

Treaty Day Resolution

Whereas, On January 22, 1855, the United States of America entered into a solemn agreement with representatives from sovereign nations that came together in Mukilteo and made promises to one another about how they would share the land and resources of this region. The agreement they signed is called the Treaty of Point Elliott;

Whereas, Treaty Day is an important part of ALL of our history it is consequently not just a tribal community event. Every one of us (and those that came before) who lives in this region has benefited from the resources and land that native ancestors have held since time immemorial. All Washingtonians are Treaty people and we would not be a state without the Treaty;

Whereas, The people of the Lummi Nation are among the original inhabitants of the coastal lowlands in what is presently Whatcom and Skagit Counties, and they seasonally migrated among many sites including Point Roberts, Portage Island, sites in the San Juans, and the Lummi Peninsula, and they were forcibly moved to reservation after the Treaty;

Whereas, although the Nooksack Tribe has always been considered one of the groups present at Mukilteo, it was not until 1973 that formal federal recognition of the Nooksack Tribe was achieved. Much of the land was conveyed via the Homestead Act 1875-1885;

Whereas, our traditional history textbooks have ignored or downplayed this important aspect of our shared heritage. Our state has passed legislation that identifies this discrepancy, and we must work together to develop lessons we can use to teach our students the meaning of Treaty Day; and

Whereas, tribal sovereignty and culture predate the treaties and the observance of Treaty Day is an important component of the recognition of Lummi and Nooksack culture and sovereignty.

Therefore be it Resolved that, on January 22, the Whatcom Democrats will honor Treaty Day, and;

That, we encourage Bellingham, Meridian, Lynden, Blaine, Nooksack, and Mt Baker School Districts to follow Ferndale School District's good example and adopt an annual Treaty Day observance working closely with the Nooksack and Lummi Tribal communities.

Adopted at the December 5, 2020 General Membership Meeting of Whatcom Democrats.