



**Land Acknowledgment
&
Additional Resources
to Go Beyond
Acknowledgment**

The map displays the traditional territories of various Native American tribes in the Northeast. The Lenni-Lenape territory is highlighted in a dark green color and covers a large area from the Delaware River in the north to the Chesapeake Bay in the south, and from the Appalachian Mountains in the west to the Atlantic Ocean in the east. Other tribes shown include the Mohawk, Mahican, Esopus, Wappinger, Nochpeeg, Sinsink, Reckga, Wiechquaeskek, Hackensack, New Amsterdam, Pavinia, Tappan, Ramapough, Haverstraw, Delaware, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Naraticonk, Little Siconese, Sewapois, Rankokus, Remkoke, Atsayonck, and Philadelphia. Major water bodies like the Hudson River, Delaware River, and Chesapeake Bay are also labeled. State boundaries for New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland are indicated.

**You are here
on the
traditional
territory of the
Lenni-Lenape**

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at Appel Farm in Elmer, New Jersey**

From LSPiRG.org:

WHAT IS A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

WHY DO WE RECOGNIZE THE LAND?

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial. It is important to understand the long standing history that has brought you to reside on the land, and to seek to understand your place within that history. Land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation. It is also worth noting that acknowledging the land is Indigenous protocol.

Please note the content of this zine is not the definitive word about the Lenape people. They have a very long history and a rich culture that nobody outside of their community can claim an expertise on, but we can continue the process of educating ourselves and support them and other indigenous people in ways that they deem appropriate and necessary.

GRCA Land Acknowledgment

As many of us are settler, immigrants, or descendants of those forcefully brought to this continent, We, the Girls Rock Camp Alliance, must recognize and never forget, that we are occupying the traditional, unceded Lenape lands.

The Lenape territory includes all of New Jersey, northern Delaware, eastern Pennsylvania, and southeastern New York. The Lenape are considered to be one of the oldest tribes in the Northeast, existing for over 10,000 years. In fact, the translation of “Lenape” is “Original People.” They were a peace loving community known for being warriors and diplomats, and often mediated disputes between their neighboring Native Nations and were even hospitable toward the first colonizers. Their once large population was threatened, murdered, and forcibly removed from their lands and pushed westward into Ohio and farther.

Presently, the majority of the Lenape are located in Oklahoma. Both the Delaware nation and the Delaware Tribe of Indians are federally recognized tribes with reservations in Oklahoma. In the New Jersey, the largest Lenape Tribal Nation is located in Bridgeton, Cumberland County, New Jersey. The Nanticoke Lenape tribal grounds, called “Cohanzick,” is located in Fairfield Township, New Jersey. Their elders were able to reclaim these 28 acres and declare them sacred. This is the location of their tribal community center and ceremonial ground. There is still so much land to reclaim. There are no federally recognized tribes in New Jersey while there are only three state-recognized tribes, which include the Nanticoke Lenape, Ramapough, and the Powhatan Renape Nation.

In the GRCA Points of Unity, we state, “Our work is political. We work to dismantle intersecting systems of oppression and acknowledge that they do not affect us all equally. Our work must be led and built by those most impacted by systemic oppression and colonization.” This work cannot begin if we don’t first recognize that the histories we’ve been told in our education system are those from the perspective of the colonizer, not the native groups who have survived many years and attempts of genocide.

This weekend while we gather on these unceded, sovereign lands, we ask you all and ourselves to examine and question the commitment and methods of dismantling systems of oppression if we do not recognize and educate ourselves about the original stewards of this land.

A Brief History of the Lenape

Prior to contact with European colonizers, the Lenape were considered the root of where many of the North American Indian Nations of the Algonquian grew. The Lenape were and still are referred to by other tribes as the “grandfathers” or “ancient ones.”

