Oregon's Trail of Tears: The Forced Removal of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians

The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians are a Federally recognized Tribe of Oregon, consisting of 3 Tribes (4 bands, based on language). The 3 Tribes are: ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** Coos, today known as Coos; ***quiich,*** today known as Lower Umpqua; and ***sha'yuushtl'a,*** today known as Siuslaw. These people have lived along the southern Oregon coast territories since time immemorial. Their respective lifeways encouraged activities with neighbors such as social ceremonies, trading, hosting, and intermarriage.

The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians experienced significant forced removals and displacement from their ancestral homelands beginning in 1856 and continuing through 1861. The forced marches led from their homelands first to encampments in Coos Bay and at Fort Umpqua and then to the Alsea Sub-Agency reservation (near present-day Yachats, Oregon). This removal is often called Oregon's "Trail of Tears." The "Trail of Tears" resulted in substantial deaths and the disruption of a traditional way of life.

Non-Indigenous People had been coming into the southwestern Oregon coast since the 1820's. They came first for the fur trade and in the early 1850's moved into logging, milling, and shipbuilding. Natural harbors and waterways were sought after for travel and trade. Indigenous People mostly lived on and close to the rivers and streams. The settlers wanted to build an overland road into the Willamette Valley from the Oregon Coast, and they wanted more land for their own settlements and to build railways.

The Indigenous People did not want to leave their homes. They tried hard to hide from the Military men to prevent being captured and then removed to some place that they did not know. This hiding and finding went on for several months. Those who were captured or "rounded up" from their homes were held in local "encampments". While held in the encampments, Indigenous People were not allowed to leave and could not access their homes or food supplies. Because the U.S. Government did not provide enough food or resources, many people experienced hunger and starvation while they waited for the forced marches to begin.

1855: A man named Joel Palmer journeyed across Oregon, meeting with Indigenous communities to negotiate an agreement that would allow the Indigenous Tribes of the Oregon Coast to relocate from ancestral homelands to reservation lands. This agreement was called the Oregon Coast Tribes Treaty of 1855. This treaty intended to relocate the Indigenous People of the Oregon Coast to lands less sought after by settlers. A Treaty was negotiated between Agent Palmer and the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People and was sent to the Federal government, who ultimately did not ratify (approve) or honor the treaty. The Treaty stated:

> *"*You will leave a valuable country, but the United States Government will pay you for it as soon as you Indians move. You Indians will be paid for the timber, for the land the river, coal, and gold." It was then that an Indigenous man called "Smart Man" came from the audience and placed an old basket in front of General Palmer saying: "If this big Man will fill this basket with gold, then maybe we will learn to use the land, and I will then sell my land."

1856: Some Indigenous Tribes of Southern Oregon engaged in a conflict known as the "Rouge River War" (Takelma, Shasta, Tututni, Upper Umpqua, Klamath and Cow Creek). This conflict caused tensions between Euro-American settlers and the Indigenous Tribal communities of Oregon. Even though the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw did not enter into the conflict,

people feared they would also take up arms against non-Indigenous settlers. Beginning in 1856, the ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** Coos People were removed from their homes in the Empire and Charleston areas and placed in encampments in the Coos Bay area. The ***hanis*** *and* ***miluk*** Coos People were moved to Fort Umpqua beginning in the Spring of 1856. The ***quiich,*** Lower Umpqua People, joined the Coos at Fort Umpqua.

1856-1859: Life at Fort Umpqua:
Life at Fort Umpqua was very difficult. Many people experienced hunger, illness, harsh living conditions, and the loss of freedom. Fort Umpqua was a military post where the Coos and Lower Umpqua people were held under guard and separated from their homelands. The sandy peninsula made farming virtually impossible, and the Army men contributed to the suffering of the Indigenous People by introducing diseases and providing the Indigenous people with alcohol. They were all held as prisoners at the Fort to prevent them from engaging in hostilities in their local areas or entering the Rogue River War. The site of Fort Umpqua is near present-day Winchester Bay, Oregon.

The Coos and Lower Umpqua worked to maintain community life and continue traditions they had practiced in their homelands, but it was difficult. They could not leave the reservations' lands to secure materials for homes, clothing, baskets, and food. The U.S. Government encouraged them to become farmers and adopt a more European lifestyle. However, the land was sandy and not well suited for farming or growing grass for grazing. Frequently, there was crop failure, resulting in food deprivation for those living there. Also, the U.S. Government did not authorize funding for support of the Indigenous People that had been moved there, causing additional suffering.

In 1956, Agent Joel Palmer secured land further north of the Coastal Reservation. The Alsea Sub-Agency tract was also added to the Coast Reserve, with its boundaries being from the Alsea River to north of Yachats. All the improvements to this land (clearing, buildings) were completed by Indigenous labor.

1857: E.P Drew who was the Indian Sub-Agent, recognized the suffering of the Indigenous People. He recognized that they could not leave the designated land to secure food and supplies, and he attempted to secure additional funding for resources. Sadly, he received very little funding and could not obtain enough food to meet people's needs. E.P. Drew also recognized that the U.S. Government had no legal authority to hold the Tribes at Fort Umpqua since the Government had not ratified (approved) their Treaty. He brought these matters to the attention of his superiors, and this caused the Government to seek additional responses to the problem. Government officials decided to move the Coos and Lower Umpqua people again. They would be forced to march north to the Alsea Sub-Agency.

February 14, 1859: The land known as the "Oregon Territory" was admitted into the Union, with Oregon then becoming the 33rd state. The Oregon Territory had been home to many Indigenous People and Tribes long before becoming a state of the United States of America.

1859: The Coos and Lower Umpqua People began their second forced removal. They were again forced to leave the homes and community they had built at Fort Umpqua and marched, barefoot, to the Alsea Sub-Agency (north of present-day Yachats). They could take only what they could carry. This was a 70+ mile march through thick forests and on ocean beaches when the tide was out.

