



Suquamish

Port Gamble S'Klallam are another nation whose place includes what is now Kitsap County, but this is a focus on the Suquamish to get us started.

Much of the information in this PowerPoint is directly quoted from the book *Saving Suquamish Sources*. Jay Miller, PhD, ed. 2020

Based on Southern Puget Sound Salish 2: Warren A Snyder, PhD. Texts, Suquamish Place Names, and Dictionary Sacramento Anthropological Society Paper #9. Fall 1968

Territory

- Suquamish territory is on the western edge of the Lushootseed-speaking peoples.
- Most Lushootseed tribal groups were closely connected with their own river drainages.
- But the Suquamish territory lacked a major river, being between the Sound and Hood Canal.
- Their subsistence adaptation required them to travel extensively to collect what they needed for the winter.
- Their accustomed fishery was judged by the Federal Court to extend from the Fraser River mouth to Hood Canal.

(Miller & Snyder 2020: 9)



Camps, villages



Before being moved to a reservation:

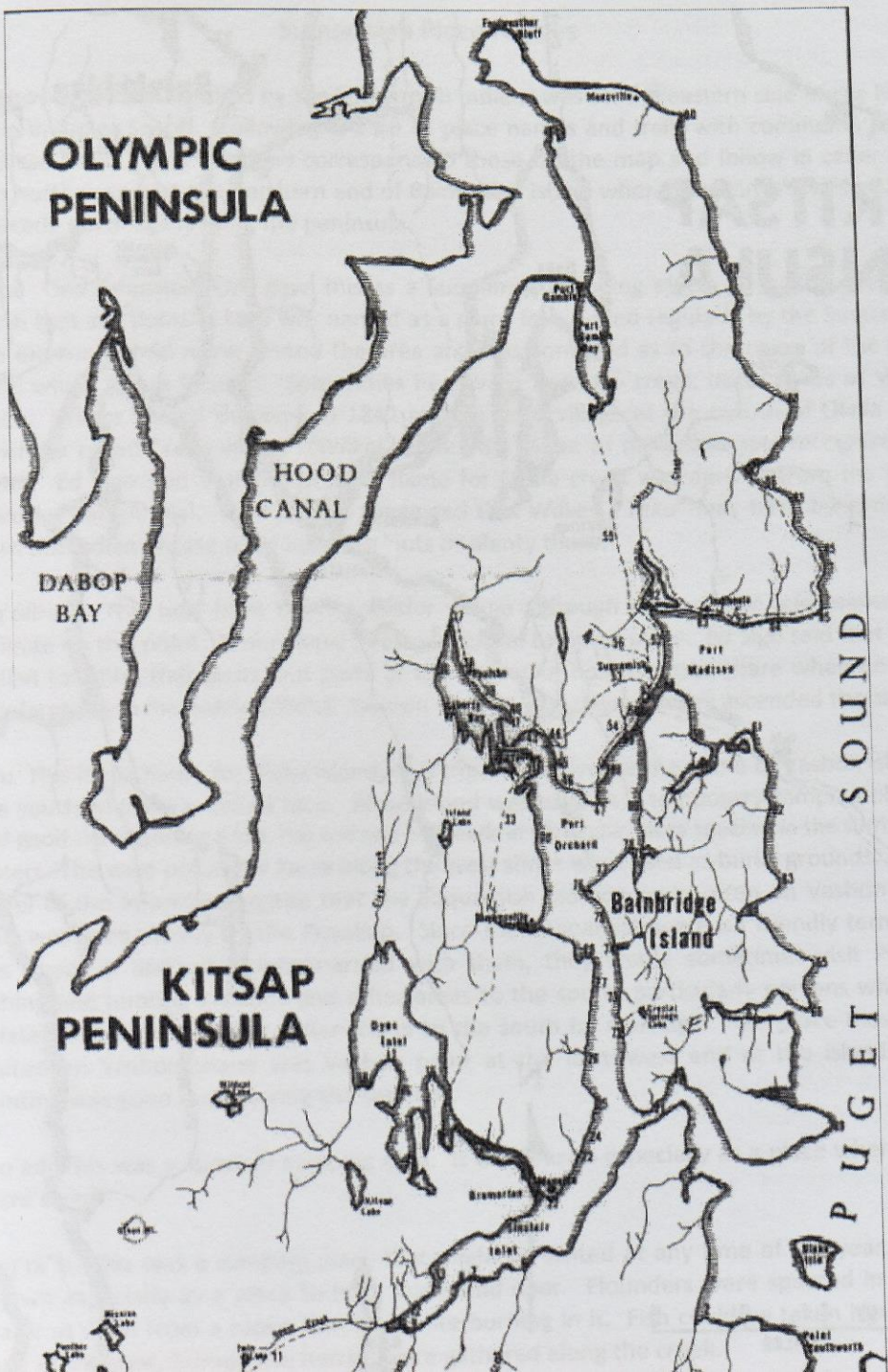
- Suquamish permanent villages, with large, wooden longhouses, were primarily on the east side of the peninsula.
- The west side of the peninsula, along Hood Canal, was considered too windy, cold and unprotected.
- The people would camp along the west side during mild weather or to "endure privations that were necessary for religious devotions."

