

Cascadia Adopts Land Acknowledgement

What is the purpose of a land acknowledgment?

It is almost certain that, if you are living in the U.S. (or nearly any country with a history of colonization), you are living on land that settlers took by force from Indigenous people. You may not have taken it yourself, you may have paid for it, but you are still receiving stolen property. We wish to acknowledge the land of all the Indigenous peoples that has been taken from them/us, by theft, by forced treaty or sale, or by any other means.¹

Land acknowledgments are a first step in bringing Native/tribal/First Nations people who have historically been hyper-invisible and prehistoric into the present time. Native/tribal/First Nations people are here, present, strong, and alive. The "stock story" told in our current U.S. historical context tells a history shrouded in lies; the "concealed stories" need space to be told by Native/tribal/First Nations people.

Land Acknowledgements can be a first step, but are in no way the same as giving stolen land back to Native/tribal/First Nations people. Some efforts have recently been made with the #Landback Activism, but we are not done. We must first acknowledge that land was stolen and begin the long journey of reckoning with white supremacy and its long history of destruction.

Cascadia worked with Sidney Morgan, MA on the development of our statement. More information on Sidney can be found at www.redsearoadconsulting.com

It is the intention of the organization to utilize this statement at the beginning of public events. This statement will also be posted on our website, and on Inside Cascadia for reference.

Cascadia Land Acknowledgement

Print version:

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment.

Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted.

¹(Citylab Article: Native Land Acknowledgments are not the same as land; Authors: Wallace Cleaves (Tongva tribe) is an associate professor of teaching, associate director of the University Writing Program, and director of the California Center for the Native Nations at the University of California Riverside. Charles Sepulveda (Tongva and Acjachemen) is an assistant professor of ethnic studies at the University of Utah.

Truth and acknowledgement are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference.

We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth. The Native communities in Portland and Vancouver, Washington number over 70,000 strong and are descended from over 380 tribes.

We are in the ancestral and occupied lands of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla, and more who may call this place home. We pay respects to the elders past and present.

Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that brings us together here today.

Our land acknowledgement evolves as our own understandings of our work in solidarity to indigenous struggle grows. The land acknowledgment text is adapted from recommendations found in the USDAC guidebook on honoring native land, which can be found at <https://usdac.us/nativeland> with Portland-specific information found at <http://www.up.edu/activities/files/leading-with-tradition.pdf>

Spoken version:

“Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed to their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment.

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