1861: Some Siuslaw people were also removed to the Alsea Sub-Agency, but since they were the furthest north-living Tribe, the distance of their forced march removal was not as great. Once removed, all the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People were imprisoned in a stockade with the loss of freedom to move about and hunt or gather food.

1860-1875: Life at the Alsea Sub-Agency:
Life at the Sub-Agency was hard. The Indigenous People were prisoners, not being allowed freedom of movement. Just like Fort Umpqua, they were encouraged to stop traditional ways of living and instead adopt Euro-American farming practices, religions, housing styles, and customs. During this time, the U.S. Government was adopting laws to outlaw Indigenous languages, ceremonies, and cultural activities. Many people tried to keep their historic culture, language, and ceremonies alive, often at risk of punishment.

The Indigenous People living at the Alsea Sub-Agency tried to adapt to life as farmers, learning to grow turnips and potatoes. They were not always allowed to keep the foods they grew and harvested, leading to food insecurity. Whenever possible, families supplemented their food with traditional foods such as berries, roots, and fish. Again, rations from the U.S. Government were often in short supply.

Life as prisoners of the Alsea Sub-Agency lasted for 17 years for the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw. During this time, over 50% of the People held at the Sub-Agency died due to poor living conditions, mistreatment, and lack of access to food. Many People had already died on the forced march to Fort Umpqua and then to the Alsea Sub-Agency.

1875: The Alsea Sub-Agency portion of the Coast Reserve was taken from the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians by an Act of Congress so that they now cleared lands could be used for Euro-American settlement. The Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw living on this portion of the Reserve were again forced from their lands. The Indigenous People were not provided for, given other lands, nor given clear instructions as to what they were to do or what was to happen to them.

Those Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw people residing at the Sub-Agency area were given the “option” to go further north to Coastal Reserve lands or return to their original homelands. No transportation or other support was offered to those who were not moving north- they were simply told to leave the Sub-Agency area. Their land and homes were now gone, having been homesteaded by settlers or taken for timber and other resources.

1876: The Alsea Sub-Agency is completely closed. The Government called the action of closing the southern end a “Release” of residents, rather than another forced removal or forced taking of their land.

Those who had been “Rounded Up, Removed, and Released” were now homeless and became wanderers, settling wherever they happened to find space. They took whatever work they could find, including hard labor and menial or part-time jobs. Despite all the difficulties, the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People actively maintained their tribal community and identities. Even if they could not live in their original homelands, they often settled on lands in proximity to one another and held monthly gatherings and traditional and ceremonial activities.

Records about Indigenous people were often incomplete, and many experiences were never written down. Because of this, much of what we know today comes from military diaries, Tribal testimony, and family oral histories.

There are no accurate records for the exact number of losses of human life during the removals. Mistreatment, harsh conditions, exhaustion, starvation, and diseases all took their toll. It is estimated that the population of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People removed was reduced from the thousands to a few hundred.

Impacts of Removal:

- Loss of Life
- Forced Displacement
- Separation from family
- Starvation (inadequate food supplies and changes in diet foods)
- Relocation
- Loss of Community & Community Support
- Mistreatment (physical abuses and punishments)
- Prevention from practicing Religion/Ceremonies
- Loss of Freedom (Imprisonment in the stockade at the Reserve)
- Loss of traditional hunting and gathering (farming was unsuitable at the Reserve)
- Failure by the Government to provide promised compensation for removal and taking of their homelands

Removal Narrative – 1: Amanda Du-Cuys (DeCuis)
Amanda Trail Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxMGQ1aBiJQ

Amanda Du-Cuys was an Indigenous Coos woman who was born in the Coos homelands. No exact date of birth was recorded, but historians believe she was born sometime in the 1820's. Amanda was blind and lived near the South Coos River with her white husband, Ammon Pangle Decuis (De-Cuys), and their young daughter, Julia.

During Removal, some Indigenous people who were married to non-Indigenous spouses were allowed to remain in their home communities. Amanda was not. Because her marriage was not recognized by government officials, Amanda was forcibly separated from her family and removed from the Coos Bay area.

Amanda remained in her homeland longer than many others, but in 1864 soldiers arrived to remove the remaining Indigenous people from the area. Her removal was recorded in the diary of Corporal Royal H. Bensell, a soldier who was ordered to gather Indigenous people and march them north to the Alsea Sub-Agency near present-day Yachats.

On May 1, 1864, soldiers traveled up the South Coos River looking for Indigenous families to remove. When Amanda was taken, she asked to see her daughter, Julia. Bensell recorded what he witnessed:

> "I was shocked to see this little girl throw her arms around old Amanda De-Cuys neck and cry, 'clihime MaMa' [dear Mama] and 'don't leave me, Mama.'"

A few days later, Amanda was among a group of thirty-two Indigenous people who were forced to walk approximately seventy-five miles north to the Alsea Sub-Agency. For many students today, that would be about the distance from Coos Bay to Eugene. The journey followed rugged stretches of the Oregon Coast, including the cliffs near Heceta Head and Cape Perpetua. Amanda completed the march even though she was blind. Bensell recorded:

> "Amanda who is blind tore her feet horribly over these ragged rocks, leaving blood sufficient to track her by. One of the Boys led her around the dangerous places."



Very little is known about Amanda's life after she arrived at the Alsea Sub-Agency. Historical records show that she survived Removal and returned to the Coos Bay area after the reservation closed. In the 1880 United States Census, Amanda was recorded as living in Coos Bay in the home of Susan Jackson Waters, a Coos woman.

Amanda's exact date of death is unknown. Although only a few records of her life survive, those records help us understand the experiences of Indigenous families during Removal. Amanda's story reminds us that Removal affected real people, families, and communities.

Today, Amanda is remembered through Amanda's Trail in Yachats. The trail honors Amanda and all Indigenous People who were force-marched almost 80 miles from their homes to a military concentration camp. A statue, adorned with remembrances and offerings, sits at one end of the trail in a location known as Amanda's Grotto.