"All of their villages and camps represented central locations giving ready access to diverse nearby resources, to Puget Sound, and to interior forests."

(Miller & Snyder 2020: 10)

(Picture, left, is of a summer camp with cattail mat shelters. 1910. Museum of History and Industry. Seattle.)

See map of village sites and information about Suquamish pre-contact life.
<https://suquamish.nsn.us/home/about-us/history-culture/>



Some Important trails

- From Dyes Inlet
- From the village at Chico – Erland Point to Seabeck
- From Poulsbo (known to the Suquamish as Mapleville)
- From the village at Suquamish to Port Gamble
- The trail from Silverdale on Dyes Inlet was so useful it is now paved as Anderson Hill Road.

See dotted lines on map, which show some, not all, of the trails.

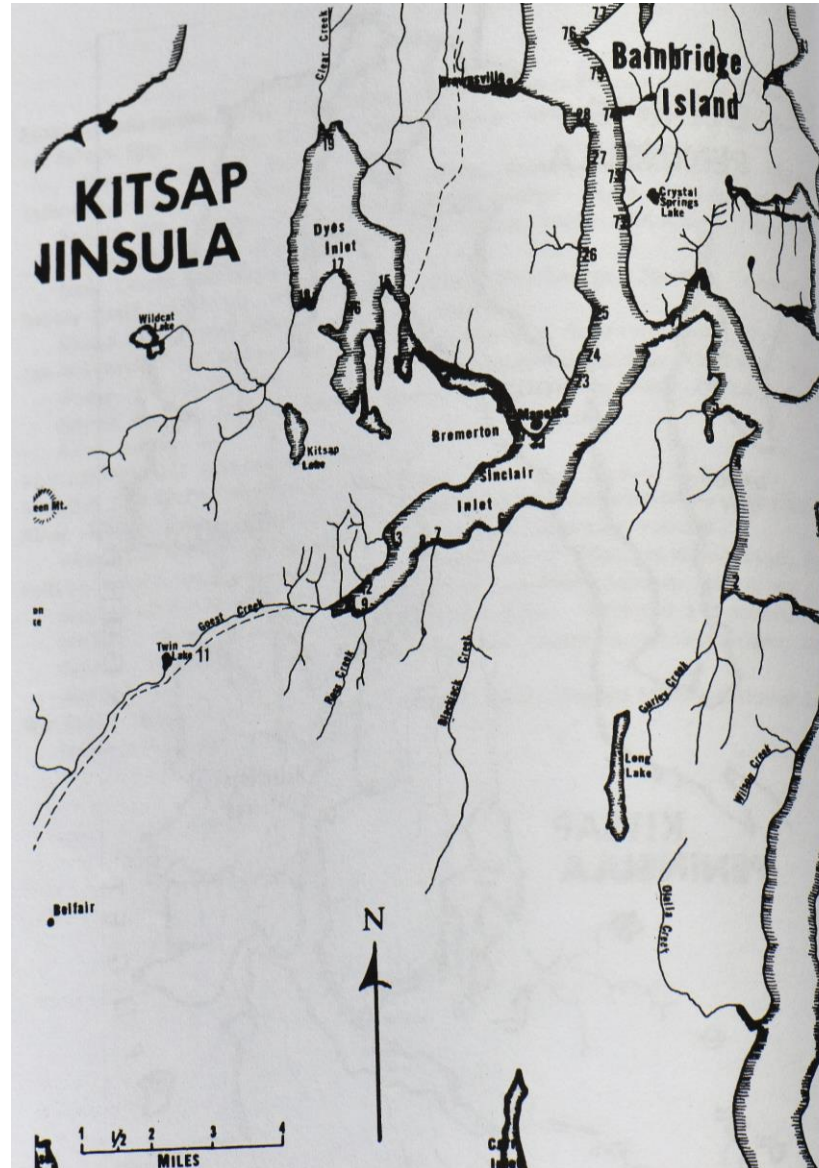
(Miller 2020: 77)

