



UPON THIS LAND

A Land Acknowledgement Statement

As those of us at Bayside Housing & Services serve this organization and carry out the work of its mission, we recognize and acknowledge that we do so upon land that from time immemorial was the territory in which native people indigenous to this region based their lives. The waters and lands adjacent to what we now know as Port Townsend Bay constituted the tribal home of the Chemakum people (Aqokúlo or Čáməqəm). Their main village was situated near the mouth of Chimacum Creek and the valley beyond it provided the opportunity to fish, hunt and forage for sustenance, harvest materials for structures and watercraft, and offered places to gather as a group for trade, governance and ceremonies. This and surrounding lands in Jefferson County were also significant to several other indigenous tribes, including the S'klallam (Nəx^wsłáyəm).

A life of harmony and balance with nature was disrupted with the appearance of European explorers in the late 1700s. That contact led to the transmission of diseases such as smallpox, diphtheria and measles to the tribes of the northern Olympic Peninsula which caused a population reduction of approximately 90%. White settlers followed in search of new lands, with further negative consequences. This intrusion, backed by the legal and military force of the United States government, set in motion the tragic process of indigenous displacement and deculturation. What followed was one of the gravest wounds that can be inflicted upon people, the misappropriation of their native lands. With the signing of the Point No Point Treaty in 1855, local Indian tribes ceded their land and waters to the United States. White settlement proceeded rapidly afterwards, and the Chemakum tribe shrank to levels of near extinction.

A vital opportunity now presents itself as Bayside Housing & Services situates itself at the shore of Hadlock Bay and refines our organization's focus upon the work we seek to accomplish. We have come to this place with a different purpose, one that we hope will honor this land and those who formerly lived here. It is our profound intention to dedicate this site and our efforts here to the cause of healing lives. Those we assist in this cause are the unhoused and unstably housed people of the Olympic Peninsula, whose state of displacement echoes that which was inflicted upon the original indigenous occupants of this land. We look to mitigate previous injustice and pledge to facilitate opportunities for change, growth and transformation that will enable and empower those who are cast aside to reclaim their proper place in humanity.