Atchafalaya Basin of Louisiana. Living off the bounty of one of the richest inland estuaries on the continent, this indigenous nation persist and rejuvenates its culture while losing its ancestral territory to forces other than conquest.

As the son of the last chief of the Chitimacha Indians and a keeper of his family’s oral tradition, we journey into sacred places of the Basin with author Roger Stouff, a fisherman descended from “a long and distinguished lineage of fishermen within a nation of fishermen”, as he provides native stories, beliefs and perspectives about this important and often overlooked people.

And never far from his native waters of the Atchafalaya Basin, will Roger’s fly fishing serve as the central storytelling device for the program.



Through him, we experience what he calls the painful “*vanishings*” that sadden him and other tribal members so: The gradual but certain demise of the river basin, the sacred places it contains, and a way of life that is quickly vanishing. He does this in the time-honored way that Chitimacha oral tradition was passed down father to son: he will take us fishing, and he will tell us stories that comprise the heart of Chitimacha identity.



Directed and produced by award-winning LPB Senior Producer/Director Tika Laudun (*Louisiana: A History*), this documentary was co-produced with C. E. Richard (*Louisiana: A History*) and Chitimacha tribal member Roger Stouff. It is written by Roger Stouff with C. E. Richard. LPB’s Rex Fortenberry was the editor and principal videographer for the program. Special assistance was provided by Chitimacha Cultural Director Kimberly Walden.

Join us for *Native Waters*, a high definition Louisiana Public Broadcasting documentary, as we present our audiences with a vision of one of the most unique natural landscapes in North America and home to the Chitimacha from time immemorial.