Removal Narrative – 2: Annie Miner Peterson

Annie, ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** Coos, was born in 1860 at ***wu'lea'aench*** (Willanch Slough) in the village of her family. This village name translates to "good weather place" and is near the present-day community of Cooston, near Coos Bay, Oregon. Her Indigenous name is ***ts'mii-xwn (***translation: Tricky [like Coyote]). Annie was born just as the forced removal of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw People was beginning.

Annie's mother, named Matilda in English, was ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** Coos. Her father, James Miner, was a non-Indigenous settler. When she was still an infant, Annie and her mother were forced to leave their homeland and were marched north along the Oregon Coast to the Alsea Sub-Agency. Annie never met her father.

As Annie grew up, she experienced many of the hardships of life at the Alsea Sub-Agency. Food was often scarce, and armed soldiers restricted where people could go. Annie was also sometimes treated differently because she was of both Indigenous and settler ancestry.

Annie spent her childhood in a place that was very different from the traditional Coos villages where her family had lived for generations. Removal separated her community from many of the rivers, estuaries, gathering places, and community relationships that had supported their way of life. As she grew up, Annie witnessed how people adapted to living in a place where they were not free to travel, hunt, fish, gather foods, or live in the ways they had before Removal.

Even in these difficult circumstances, Annie learned and thrived in many ways. At the Alsea Sub-Agency, she grew up surrounded by people speaking many languages. She spoke both ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** from a young age and later learned Alsea, *Chinuk WaWa*, and English. Her family continued participating in Indigenous ceremonies while living at the Sub-Agency, even though many Indigenous cultural practices were being discouraged and later outlawed by the United States government. Annie learned stories, songs, dances, and cultural teachings from Elders and carried this knowledge with her throughout her life.

When the Alsea Sub-Agency closed in 1875, Annie was forced to move again. She and her family chose to move north to Coast Reservation at Siletz. During her lifetime, Annie lived in several places in Oregon, including areas near the Siletz River, the Siuslaw River, and Portland, before eventually returning to her ancestral homeland near Coos Bay.



Throughout her life, Annie worked many different, and often difficult, jobs to support her family. She also continued practicing and sharing knowledge. She was a skilled basket weaver and a speaker of multiple languages.

In 1933 and 1934, Annie worked with anthropologist Melville Jacobs to preserve her languages, stories, songs, and cultural knowledge. She was one of the few

remaining speakers of both ***hanis*** and ***miluk*** and is credited with helping preserve the ***miluk*** language for future generations

Annie's stories, songs, and descriptions of what life was like during their imprisonment on the Reservations has been invaluable to the history of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Tribes. Her recordings, stories, songs, and descriptions of life during Removal and imprisonment at the reservation continue to help people learn about the history, languages, traditions, and experiences of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw people.

Annie lived her later years in her ancestral homeland near Coos Bay. She and her husband, Carl Peterson, both died of tuberculosis in 1939. Annie had one child who survived to adulthood. Because Annie shared her language, stories, songs, and experiences, future generations continue to learn from her today.

Removal Narrative - 3: James Buchanan

James Buchanan was a ***hanis*** Coos and Upper Coquille Indian who was born around 1845 at the ***hanis*** Coos village of ***wu'alach*.** His Indigenous name was ***tselel***, which means "worn-out knife" or "small old knife."

James Buchanan experienced many important events in the history of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw People. As a child he witnessed the Treaty of Empire in 1855 and later survived Removal to Fort Umpqua and the Alsea Sub-Agency. Throughout his life, he became a respected leader, cultural teacher, historian, and advocate for his People.

In 1931, more than 75 years after the Treaty of Empire, James Buchanan gave testimony in support of Tribal claims against the United States. His testimony provides a rare first-person account of promises made during treaty negotiations, life during Removal, conditions at Fort Umpqua and the Alsea Sub-Agency at Yachats, and the experiences of the People who lived through those events.

The words that follow are excerpts from James Buchanan's own testimony, recorded in 1931. They are presented here because they provide an important firsthand account of this history.

When James Buchanan was young, he attended a Council meeting between Tribal leaders and Joel Palmer, a representative of the United States government. Joel Palmer had come to negotiate a treaty that would remove Oregon Tribes from their homelands on the Oregon Coast.

James Buchanan remembered hearing many promises about what would happen if the people agreed to move. Joel Palmer promised payment for Tribal homelands and resources. He also recalled a respected Tribal leader known as “Smart Man” questioning whether such promises would be kept. “Smart Man” placed a basket in front of Joel Palmer and replied:

> “If this big man or United States Government fills this basket with gold as it is a big thing for you white men-and we might learn the value of this land and how to use it, then I will move.”

James Buchanan remembered that Tribal families were also promised schools for their children, support from Government Agents, and good treatment after they relocated.

During the Empire Treaty making time, a conflict called the Rogue River War was happening in southern Oregon. Although the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw people did not participate in the conflict, government officials feared they might join it. The Agents thought this would be a good time to remove the Tribal People from their homelands and community. As part of their forced removal, Tribal families were rounded up, separated from their homes and food supplies, and marched to Fort Umpqua, a military post near present-day Winchester Bay. There, soldiers guarded them and restricted their freedom. James Buchanan later remembered, "we became prisoners."

James Buchanan explained:

> "The Government fearing that we might join with the Rogue River Indians put us under guard of soldiers at Fort Umpqua, and we became prisoners. We never had any intentions of joining with the Rogue River Indians, but have always been peaceful. We have never had any trouble with the whites."

After years at Fort Umpqua, the Coos and Lower Umpqua People were forcibly removed again. This time they were marched north to the Alsea Sub-Agency, which is near present-day

Yachats. Life there was very different from the homelands where their families had lived since time immemorial. People were separated from many of the rivers, estuaries, villages, and seasonal gathering places that had sustained them for generations. They could no longer freely travel to hunt, fish, gather foods, or collect materials in the ways they had before Removal.

