OREGON TIMELINE: Events & History of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians

Before Current Era:

6000 BCE	Carbon test dating established evidence of a Coos village at Tahkenitch Lake.
5465 BCE	Carbon Testing established the presence of human inhabitation on the southern Oregon Coast.
1000 BCE	Carbon Testing established the presence of a Lower Umpqua village near the mouth of the Umpqua River. Faunal remains evidence that grizzly bears once live in this area. This site is now known as Umpqua Eden and is located near present-day Winchester Bay. All of these villages supported Indigenous life with an abundance of resources that the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw protected, harvested and lived a sustainable life.

Current Era:

1542-43	**Spanish Explorers** arrive on the southern Oregon Coast. They do not land, but they record their expeditions.
1600	There are established **Native American villages** in Oregon, but written history is sparse. European writings determined that there was plenty of food, and other resources, to support thousands of Indigenous People in western Oregon.
Jan. 26, 1700	**Cascadia Earthquake** (9.0) occurs and a subsequent tsunami dramatically changed the face of the Oregon Coast.
1791	Captain James Baker is the **1st white man** to record entering Umpqua River and Lower Umpqua territory. He recorded trading with local Indigenous People.
Nov. 15, 1805	**Lewis and Clark** Expedition reached the Pacific Ocean. Their journals record meeting/seeing Coos Indians.
1824	Continued contact with Europeans expose Indigenous People to new diseases. **Smallpox** disease wipes out an entire ***hanis*** village at Temile Lakes.
1836	A **Measles** epidemic killed 1,200 at Coos village of 2,000, leaving 800 surviving members.

1846	Oregon Territory is established by the **Oregon Territory Organic Act**. England transfers their interest in the Oregon territory to the US. The Act specifically acknowledges Indian's rights to the land.
Sept. 27, 1850	**Oregon Homestead Act:** A law that granted 320 acres of designated areas for free to every unmarried, white male citizen 18 and older and 640 acres to every white, married couple arriving in the Territory before Dec. 1, 1850. This law was specifically designed to benefit settlers coming into the Oregon Territory and to dispossessed Indigenous People of their lands. Millions of acres of Indigenous land were claimed by settlers. Settlers came to farm and their planting of new crops caused great destruction to Indigenous food sources and locations. Additionally, the new, domesticated animals both ate the plants and disrupted food locations with their hooves.
Jan. 7, 1852	**Reedsport** Community is established on the Umpqua River Estuary (incorporated as a city in 1919). European settlers were drawn to land at the estuaries, leading to the displacement of many Indigenous people already living on those lands.
1853	A Land Claim was filed by Charles Haskell for **Charleston,** Oregon and it remains an unincorporated community today.
May 1853	First White European settlement is established in Coos County and is named **Empire City**. The continued immigration of settlers/colonists into local areas pushed Indigenous People further and further from their villages and traditional food location sources.
July 1853	**Gold** is discovered at Whiskey Run Beach north of the Coquille River. The Tribes called this beach ***wetl'almas.***
1866	**Placer Act:** First legal act recognizing mining rights ad extended protections to miners in southern Oregon. Miners were granted both rights to mine streams and downstream and the legal status to lands on which they had been squatting. The discovery of gold caused more Europeans to come into the area, resulting in further disruption and displacement of local Indigenous

residents. Miners took over streams and creeks to search for gold. Mining practices destroyed fresh water resources.

1855 — Indian Agent Joel Palmer entered into **Treaties** between the U.S. Government and Oregon Tribes. The Government promised the Tribes goods and payment for lands in their local areas if they would leave those lands for European settlements. The Treaty agreed to pay the Tribes for their lands and provide food, clothing, education, employment and health benefits.

The Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw signed their Treaty and acted in good faith, agreeing to leave their lands for identified settlements. But, the Federal Government ignored their own treaty and the Tribes were never received any payments for lands or resources that were taken.

The Treaties caused additional hardship for the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw. They were moved off of the lands they had cared for and lived on for centuries.

August 1856 — The **Rogue War** broke out in Southern Oregon, near present day Medford (175 miles from the Coos Tribe). Local settlers feared the Coos Indians would join in the hostilities and rise up against them. Even though the Coos People had no part of this dispute and did not ever act with aggression toward the local communities, they were "rounded up" and "corralled" in a holding area at Empire City (present-day Coos Bay).

