

Native America and the USA

2025 Visual Arts Competition Program

Why are we doing this? The League and many other organizations open meetings with a land acknowledgment statement. Our current one reads ‘We acknowledge and honor the first people of the Palouse Region their descendants Including our neighbors the Nez Perce, Colville and Coeur d’Alene Tribes.’ You might have heard similar statements but what does it mean and how can we truly honor these first peoples. By learning. Native peoples and their cultures never went away. They are still here.

Slide 1 Title Native America and the USA

Slide 2 Introduction

- Lots of tribes once lived in Eastern WA. Can you name any local areas named after native words.
- Palouse, Kamiak Butte, Wawawai Canyon, Walla Walla Walla, Spokane, Wenatchee

Slide 3 Purpose

- We want to explore the evolving, complex, and intertwined relationship between the government of the Native American Nations and the government of the United States of America.
- We will be introducing you “new” terms and definitions related to this relationship.

Slide 4 Time Immemorial

- Things that happened so long ago no one remembers them anymore.
- “Time so long past as to be indefinite in history or tradition.” (Dictionary definition)

Some Key Dates in WA: Lewis & Clark Expedition 1805-1806, Indian treaties 1855 and 1872, WA becomes a State 1889, Pullman becomes a city 1888, 1974 Boldt Decision 1989 Centennial Accord. No one knows when people first came to North America. New information keeps pushing the date further back in history. The oldest date on people in our area is from Marmes Rockshelter (over 11.000 years ago)

Slide 5 Treaties

- Government to Government agreements
- “A contract in writing between two or more political authorities (such as States or Sovereigns).” (Dictionary)

Treaties are mentioned in the US Constitution, Article VI. Clause 2 “Supremacy Clause”. “This Constitution and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.”

Slide 6 Sovereignty

- The right to make your own laws
- The right to be recognized by other governments as independent.
- “One that is Sovereign especially an autonomous state”

Slide 7 Self Determination

- The ability to advocate for yourself
- The right to decide your own future for your nation or people
- “Free choice of one’s own acts or states without external compulsion.”

Slide 8 Government to Government

- Government to government relationships are relationships between equals.
- Like Canada and the United States or France and Germany.

Slide 9 Native America

- Native America is everywhere, extends to the north to include Canada and to the south to Mexico and the Caribbean. **When the international boundaries were set tribes (and even families) that lived in the area were split.**
- Reservations are scattered throughout the country. **Within the United States there are 574 Federally recognized Tribes and in Washington State there are 29. There are tribes that are not Federally recognized, and some are working on gaining that recognition.**
- Local reservations/tribes: Nez Perce, Colville Confederated tribes (**including the Palus**), Coeur d’Alene, Spokane.

Slide 10 Tribal Government

- Many different governing styles.
- Some similarities: governing by consensus (**continued to talk until they found a solution everyone could agree on**) and no concept of land ownership.
- Weren’t isolated plenty of mingling **through trade, inter marriage, and shared resources.**

Slide 11 Treaties

- Treaties were made between representatives of the US Government and Native American Tribes
- Promised the natives “reserved land”.
- Promised the natives the right to fish and hunt, in their “usual and accustomed places”.
- In exchange the settlers would move on to the land that natives previously lived on.

Slide 12 Treaties Broken

- US Government broke the promises of the Treaties
- Reservations shrank and were broken up to allow non-Indian settlers to live there (**1887 Dawes Act**).
- Children were sent to boarding schools to prevent them from practicing their culture (**forbidden to speak their native languages or practice their religion**).

Slide 13 Tribes Merged

- Some Treaties merged tribes together against their will.
- Loss of individual culture

- One example is the Colville Confederated Tribes (1872 treaty). Twelve different tribes make up the Colville Confederated Reservation: Arrow Lakes, Chelan, Colville, Entiat, Nespelem, Okanagan, Methow, Sinkiuse-Columbia, Wenatchi, Palus, and non-treaty Nez Perce (Chief Joseph's Band)

Slide 14 1924 Indian Citizenship Act

- Made natives legally US citizens.
- Gave them the right to vote but not all states honored it.
- Many states fought back against letting Natives vote. In reality, it wasn't until 1950s that Indians were able to vote in all states.