Despite these hardships, people continued to draw upon generations of Tribal knowledge. They adapted to new circumstances, cared for one another, shared knowledge, and found ways to continue providing food for their communities whenever possible.

James Buchanan remembered:

> "They hunted and fished. They hunted deer and elk. They caught perch, flounders, eel and salmon."

James Buchanan also remembered that some of the promises made before Removal were never fulfilled.

> "We failed to receive our monthly rations, and no school was built nor any school held."

Even after experiencing removal, confinement, hunger, and broken promises, the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw people remained a community. Families continued to support one another, maintain their identities, and pass knowledge to future generations. James Buchanan later dedicated his life to sharing Tribal history, language, and culture so that those stories would not be forgotten. When the Alsea Sub-Agency closed, James Buchanan did not have a home to which he could return. Instead, he moved to the Siuslaw River and lived with others who were displaced by the Sub-Agency closure.

James Buchanan died in 1933, at about 87– 88 years old, at Cushman (just east of Florence). He continues to be an important teacher today. As a survivor of Removal, leader, historian, and cultural informant, he shared knowledge about Tribal history, language, homelands, and culture so that future generations could learn from it. His words, testimony, and ecordings continue to be used and valued in both Tribal and academic settings



In 1909, James Buchanan worked with linguist Leo Frachtenberg to document the Coos language, stories, genealogy, village locations, and cultural practices. These recordings and writings continue to help Tribal members, educators, historians, and researchers learn about Coos history and language today.

Frank Drew, ***hanis*** Coos, was born at the Alsea Sub-Agency. When it closed in 1875, he moved with his family to the Siuslaw River area. Fluent in ***hanis, sha'yuushtla'a, quuiich,*** Chinook Jargon, and English, he was reter and cultural recorder. In 1931, he interpreted James Buchanan's uchanan's experiences and knowledge could be shared and preserved. He oos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw history, language, and culture.

Together, James Buchanan, Frank Drew, and others helped preserve Tribal history, language, and cultural knowledge that continue to teach and inform people today.

Removal Narrative - 4: Tarheel

Tarheel, ***miluk*** Coos, was born, raised, and lived on South Slough near present-day Charleston, Oregon. His family, community, and ancestral homeland were located in this area. Much of what is known about Tarheel comes from family stories and military journals recorded during the period of forced removal of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People. The written records are sparse, as Indigenous People's lives did not have the same value, and their names and histories are not accurately recorded.

There is no record of the date of Tarheel's birth or death. He was alive and a married man at the time of the 1856 forced removal, so perhaps he was born around 1820-25. He lived at the Alsea Sub-Agency from 1864 to 1875.

During the time that the Military was "rounding up" Coos People to be put in "encampments" prior to their forced removal, many Indigenous People tried to escape capture and hide out in inaccessible areas of their homeland. One such story about Tarheel was related by Mrs. Nellie Freeman. [Meluk was also the name of a village].

> "When Tarheel was at Meluk [sp] he saw a boat rowed by two men, soldiers, coming around the point from Empire. He jumped into his canoe and paddled so fast they couldn't keep up with him. He rowed up South Slough to the island and pulled his canoe into the brush and ran into the underbrush where he remained for ten days living on berries and roots. He was nearly starved when he came out. He was called ***e-muck-du-luc,*** which means "poor, thin young man." His father called him Tarheel because he was black. He was known by this name. I do not know his real name."

This story tells of the desperation Indigenous People felt, their fear of the Military men, and their determination to remain in their homeland for as long as possible. Tarheel and others spent many days moving about to evade capture. Moving about and hiding prevented them from being in their homes and with their families. It also kept them away from their food resources and other supplies. These People were forced to live a fugitive lifestyle, complete with fear of being caught and not knowing how many men were pursuing them each day. These actions reflect the many ways Indigenous People resisted removal and attempted to stay connected to their families, communities, and ancestral lands.



The only known photograph of Tarheel. Date unknown. (photo courtesy of the Bill Brainard family)

Tarheel did not want to leave the home he loved. For several years, he successfully avoided capture and remained in his homeland. Eventually, however, he and his wife were captured and forced to leave their community. According to Corporal Royal H. Bensell's military journals, Tarheel and Lady Tarheel were captured on May 5, 1864, and taken north to the Alsea Sub-Agency.

Tarheel's life at the Alsea Sub-Agency is unknown. He did survive the starvation, disease, and desperation at the Sub-Agency. When the Sub-Agency closed in 1875-76, and the Indigenous People were "released," he made his

way back to the Coos Bay area where he reconnected with his niece. The 1880 U.S. Census identifies Tarheel as alive and living in Coos Bay with his wife, Susan.

Although little is known about Tarheel's later years, records and family history show that he survived Removal, starvation, disease, and years of separation from his homeland. After the Alsea Sub-Agency closed, he returned to the Coos Bay area and reconnected with family members. His story reflects the determination of many Indigenous people who endured Removal while maintaining connections to their families, communities, and homelands.

Family oral history says that Tarheel is buried at a ***miluk*** Coos family allotment land on Seven Devils Road, just south of Charleston, Oregon.

Removal Narrative - 5: Tennepah

Tennepah, ***miluk*** Coos, was born around 1847. Her Indigenous name, Tennepah, translates to "Little One". She and her family lived in their homeland, which is near present-day Charleston, Oregon. Beginning in 1855-1856, the U.S. Military rounded up many Coos People and forcibly marched them from their homes to distant and unfamiliar places on the northern Oregon Coast. Tennepah's mother feared that her young daughter would not survive the removal journey. She made the heartbreaking decision to give Tennepah, then about 6-8 years old, to a local European family so she would not be removed.