1857 — **Forced Removal** begins: The ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** Coos were forcibly removed from Empire City to Fort Umpqua at Umpqua Eden (near Winchester Bay). This Removal March covered a distance of about 23 miles through dense forested lands with only the few personal and household possessions that they could carry. The Lower Umpqua People were forced from their homes to the same area (about 12-15 miles). About 125 Lower Umpqua and 254 Coos were held at this location. This village had historically been able to support and accommodate a much smaller number of inhabitants.

Feb. 14, 1859 — Oregon is granted **Statehood**. Statehood led to the rapid increase in settlers, causing forced displacement of Indigenous People and massive land loss. Dramatic increases in disease introduction and violence also occurred causing loss of life. Indigenous People were moved off their homelands and onto small Reservations, which were very much like prisons.

1859-60 — **Forced Removal** continues: Oregon Trail of Tears.

	The Coos and Lower Umpqua were removed from their homes at Fort Umpqua and marched north to the Coast Reserve (near present day Yachats). Along the way some members of the Siuslaw Tribe were removed from their homes and forced marched with the Coos and Lower Umpqua to the Alsea Sub-Agency of the Coast Reserve. They walked over 50 miles with only what personal items they could carry. Conditions at the Alsea Sub-Agency were deplorable, without adequate shelter, food or clothing. Over half of those removed died in the first 5 years after removal.
1860-70	The Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw spent many years at the Alsea sub-Agency clearing lands, building homes and trying to grow crops. There were not sufficient resources, such as food, clothing or housing materials.
1874	**Marshfield,** Oregon became the first incorporated town in Coos County (name changed to Coos Bay on 2-15-1945).
1876	The U.S. Government closed the Alsea sub-Agency, opening it for non-Indigenous settlement and homesteading. Tribal members were "released" from government imprisonment and told to leave to either return to their homelands or go north to the Siletz Reservation. However, the homelands had been changed forever: their homes no longer existed, their Indigenous crop locations had been destroyed and they did not have income or employment.
1883	**Code of Indian Offenses passed**: A set of Federal Laws that restricted all Indigenous People in the United States from practicing their Religion or engaging in sacred, ceremonial or cultural events and activities. The laws prohibited traditional medical practices and redefined Indigenous marriages to strictly conform with Euro-Christian practices. Burial and gift-giving practices were also prohibited. Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People who engaged in Religious or Ceremonial activities were subject to criminal punishment.
1886	**Union Bench** was established as a community (renamed **Mapleton** in 1901 and incorporated as a city in 1948).
Feb. 10, 1893	The City of **Florence,** Oregon is incorporated.
Dec. 28, 1903	**North Bend** city is incorporated.
1916	The Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Tribes had been consolidated together since removal, but they became officially **confederated** as one Tribal group with a vote. A formal Tribal government was elected.

1919	The city of **Reedsport**, Oregon was incorporated.
Feb. 15, 1945	Marshfield, Oregon is renamed to **Coos Bay.**
Aug. 13, 1954	**Western Oregon Termination Act:** This Act stopped all federal recognition of 56 Bands of Western Oregon Indians, including the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw. The Tribe and members lost all lands and federal programs, funding and services. They were no longer considered Native American by the US Government or the State of Oregon. Even though the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians were not recognized by the U.S. Government, they continued to meet monthly and act like a Tribal Government and struggled for 30 years in an effort to regain Federal Recognition status.
1964	**Empire** (City) was consolidated with Coos Bay.
Oct.17, 1984	The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians are **Restored** to Federal status after many, many years of perseverance. They are once again recognized as Indigenous Americans. There are about 1,350 members of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw who are again able to participate in Federal programs, funding and services. The Tribes serve their members from their main office in Coos Bay, and satellite offices in Florence and Eugene. The Tribe operates a number of Programs on Tribal and public lands, including housing, social services, culture and language development, elder's services, health and dental clinics, and natural resources protection (invasive species removal, re-introduction of Indigenous plants, re-introduction of Indigenous forestry practices).
2002	First large scale business of the Tribes, **Three Rivers Casino**, opened in Florence, OR.
2010	A **Culture Center and Museum** was opened at the Confederated Tribes Tribal Hall in Coos Bay, OR .
2015	**Three Rivers Casino**, Coos Bay opened in the city's Empire district.
2018	**Western Oregon Tribal Fairness Act** returned 14,000 acres of land to the Tribe for economic and forestry development.