Examples of places designated by numbers on the map:

11: A trail led from the head of Sinclair Inlet to Lynch Cove at the end of Hood Canal. The trail was used for fishing in the Union River. Early spring, people would go to the Union River to catch steelhead. The steelhead were caught with spears. Only the barbed points were carried. Spear shafts were made at the fishing place and then abandoned. Deer hunting was good around Twin Lake.

14: This camping place was located where the Bremerton City Park was located. Remnants of the shell mound were still visible in 1952. It was known as a good clamming, fishing and duck hunting area. Deer were hunted inland.

15: "Two groups fighting a battle". A myth concerning this point relates that there was a battle going on when Transformer (or Changer) came along. Transformer changed the warriors into rocks. The pile of rocks can still be seen there. This was a camping ground used especially for clamming.



Examples of places designated by numbers on the map:

16: "Potlatch (invite) house". Said to have been the last potlatch house in the Suquamish area.

17: "Canoe finding side." Canoes always drifted to this point if they got loose. It was not a camping place.

18: A winter village site. Salmon were caught in the stream and deer hunting was good, especially around Kitsap Lake.

19: A place called "spear it," a camping ground at the mouth of Clear Creek. Silvers were the chief kind of salmon speared in the creek. Oysters and clams were plentiful on the beach. Inland, huckleberries and deer were abundant.

22. A place called "to cry out" or "to be taboo". Canoe burials were placed in the trees here. (Close to what is now Manette)

Economy

The year was divided into seasons.

- March or April was the time when the wind blew a lot.
- Summer was the time of warmth.
- Fall was when salmon fishing and berry picking started.
- Winter was the “time of sliced salmon” and “time of cold”.



Salal berries

- **July** was spent drying clams, catching early salmon and picking blackberries, blackcaps, red huckleberries and red elderberries.
- **August** was a time to dry clams, pick salal berries, eat fresh summer dog and humpy salmon (not good for drying) and hunt for fattened deer.
- **September to October** was focused on the fall salmon runs, the beginning of duck-hunting, and the picking of huckleberries.
- **November** things were winding down except for taking ducks
- **December** was the start of the sacred season, the first games and ceremonies, but they also dug clams and took bottom fish from canoe heated with fires inside.
- **January to February** were spent at ceremonies and visiting
- **March** was the beginning of salmon returning
- **May** was for salmonberries and red elderberries, with some camas dug on Smith Island, steamed or kept dry in a basket
- **June to July** brought salmon trout, with some dried after it was cooked

The Suquamish started making their canoes in the spring and tried to finish them during the summer. They wanted them done before the salmon started to run.