Along with many other Indigenous People, Tennepah's family was removed in 1856. Some were held in local "encampments" in the Coos Bay area. Then they were marched to a military stockade called Fort Umpqua (near present-day Winchester Bay, Oregon). They attempted to rebuild their life and community while there. Three years later, in 1859-60, the people at Fort Umpqua were forced to leave their new home and march north to the Alsea Sub-Agency (near Yachats, Oregon). Due to a lack of adequate and accurate record-keeping, no information is available about what happened to Tennepah's mother or the rest of her family. She may have died at Fort Umpqua or died on the march to Yachats, or she might have perished at the Alsea Sub-Agency. She is one of the many known and unknown Indigenous people who did not survive Removal.

Tennepah was given to a family living on or near what is now Seven Devils Road, just south of Charleston, Oregon. Fearing she might be discovered during the daily Military roundups, every day the family hid her inside a large hollow stump on land near the present-day South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. At night, she was brought safely into the family's home. This daily hiding continued for weeks until the Military completed their capture of Indigenous People.

In 1876, when the Alsea Sub-Agency was taken and opened to European settlement, surviving members of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians were told to leave the Reserve. Some People returned to the Coos Bay area only to find their Indigenous lands were now occupied by European settlers. Tarheel, Tennepah's uncle and one of the removed ***miluk*** Coos people, returned home to the South Slough/Charleston area.

Tarheel sought out his niece, Tennepah, and was reunited with her. By then, Tennepah's life had become very different from the tribal lifeways she had known as a child. She had become accustomed to many of the customs and daily practices of the non-Indigenous household where she was raised. She spoke English, slept in a bed, wore dresses, stockings, and button-up shoes, and used household items and customs that differed from the Tribal lifeways. She had also been given a new English name: Jane (sometimes called Indian Jane or Indian Jenny). The reunion helped reconnect Tennepah to family members, community connections, and cultural knowledge that had been disrupted by Removal.

Even though she lived with a non-Indigenous family, little is recorded about Tennepah's life. She had a first marriage to "Marshfield Tom", an Indian man from the Coos Bay area. There are no legal documents for this marriage, and it is remembered through oral history. She later married a non-Indian man, Frederick Merchant, in a legally recorded marriage. They had a daughter. When Frederick Merchant left the Coos Bay area, possibly around 1860-61, to seek gold in California, he never returned. In 1864, Tennepah legally married another non-Indian named Mattson/Madison Talbot. Together, they had eight more children, seven of whom lived to adulthood. They remained married until Tennepah died in 1898. Mattson died in 1920.

Although Tennepah spent much of her early life in a non-Indian household and became part of the dominant society, her reconnection with her uncle helped her return to many cultural practices that she learned when she was young. She was able to regain her first language. Throughout her life, Tennepah and her children navigated between two diverse and different worlds.

Few records exist about Indigenous people before, during, and after Removal. Although many details have been lost, Tennepah's story reflects the experiences of many Indigenous people whose families endured Removal, separation, loss, and the work of rebuilding connections to family, culture, and community. Oral histories contain gaps and sometimes differ among family members. Later legal records, such as birth, death, and marriage documents, help fill in some historical details, but the personal experiences, losses, and daily lives of the Indigenous people who lived through these harsh and disruptive times remain difficult to fully know.

[There were no records kept about Indian people at this time, so exact information on dates of birth, marriage, deaths, leaving, and arrival is unknown. This historical rendition has been passed down through the generations by the descendants of a child of Tennepah (Indian Jane/Indian Jenny) Merchant Talbot.]

Removal Narrative - 3: James Buchanan

James Buchanan was a ***hanis*** Coos and Upper Coquille Indian who was born around 1845 at the ***hanis*** Coos village of ***wu'alach.*** His Indigenous name was ***tselel***, which means "worn-out knife/small, old worn knife."

He was present at the 1855 Treaty of Empire signing, survived forced march removals, and spoke at the 1875 Yachats Conference against the closing of the Alsea Sub-Agency. When the Alsea Sub-Agency closed, he moved south and lived with other community members in the Siuslaw River area.

In 1909, he worked closely with Leo Frachtenberg, a linguist, to document Coos grammar and recorded traditional stories and histories. He documented traditional village sites, genealogy, and cultural practices. In 1931, he spoke again for his People at the US Court of Claims, identifying their original homelands and seeking payment from the U.S. Government for lands taken. He spoke in his own language and was interpreted by Frank Drew, another ***hanis*** Coos Indian. (Some words are misspelled as this is taken directly from the records).

I, James Buchanan, the sole and only survivor of the three Confederated Tribes of Indians of Oregon, viz: Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaws, offer the following testimony, the same being from my own personal knowledge and observation of the treaty of 1855, made between the United States Government and the three Confederated Tribes of Indians.

In the beginning, Gen. Joel Palmer, acting for the Government, accompanied by two men, called the Indians together to hold a council. In this meeting, General Palmer told the Indians that the whites were already settling on lands in the Coos Bay country, and that two sawmills had already been built, one at Empire City and one at North Bend. I have personally heard, and I was present when General Palmer said that the United States Government had authorized him to make a treaty with us and to hold some terms with us. As part of the conditions of this treaty, we Indians were to be moved from our Coos Bay country to the Umpqua. General Palmer at that time said: "You will leave a valuable country, but the United States Government will pay you for it as soon as you Indians move. You Indians will be paid for the timber, for the land, the river, coal, and gold."

An Indian whose name is hard to spell but when translated means "smart man," came from the audience and brought and placed an old basket in front of General Palmer saying: "If this big man or United States Government fills this basket with gold as it is a big thing for you white men-and we might learn the value of this land and how to use it, then I will move."

Then General Palmer said: "Sure, the United States Government will pay as soon as you move to Fort Umpqua. And on that same morning, General Palmer said he was instructed by the United States Government. He also said that a schoolhouse would be built for our children and us, so that the children would be taught the words of the white brothers, and after learning the ways of his white brothers, a land of 160 acres would be given to each Indian for his own use. Also, that an Indian agent would be appointed to look after and provide for the welfare of the Indians. Then General Palmer said that later on he would visit us to see what progress the Indians were making and to see how they were treated, and that they should be treated well.