They were divided in three geographical dialect groups. Munsee is the northern part of their territory with the Unami and the Unalachtigo in the central and southern regions. These clans were matrilineal, meaning the children traced their lineage through their mother. Lenape lived in semi-permanent settlements that could have anywhere from 25 to 300 people. They lived in wigwams, and their food came from hunting/fishing and planting. Food is an important part of their culture as they believed that food was meant to be shared and that nobody should go hungry. The Lenape were honored by their neighboring nations as peacemakers and mediators, but also feared as fierce warriors.

In the early 1600s, the Lenape had their first exposure to colonizers as the Dutch established “New Netherland” in the northern Lenape territories. Not long after, the Swedes and Finns established “New Sweden along the Delaware Bay.” The influx of colonizers caused the Lenape population to decline due to European encroachment, violence, and intentional and unintentional spreading of diseases. The survivors rallied and began to resist colonization, resulting in the start of a war between the Dutch and Lenape in 1639. Additionally, the Dutch, Swedish, and English colonizers were fighting each other over Lenape lands. Dutch colonizers conquered New Sweden, and the English conquered New Netherland. Despite the underestimated strength of the Lenape warriors, between 1620 and 1640, an estimated 90% of the population died from diseases that were purposefully spread to the Lenape.

The remaining Lenape were pushed farther North and West. The Treaty of Easton, signed in 1758, officially forced the Lenape out of present-day New York and New Jersey and into Pennsylvania, Ohio, and into Canada. Then the Indian Removal Act of 1830 removed the majority of the Lenape remaining in the U.S. to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. The U.S. established two reservations in Oklahoma, where the majority of the Lenape remain today.

The Leni-Lenape Today

The **Ramapough Lenape Nation** is also known as the “Keepers of the Pass,” referring to their tribal obligation to guard and protect the mountain passageway, rivers, and valley on their traditional lands. Recently, the Ramapough Lenape Nation have protested the Pilgrim pipeline that would run through their traditional lands. After the Manwah township penalized the Nation with violations for organizing on their traditional land, the Ramapoughs sued the town for violating their rights to access their ancestral land. Additionally, the Ramapoughs were recently acknowledged and reaffirmed as an American Indian Tribe by the State of New Jersey.

The **Nanticoke Leni-Lenape Indian Tribe**, once locally referred to as “Cohansies,” are dedicated to maintaining a strong cultural identity while also encouraging economic development. A language recovery initiative is working on reclaiming their ancestral language, with tribal drummers writing songs in Lenape and Nanticoke. "We're Still Here," a booklet detailing their history, is available for free at www.nanticoke-lenape.info.

Different tribes of Lenape (located outside of NJ):

- The Delaware Nation: Oklahoma, federally recognized
 - <http://delawarenation.com/>
- Delaware Tribe of Indians in Oklahoma: federally recognized
 - <http://delawaretribe.org/>
- Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware, state recognized
 - <http://www.lenapeindiantribeofdelaware.com/>
- Canada:
 - Munsee-Delaware Nation
 - <http://www.munsee.ca/>
 - Delaware Nation at Moraviantown
 - <http://delawarenation.on.ca/>

State recognized in NJ (no federally recognized tribes in NJ)

- Nanticoke Leni-Lenape Tribal Nation, Bridgeton, NJ
 - <http://nanticoke-lenapetribalnation.org/>
- Ramapough Lenape Nation, Mahwah, NJ
 - <https://ramapoughlenapenation.org/>
- The Powhatan Renape Nation, Rancocas, NJ
 - <http://www.powhatan.org/>

Unrecognized tribe in NJ:

- The Southern New Jersey Taino Tribe: Vineland, NJ
 - <http://www.taino-tribe.org/jatiboni.html>

Beyond Acknowledgment

Questions to ask ourselves:

How can you disrupt settler colonialism and center Indigenous perspectives?

How can you challenge internalized colonial ideology?

What stereotypes/beliefs about Native people do you or acquaintances perpetuate?