Other foods that were harvested: dog salmon eggs, potatoes, ferns dug and warmed on the fire before being eaten, salmonberry sprouts were peeled and eaten raw, blackberries and cranberries picked and put in deer gut to be placed on a platform over a fire to dry, herring ...

(Jay Miller. 2020. 14)



Ranked Society (unusual in hunter gatherer societies) Northwest Coast nations are called “chieftan societies”

- Status depended mostly on ancestry ... bloodlines.
- Genealogy was important to prove the strength of your blood.
- “Weak blooded people did not have as much to ‘say’ as did a higher ranked person.”
- “The leader of the high-class people only suggested what he wanted done. He let others know so they could help him decide. If the other people decided it was all right to do so, then it would be done. What the majority of them wanted was what they would do.
- Chief Jim Seattle lost the chiefship of the Suquamish when people voted in Chief Jacob Wahelchu. Jim Seattle had inherited the chiefship, but he was quick tempered and easily offended. The people didn’t like that, so they voted for Chief Jacob to be the head man. Jim Seattle still had some “say”, but Chief Jacob had “first say.” In fact, everybody had a “say”. (Jim had become chief after Chief Seattle died in 1866.) (Source: Wilson George, Suquamish elder)
- A low-class man, if he was very smart and good, could become the headman if people chose him.
- There were headmen for different Suquamish areas. Villages were usually made up of two or three extended families who usually camped close together. They would agree on a headman.

High class people had slaves who did work for them such as getting wood and digging clams. Slaves ate by themselves and only after others were done eating. The Suquamish “bought” most of their slaves from the north. In the generation of Chief Kitsap, they might go out and raid for slaves. Northern tribes would come to Puget Sound to raid for slaves. (Wilson George)

(Jay Miller. 2020. 26)



Chief Seattle

- The whole tribe would get together under one head if there was trouble, such as when they were under attack.
 - Kitsap was one such head. Kitsap was chief for the Suquamish. “They had him for chief because he was such a good war leader. An arrow never got through his skin. It glanced off and away.” (Miller. 2020. 27)
 - Seattle was chief for the Duwamish as well as the Suquamish because his mother was Duwamish and his father Suquamish. His tenure as chief included dealing with the treaty between the U.S. government and the tribes.
- “The name Seattle is an Anglicization of the modern Duwamish conventional spelling **Si'ahl**, equivalent to the modern Lushootseed spelling *siʔaʔ* IPA. He is also known as **Sealth**, **Seattle**, **Seathl**, or **See-ahth**.”
- Leader from before 1847 to his death in 1866.

Oregon Territory Donation Land Law of 1850

- Congress passed the Donation Land Law, which allowed citizens of the U.S. to claim land in the Oregon Territory. Before 1850, a white male citizen could claim 320 acres and his wife could claim another 320 acres.
- After 1850 and until 1855, a white male citizen could claim 160 acres and a couple could claim 320 acres.
- (Native Americans were not considered citizens. They could not claim land under the Donation Land Law unless they were “half breed” and a citizen or were “half breed” and had filled out paperwork to become a citizen. Blacks and Hispanics were also not eligible.)
- Claimants had to reside on and make improvements to the land for four years to keep it.