Just about this time a war, or Indian war, broke out in southern Oregon, or better known as Rogue River War and the Government fearing that we might join with the Rogue River Indians put us under guard of soldiers at Fort Umpqua, and we became prisoners. We never had any intentions of joining with the Rogue River Indians, but have always been peaceful. We have never had any trouble with the whites.

Then a schooner came into the Umpqua River, bringing a cargo of foodstuffs and clothing for us, and we received rations each month. We were placed on the north side of the Umpqua near the mouth of the river, right in the open sand.

Doctor [Edwin P.] Drew was our first Indian agent. He held the position four years and treated us pretty good. Doctor Drew built schools for our children, and about 50 scholars attended the school. The children learned rapidly. We were pretty well satisfied with Doctor Drew's administration. At the expiration of his terms another agent was appointed; his name was Ben Sampson [Simpson]. [Simpson did not assume duties until April 1, 1863]. As soon as Ben Sampson became agent, he went to Doctor Drew and told him that he got orders from the United States Government to move us to Yachats. Doctor Drew did not like the idea of moving us, and at his suggestion, a council was held with the Indians, when it was agreed to send four Indians with Ben Sampson to look over the lands at Yachats. They were gone about two weeks, and on their return, they reported that the land was good and would be suitable for raising produce. Ben Sampson promised that we Indians would receive instructions in farming and that schools would be maintained there, and that we would continue to receive our monthly rations. The Indians who made the trip were Joe Scott, Tyee Jim, Smart Man, and Go Back Charley, the latter being my brother, and who did the interpreting. They all reported in favor of making the move.

Ben Sampson was good to us after making the move to Yachats. But we failed to receive our monthly rations, and no school was built nor any school held. He was agent four years. He did not do us any good.
Sampson was succeeded [in 1861] by a man named [Linus] Brooks. While he was good to us, he never did anything toward improving the welfare of the Indians. Brooks was agent for four years. He was succeeded by George Collins [in July, 1864]. He allowed the Indians to fish and hunt, but he did nothing toward bettering conditions, claiming he was powerless to do so. For two years he carried on gold mining, with Indians to do the work. I was one who helped and received $4 per day for what time I worked.

Collins was agent for two terms of four years each. During his second administration, a clerk of the agency by the name of [Thomas] Clark shot and killed an Indian by the name of John Winchester. Clark had been sent to Alsea Bay to instruct Winchester to give up his salmon fishing and return. Winchester asked to stay another day, and finally the men wrangled, when Clark shot him dead. Clark escaped at once to Newport, where he remained about three weeks, when he returned with a body of soldiers, explaining that he feared an uprising among the Indians because of the shooting. They found the Indians peaceable, and the soldiers returned at once. [Thomas Clarke became "Superintendent of Farms at Alsea Agency" on April 1, 1864.]

Conditions were very poor during Collins's second term, and many of the Indians had but very little on which to live. Some in their desperation, ran away, hoping to do better. If they returned, they were tied to a post and flogged almost to death.

Lieutenant [F.A.] Batty was the next United States Indians agent, and served four years. He appealed to the United States Indian Department for relief for us but failed. He never received any appropriations for our support during his administration. [Battey replaced Collins in July, 1869].

Question: What did the Indians do for a living during this time?
Answer: They hunted and fished. They hunted deer and elk. They caught perch, flounders, eel and salmon. Some fished for perch and rock cod off a rock called "Scow" and they also gathered mussels, a shellfish off this rock. It was very dangerous to fish off this rock, and three women nearly drowned, being rescued just in time.

There was no school during Lieutenant Batty's time.

The next agent was Sam Case, who served four years [commencing in 1871]. He maintained a private trading post, buying provisions from Newport and selling it to the Indians. Case started a school for the Indian children.

The last agent was George P. Litchfield, who served four years [commencing July 1, 1874, as sub-agent]. Litchfield maintained the school and gave the children some clothes. During his term the reservation was thrown open to settlement without compensation on April 28, 1876.

In 1876 the Indians were turned loose without any instruction. Some of them returned to their native homes and some just squatted on a piece of land that looked good to them. They remained on the land where they had chosen until the white men filed on it and forced them off. The Indians were ignorant of the rules and regulations of the Land Department. The white man took it all. The Indians got nothing.

Question: Do you remember what the Yachats country looked like at first?

Answer: The country was rough, no broken ground. The Indians used oxen teams to plow the soil. They build their first houses of fir boughs. Later, they used split shakes and clapboards instead of the lumber promised them. They put up houses and barn for the Government. They build a barn of logs about 60 by 200 feet. They also built a lot of fences. The Indians were paid $1 per day for 12 to 14 hours work. The Indians were held at Yachats for 20 years and were turned loose without a cent. Most of the Indians who were brought to Yachats died of hunger and exposure. They were very unhappy.

The above testimony was given by me at Florence on this 14th day of October, 1931.



Frank Drew, sitting
James Buchanan, standing

James Buchanan died in 1933, at about 87-88 years old, at Cushman (just east of Florence). Hecontinues to be an important teacher today. He was a prominent leader, historian, and cultural informant. His words and recordings are used and treasured today in both academic and tribal settings.'

)Frank Drew, ***hanis,*** was born at the Alsea Sub-Agency. When it closed in 1875 he moved with his family to the Siuslaw River area. He was fluent in many languages, speaking ***hanis, sha'yuushtla'a, quuiich,*** Chinook Jargon and English and was an important interpreter. He also recorded much about Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw history, language and culture.)