Action items:

Get involved and learn about tribes/nations in your region.

Support their resistance, further their causes, engage with tribal members year-round, instead of just in November

Attend cultural events (when appropriate): Use

<https://www.powwows.com/> to find Pow Wows in your state.

Support the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women Movement (MMIW):

<https://www.nativewomenswilderness.org/mmiw>

Center Indigenous Voices & Stories

All My Relations podcast: <https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/> Podcast hosted by 2 Indigenous women who discuss various topics, such as: Indigenous feminisms, food sovereignty, Native mascots, DNA testing.

Books

Why Indigenous Literatures Matter by Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation)

There There by Tommy Orange (Cheyenne and Arapaho)

An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

Poetry

Whereas by Layli Long Soldier (Oglala Lakota)

Walking with Ghosts by Qwo-Li Driskill (non-citizen Cherokee Two-Spirit)

Activists/Social Media

Native Appropriations by Dr. Adrienne Keene (Cherokee Nation): @nativeappropriations

Dallas Goldtooth: @dallasgoldtooth

Corinne Oestreich: @misscorinne86

Photographers/Artists

Matika Wilbur's Project 562: Indigenous photography project: @project_562

Gregg Deal (@greggdeal): activist art

Miskwaa Designs: @miskwaadesigns

J NiCole Hatfield Art: @jnicolehatfieldart

Musicians: A Tribe Called Red, Supaman, Frank Waln, Raye Zaragoza

Native-Owned business: <http://www.beyondbucks.com/p/buy-native.html>

Films:

RUMBLE: The Indians who Rocked the World, directed by Catherine Bainbridge, a feature documentary about the role of Native Americans in popular music history.

Mankiller [2017], directed by Valerie Red-Horse Mohl, a film about Wilma Mankiller, the Cherokee Nation's first woman Principal Chief.

More than a Word [2017], directed by Kenn & John Little, a film that analyzes the issues surrounding the Washington team name and mascot, and the history of Native American cultural appropriation.

Tribal Justice(2017), directed by Anne Makepeace, documentary about two Native American women both chief judges in their tribe's courts, strive to reduce incarceration rates and heal their people by restoring rather than punishing offenders, modeling restorative justice in action.

Annual Native American Film Festival:

Pocahontas Reframed "Storytellers" Festival <http://pocahontasreframed.com/>

To learn more about land acknowledgments:

"Are you planning to do a Land Acknowledgement?"

<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2019/03/are-you-planning-to-do-land.html>

This blog post is a must read before you embark on writing a land acknowledgment. It provided us with many guidelines in investigating our intentions and methods of creating this zine to supplement the land acknowledgment for this year's conference.

Native Land <https://native-land.ca/>

This site features an interactive map that shows you which indigenous and aboriginal groups are native to lands all over the world. You search by address, languages, and treaties. This site also engages you to think critically about the map itself and provides more context and resources for territory acknowledgments. Disclaimer from the site: "This map does not represent or intend to represent official or legal boundaries of any Indigenous nations. To learn about definitive boundaries, contact the nations in question. Also, this map is not perfect -- it is a work in progress with tons of contributions from the community." Despite this, this site can be useful in getting a start, an idea about which ancestral lands may be in your area.

Beyond Territorial Acknowledgments

<https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>

It's not enough to make a statement if it's not followed by calls for introspection and action. This site reviews the practice of territorial acknowledgments and asks the hard questions about the real work that must follow your words.

Know the Land <http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland/>

This website has a very straightforward definition and explanation of land acknowledgment that we used in this zine. Read their publication titled "Indigenous Allyship: An overview" as well.

"I regret it": Hayden King on writing Ryerson University's territorial acknowledgement"

<https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.4973371>

Mistakes and regrets can be useful moments to learn from. Read this Q&A with Hayden King, an Anishinaabe writer, to learn about an easy mistake to make when approaching land acknowledgments.