“To meet constitutional requirements, Territorial Delegate Samuel Thurston had told Congress that extinguishing Native title to land was the “first prerequisite step” to settling Oregon’s land question. Therefore, before lawmakers voted for the Donation Land Law, they passed legislation authorizing commissioners to negotiate treaties to extinguish Indian title and to remove tribes ‘and leave the whole of the most desirable portion open to white settlers.’ ” (Oregon Encyclopedia)

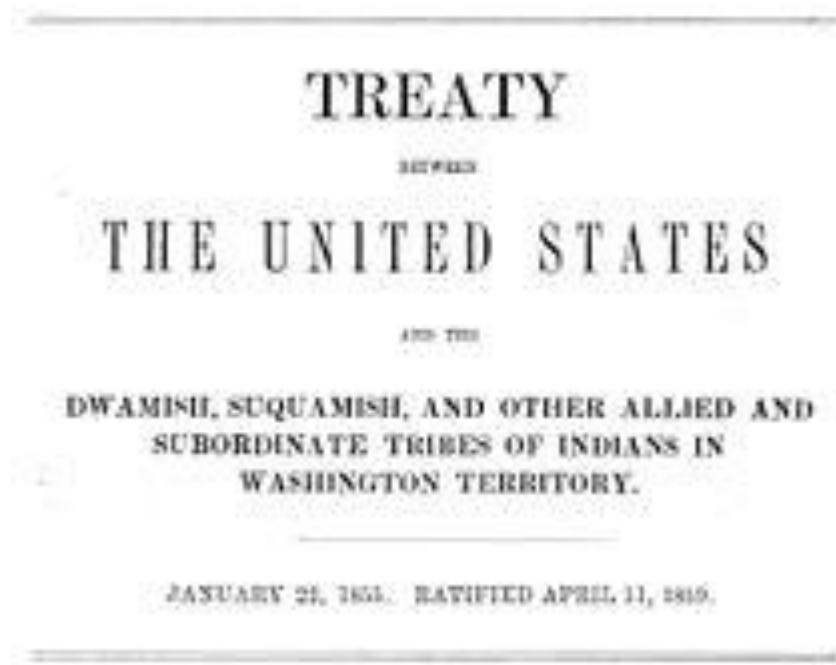
By 1855, white immigrants had claimed 2.5 million acres of land in the Oregon Territory.

(Oregon Encyclopedia)



Land was supposed to be ceded through treaty before being claimed.