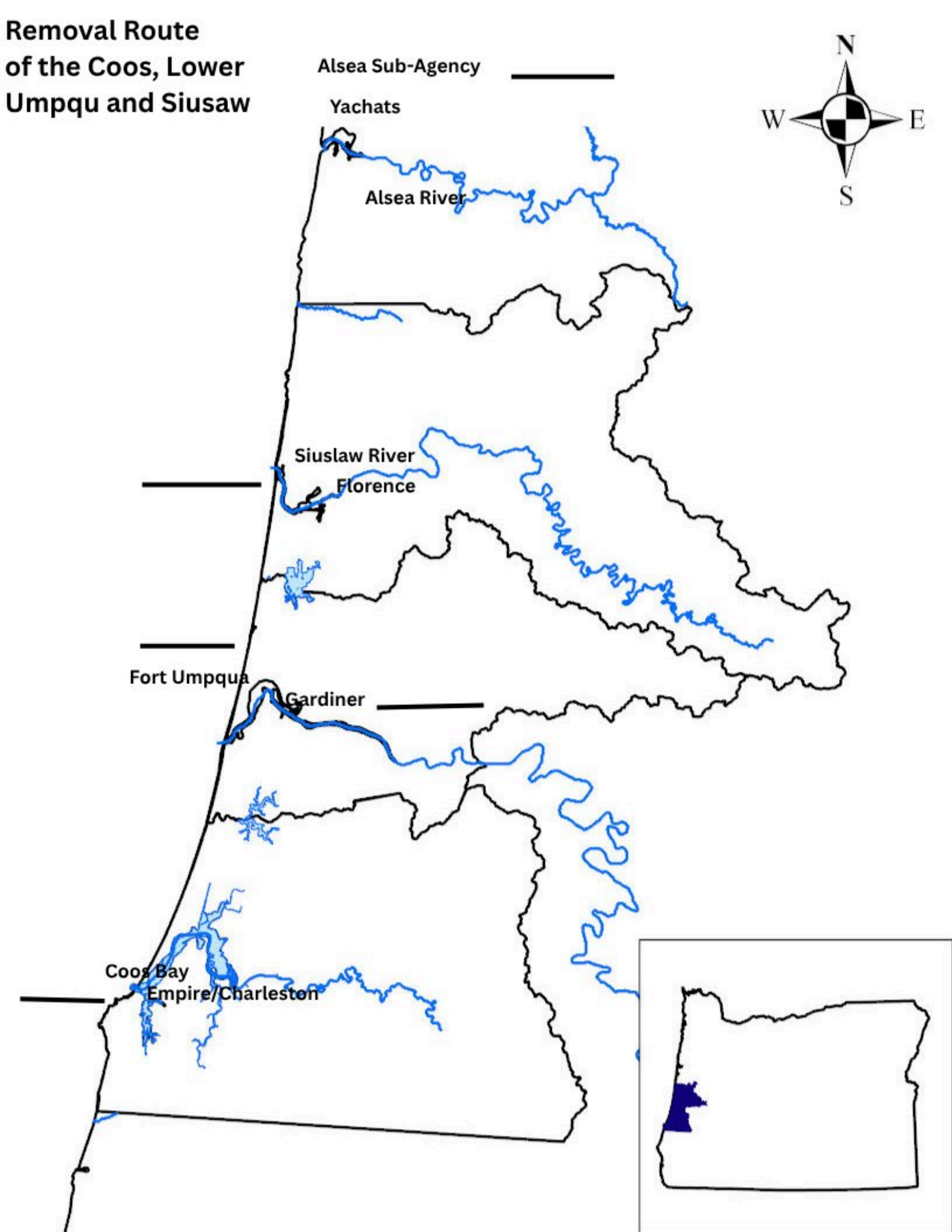
Removal: Reflection

What challenges did the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw People face during Removal?

What helped People maintain their communities, traditions, and knowledge despite those challenges? Personal Reflection:

What was something you have learned from your family, community or culture that is important to pass to future generations? Why?

Removal Route of the Coos, Lower Umpqu and Siusaw



Name_____

Removal Map Worksheet
Using Maps and Timelines as Evidence

Historians use maps and timelines to learn about events.
Use the Removal **Overview Timeline** and the **Removal Map** to complete this worksheet.

- Look for dates, locations and distances on the Timeline and Map.
- Record important dates on the map as you work.
- Use the mileage chart to solve the distance problems.
- Answer the final reflection question using evidence from both the Timeline and the Map.

1. What year did the U.S. Government start rounding up Indigenous People from the Coos Bay/Empire/Charleston area, and hold them in “encampments” in the Coos Bay area? _____. Put this year on the line by Coos Bay/Empire on the map.

2. What year were the Coos People marched to Ft. Umpqua?_____. Put this year on the line by Ft. Umpqua on the map.

3. What year were the Lower Umpqua People marched from east of Gardiner to Ft. Umpqua? _____. Put this year on the line by Gardiner on the map.

4. What year were the Coos and Lower Umpqua People marched from Ft. Umpqua to the Alsea Sub-Agency north of Yachats? _____. Put this year on the line by the Alsea Sub-Agency on the map.

5. What year were some of the Siuslaw People marched from the Siuslaw River/Florence area to the Alsea Sub-Agency? _____. Put this year on the line by the Siuslaw River on the map.

Forced March by miles: Trace the Removal Route marched by these People.

Empire to Coos Bay	4 miles
Charleston to Coos Bay	9 miles
Charleston to Ft. Umpqua	29 miles
Empire to Ft. Umpqua	24 miles
Coos Bay to Ft. Umpqua	23 miles
Gardiner to Ft. Umpqua	12 miles
Ft. Umpqua to Alsea Sub-Agency	69 miles
Florence To Alsea Sub-Agency	35 miles

6. Which Tribe was forced to march the greatest distance?_____

   Which Tribe was forced to marche the shortest distance?_____

7. How many total miles were the Tribes forced to march?

-**Coos People**: Charleston to Coos Bay _____ miles + Coos Bay to Ft. Umpqua _____ miles + Ft. Umpqua to Alsea Sub-Agency _____miles = _____ total miles.