Slide 15 Turning Points

- Lots of change in the 1970's
- The Boldt Decision 1974 reaffirmed promised fishing rights. Over the years, Washington State restricted Indian fishing rights, sometime leading to violent confrontations. The Judge, Boldt, used the original treaty language that promised the right to fish and hunt "in all usual and accustomed places". This court decision made tribal sovereignty a reality. And has had a reach beyond the original treaty tribes and fishing rights.
- Self Determination Act (Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) 1975 let natives manage their own education, healthcare and housing programs. This policy is a set of laws and practices that give Native American tribes more autonomy and control over the services and programs that affect them. The policy aims to empower tribes to act more like sovereign governments. They took ownership and became better advocates for themselves.
- Big turning points in Native rights federally

Slide 16 Centennial Accord

- Washington wanted to improve our relationship with the tribes within the state
- In 1989 an agreement between the state and several native groups was made, The Centennial Accord. The Centennial Accord is an agreement between the federal recognized tribes of WA and the State of WA to achieve mutuals goals through improved relationships between sovereign governments. It provides a framework and procedures for that relationship.
- Washington promised it would treat native nations as equals and respect their decisions.
- Washington was the first state to sign this type of agreement in 1989 starting with only 6 state agencies on board. Now every state agency has a tribal liaison to consult with. This is a big win for all governments state and tribes. This relationship between state and tall 29 federally recognized tribes has continued for 35 years and is still growing. The Accord insures that gov-to-gov relations are honored and tribal representation is present, and policies are implemented together.

Slide 17 Modern Relationships

- Many state agencies have people (ambassadors or liaisons) to work with native nations.
- Increased effort at collaboration increased respect for native decision making

Slide 18 What's Next

- This discussion isn't over. There is lots we couldn't include.
- There are many ways to continue learning more
 - Attend WSU's Pah-Loots PU Powwow on April 19th
 - Watch the film Fish Wars
 - Learn more about sovereignty and self-determination
 - Always Keep Learning

Slide 19

"Tribal governments have become more and more important, not just to Indians, but to all of us, because they are involved in issues such as saving wild salmon, protecting the health of rivers and streams, managing urban growth, improving education, and creating jobs." (Pg 15 League textbook 8th edition)

End of Slide Program

There is still so much to learn about. Do your own research. There are many resources available. A good place to start is using the League's civics Textbook *The State We're In*, either the Grades 3-5 or the Grades 6-12 versions.

This program is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Pullman/Whitman County's Education Fund and supported by Neill Public and Whitman County Libraries, with contributions from the Tribal Consultation Program, Office of Native Education, and the WA Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

References and Additional Resources:

LWVWA Textbook Grades 3-5 *The State We're In: Washington: Your guide to state, tribal & local government*
<https://oercommons.s3.amazonaws.com/media/courseware/relatedresource/file/SWIW-ElementaryBook-2020i.pdf>

LWVWA Textbook Free Digital Downloads including Grades 7-12 and Spanish versions of *The State We're In: Washington*
<https://lwvwaef.org/collections/digital-downloads>

John McCoy Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Early Learning Curriculum
<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/john-mccoy-lulilas-time-immemorial-tribal-sovereignty-washington-state>

Online Resources List from the Since Time Immemorial Tribal Sovereignty Early Learning Curriculum
https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/tribal-training/Resources1_Online_Resources_v3.27.2017.pdf

Tribal Consultation Program, Office of Native Education, and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/access-opportunity-education/native-education/tribal-consultation>

Centennial Accord Agreement
<https://goia.wa.gov/relations/centennial-accord>

Federally recognized Indian tribes and resources for Native Americans

<https://www.usa.gov/tribes>

The Washington Indian Gaming Association

<https://www.washingtonindiagaming.org>

The original inhabitants of the area that is now Washington

<http://www.native-languages.org/washington.htm>

Boldt decision affirms tribal fishing rights, sovereignty

<https://www.courts.wa.gov/content/publicupload/eclips/2024%2002%2020%20It%20Happened%20Here%200Boldt%20decision%20affirms%20tribal%20fishing%20rights%20sovereignty.pdf>

The Fish Wars - Native Knowledge 360, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/pnw-fish-wars#title>

Office of Tribal Relations & Native American Programs

<https://native.wsu.edu>

PLATEAU PEOPLES' WEB PORTAL WSU

<https://plateauportal.libraries.wsu.edu>

NATIVE KNOWLEDGE 360° National Museum of the American Indian

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/>

Tribal Perspectives Northwest - Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f1ESMsLXtg>