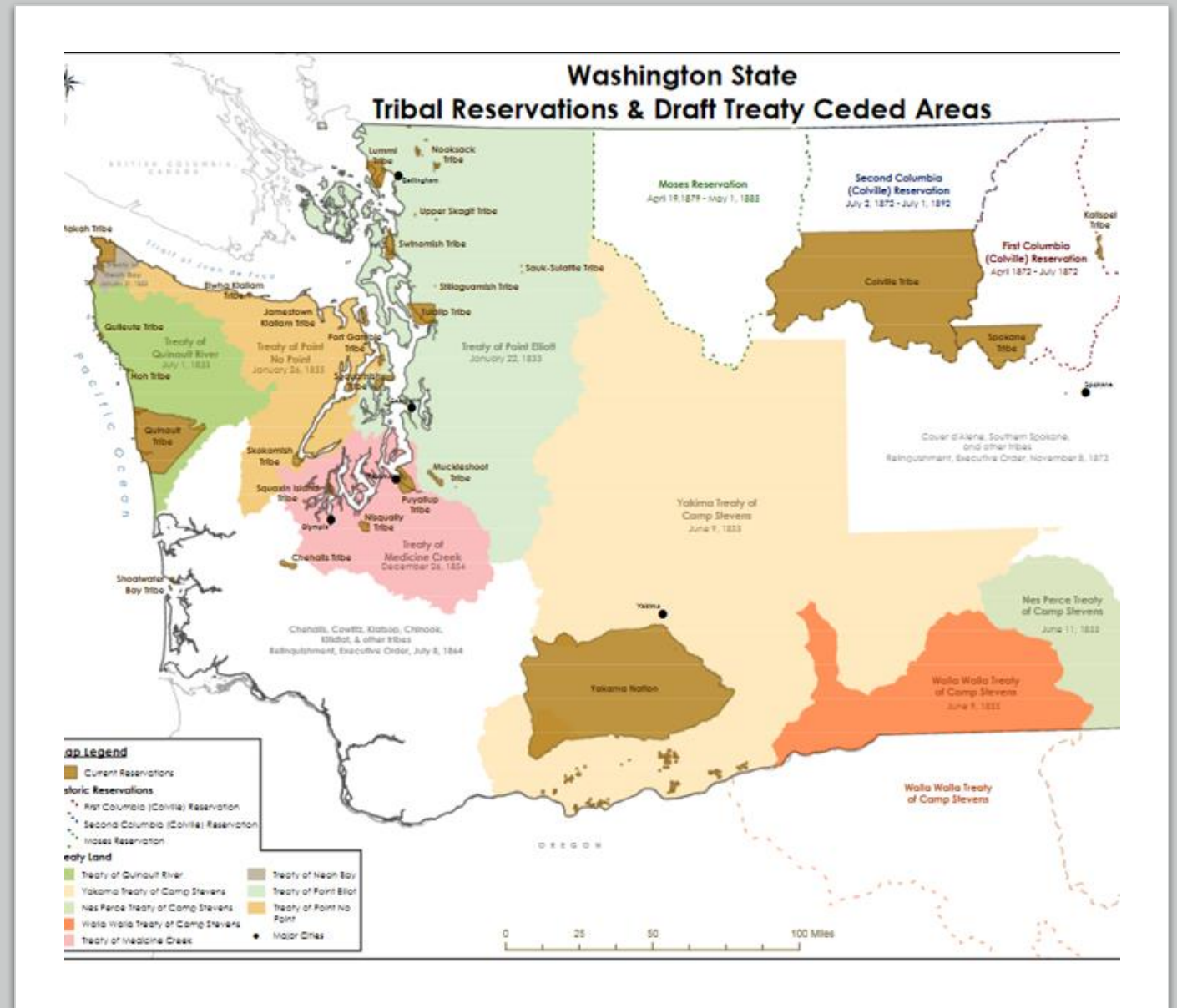
- White Americans began claiming large tracts of land before it was ceded through treaty.
- Lack of treaties did not prevent or hinder newcomers from claiming land.
- The first territorial governor for what is now Washington State, Isaac Stevens, came in 1853 to start the treaty making process.
- While the treaties were to be “negotiated,” most native people at the treaty signings said that the treaties were already created, “a done deal.” The language barrier was also problematic to fair negotiation. *(Historians. Puget Sound Treaty War Panel Discussion 2021.)*
- The treaty with the Suquamish, Snoqualmie, Duwamish, Snohomish, Lummi, Skagit and Swinomish was called the Treaty of Point Elliott, 1855.
- The treaty established the Suquamish Port Madison reservation and the Tulalip, Swinomish, and Lummi reservations. No reservations were created for the Duwamish, Skagit, Snohomish, and Snoqualmie peoples.
- Seattle felt that putting the Suquamish and Duwamish people together at Port Madison would lead to great conflict. Some Duwamish did come to live in Port Madison. The Duwamish were told a reservation would be created for them. It never happened. Non-native men in Seattle signed a petition to prevent a Duwamish reservation, saying it wouldn’t be fair to the non-natives. They claimed that the Duwamish were already treated well by people in Seattle. *(David Buerge, author of Chief Seattle and the Town That Took His Name. 2017. Sasquatch Books)*



Perspective?

Jerry Eckrom, historian and author of *Remembered Drums – A History of the Puget Sound Indian War*

“(What) if a spaceship landed today and little green men came out and said, ‘The great green father says all people in North America need to move. We’ll give you Alberta, how’s that?’ There would be resistance to the end for something like that.”



Brandon Reynon

Puyallup Tribe

“The amount of land that was going to be lost. We were allowed to roam and go about wherever we wanted to visiting family, hunting, fishing wherever we wanted. And then all of the sudden you have Isaac Stevens show up and present us with a treaty that said you can’t do that anymore.