-**Lower Umpqua People**: (East of) Gardine to Ft. Umpqua _____miles + Ft. Umpqua to the Alsea Sub-Agency _____ miles = _____ total miles.

-**Siuslaw People:** Siuslaw River (Florence) to Alsea Sub-Agency _____ total miles.

Reflections:

8. What do you notice about the routes People were forced to take

_____

_____

9. How does the Map tell the story of Removal?

_____

_____

_____

10. What are some of the challenges the Coos, Lower Umpqua nd Siuslaw People face during a forced removal?

_____

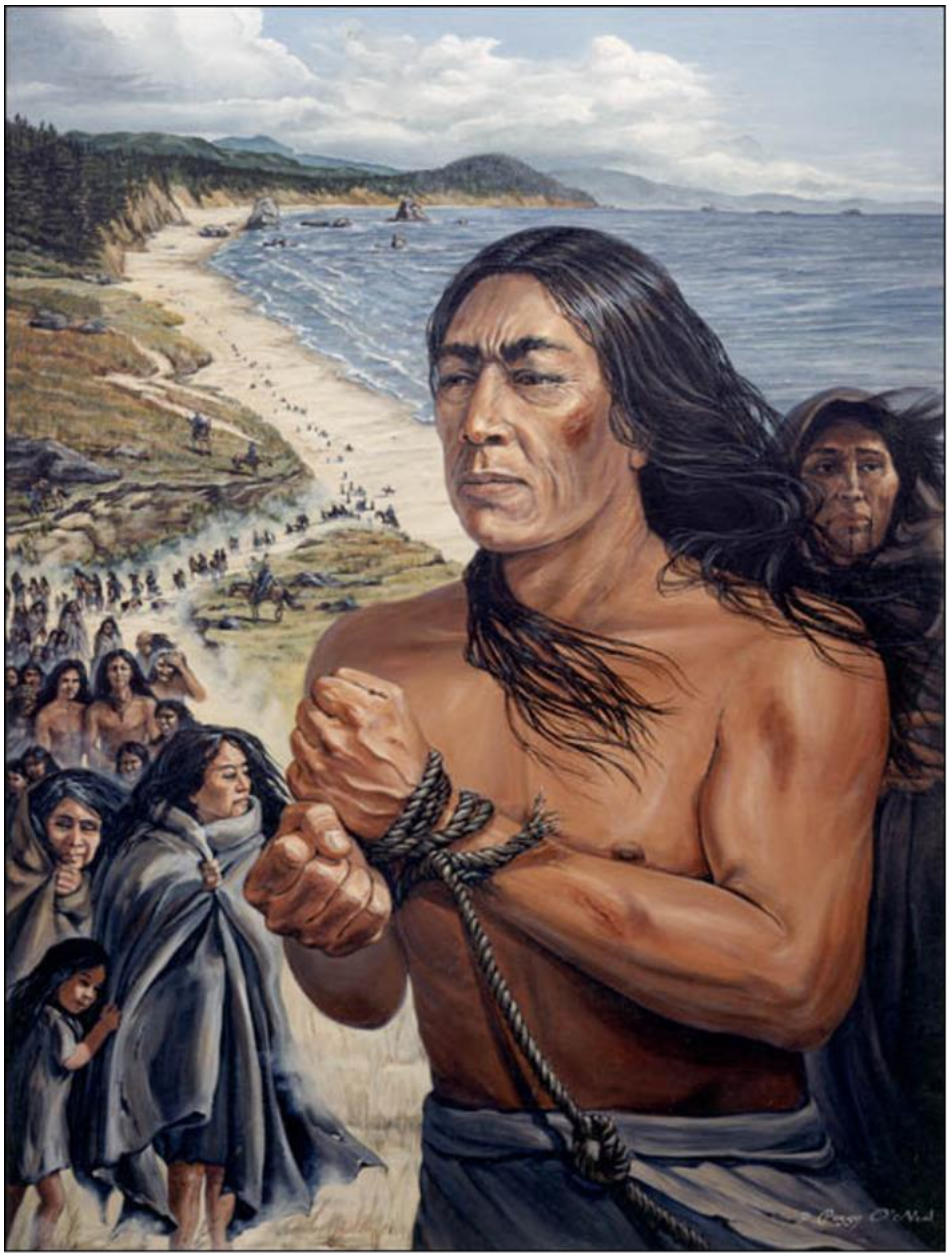
_____

_____

"Ahnkuttie Tillicums" Peggy O'Neal

Ahnkuttie Tillicums (Chinuk Wawa language translation "Ancient People/Ancestors") is a profound painting depicting the Removal of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw. This painting is from a geographic location in the Confederated Tribes' homeland, just south of Yachats, Oregon.

1. Take some time to observe this painting.



2. What did you notice? (Only what you can see.)

   Write or sketch details from the image.
   - I notice: _____.
   - I notice: _____.
   - I notice: _____.
3. What might it mean?
   Use your observations to begin thinking about what the image is showing.
   - This might show: _____.
   - This could suggest: _____.
   - An important idea in the image might be: _____.
4. Think about perspective
   - I think this image shows the perspective of: _____.
   - I think this because: _____.
   - Someone or something centered in the image is: _____.
   - Someone or something less visible is: _____.

5. Notice what is not shown
   Think about what you know about the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians and their relationships to land.
   - Something I know about this place that is not shown is:

     _____
   - A relationship to land that is not visible is:

     _____
   - A perspective or knowledge that is missing or not centered is:

     _____
6. Write about your thinking
   Does this painting show a complete story of the land and people? Use evidence and include what may be missing.
   You might begin with:
   - I notice…
   - This shows…
   - Another perspective might include…

View Peggy O'Neal's artwork, *Ahnkuttie Tillicums*, found at albinocrwagallery.com/art (3rd work) depicting Western Oregon Removal.



Answer the following questions.

What do you see?	What do you think?	Does this remind you of anything you know or have heard?