Not only that, but we’re going to take you off of all of the land that you have ever known. We’re going to put you on areas that don’t have access to water, don’t have access to hunting, don’t have access to any of your traditional places, don’t have access to your ancestors. Not only that, you’re going to have to take those ancestors, and the ones we allow you to have access to, you can bury if you can, but the other ones we’re just going to destroy.

On top of that you have the knowledge – and this wasn’t lost on our leaders – that you have 2,000 natives that are going to be forced to live on 1200 acres, yet their white friends that they had helped survive when they got here, now get access to as many as 640 to 1200 acres for one family.

For non-natives, they had the same amount of land that 2,000 natives had. That wasn’t lost on our leadership, how unfair that was. And the knowledge that the treaty is really sending us to death, cutting us off from all resources. It meant starvation.” (2021. Puget Sound Treaty War Panel Discussion. Fort Nisqually Living History Museum)

Annette Bullchild.

Nisqually

It was hard to survive. After the treaty, fear set in for the native people.

Lands that provided for everyday life were fenced off and taken by settlers because of the Donation Land Act. Before the treaty, the people went where the resources were for food, medicine, trees, plants, clothing, and housing. They gathered seasonally for summer gathering camps and winter homes.

So, when the leaders allegedly signed the treaties, by force or because of the language barrier, did they know they were giving up 2.5 million acres or 4,000 square miles of ceded land?

Then being moved to a reservation ... it was understood by the tribal people they could not go to their regular fishing, hunting and gathering grounds. No one explained they would have to move their dead relative from the land they originally lived on. Chief Leschi's body was moved from family land, which was then condemned for the military. Families were located to the reservation. Some are still on reservations. Tribal people were not allowed to use their language and practice their traditional ceremonies. They were to be civilized and left with no tribal identity. Each generation has suffered some kind of historic trauma and struggled to heal. We still deal with alcohol and drug addiction. The more you know, the less you like what our ancestors had to deal with to survive. How the treaty affected my tribe.

There was no understanding from tribal to non-tribal people. All the sudden you couldn't go fish and gather where you used to. Everything was fenced, taken away as the newcomers created their farms.

All of the sudden it was you don't have the basics to survive. How are you supposed to survive?

...

But then you have somebody coming from the east, and they're trying to put you on .. and Nisqually it was a bluff, away from the Nisqually River. We discovered they were putting the people there because it was benefitting the landowner as labor force. The new landowner wanted the Nisqually close so that they could continue to work (for this non-native landowner who got all these acres of land). So, it just wasn't fair all the way around because all of the tribal leaders knew their places, and then when you're forced to go someplace else ... You read a lot of the tribal people's testimonies. "We want to stay where we grew up. We want to die where we grew up. We want to be by our ancestors. Now you want to take us someplace else, but also to another reservation." Mostly river tribes didn't grow up around the salt water. It's a whole different way of life. If you grew up closer to the mountains, that was your life. (2021. Puget Sound Treaty War Panel Discussion. Fort Nisqually Living History Museum)

The treaties

Importantly, the United States did not grant rights to Indians through treaties, Indians reserved rights for themselves. In this, the fledgling United States recognized the sovereignty of the Indian people who were here first and with whom the United States shared the continent.

Witnesses to the treaty negotiations reported that Stevens instructed his interpreter to say, “Tell the chiefs if they don’t sign this treaty, they will walk in blood knee deep.” (*Talbot. Native Nations of North America. 2015. Ch. 7*)

“What About those Promises?” Lummi Nation play about the Treaty of Point Elliott. (3 minute video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zA54BPtSqi0&t=43s>

Longer version

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXTGMn5ytl4&t=24s>

What promises did the United States make in the treaties?

In return for the vast Indian holdings and resources, the United States made certain promises:

- Protection for Indians from attacks upon their lands (this protection included legal assistance).
- Health care
- Education
- Some monies
- Sovereignty and religious freedom
- **Confirmation and protection of certain rights: self-government, fishing and hunting rights, and jurisdiction over their own lands.**
- In particular the treaties reserved exclusive rights to fish within their reservations and rights to fish at all usual and accustomed fishing places.

It is important to remember that these promises were, and still are, legally binding upon the U.S. by the 6th Article of the U.S. Constitution.

Warren KingGeorge

Historian Muckleshoot tribe

Roots that help people understand the indigenous dependency on the land and the value. Value of the land. Not monetary value. More of a relationship of parent. Guardianship with the land and its resources.

So, when we're talking about land, we're not talking about acreage. We're talking literally about a relative. We care that much about it. And that might help people understand why the tribe decided to not go along with Isaac Stevens' *strong suggestions or strong recommendations* that we move, that we pull up our roots our family our children and grandchildren and our elders and we move to this other place forever.

Something like that wouldn't fly today, so there's no reason why it would fly 160 years ago. It's just a ridiculous request to make to anybody. That puts things into perspective and helps people understand what was being asked of the ancestors of that time. Just a horrible thing to do to somebody. That approach and idea and way of thinking, today we still carry that and hold that perspective of the value of the land and what it means to us and what it means to our children and grandchildren, what it's going to mean to them as well. And we're going to teach that continually.

That will echo in our culture forever. And that's one thing that a treaty will never break. Regardless of how many X's or how big a title you have on that piece of paper.

It doesn't matter. Any court case. It doesn't matter. You're not going to separate the traditional people, the first people of this area from the land. They're one and the same. (2021. Puget Sound Treaty War Panel Discussion. Fort Nisqually Living History Museum)

Loss of land due to BIA mismanagement

From the Suquamish website:

- In the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott, Chief Seattle agreed to cede 88,000 acres of Suquamish territory, reserving roughly 8,000 acres in the northern portion of Kitsap County for the Port Madison Indian Reservation.
- By the '1950s, disastrous federal government assimilation and land allotment policies resulted in the sale of more than two-thirds of the reservation out of tribal ownership.
- To counter this loss, the Suquamish Tribe created the "Buy Back the Reservation" initiative in the '1960s. With help from a combination of funds, including profits from Tribally-owned businesses, the Suquamish Tribe has been able to purchase many properties back from private owners.
- *Image depicts an early twentieth century advertisement for cheap land for sale on the Port Madison Indian Reservation.*

Get a Camping Site
at Historic Suquamish

COMMUNITY BEACH AT SUQUAMISH

Just across the street on the Port Madison Indian Reservation, the Company owns 200 acres of dry, fertile land with 1/2 mile of water front.

This land was the old home of Chief Seattle, and is now the heart of the tribe's reservation. The land is perfect for camping, fishing, and other sports.

We will sell you a 1/2 acre camping site with 100 feet of Community Beach, and 100 feet of water front.

\$55
Terms \$5 Cash \$1 per Month

These sites are within easy reach of the Port Madison Indian Reservation. They are perfect for camping, fishing, and other sports. The land is perfect for camping, fishing, and other sports.

Ole Hanson & Co.
TRIED FLOOR NEW YORK BLOCK

A few sources discussing federal land management issues for the Suquamish

- 2020 demonstration
- <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/columnists/2020/06/12/your-turn-change-kitsap-must-embrace-vision-chief-seattle/3173805001/>

End of 50-year lease giving tribe jurisdiction once again over some of its land

- <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/end-of-50-year-lease-means-redemption-for-suquamish/>



Land Acknowledgement

Making Coast Salish Territorial
Acknowledgements Matter

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-
Tei5tGoQ4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Tei5tGoQ4s)

Why Duwamish don't have federal recognition or territory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEmytqji1rY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wENDbxaorQ>

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

Chief Seattle Descendant Speaks Out about Point Elliott Treaty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjzO9Ri-Tdc&t=260s>