

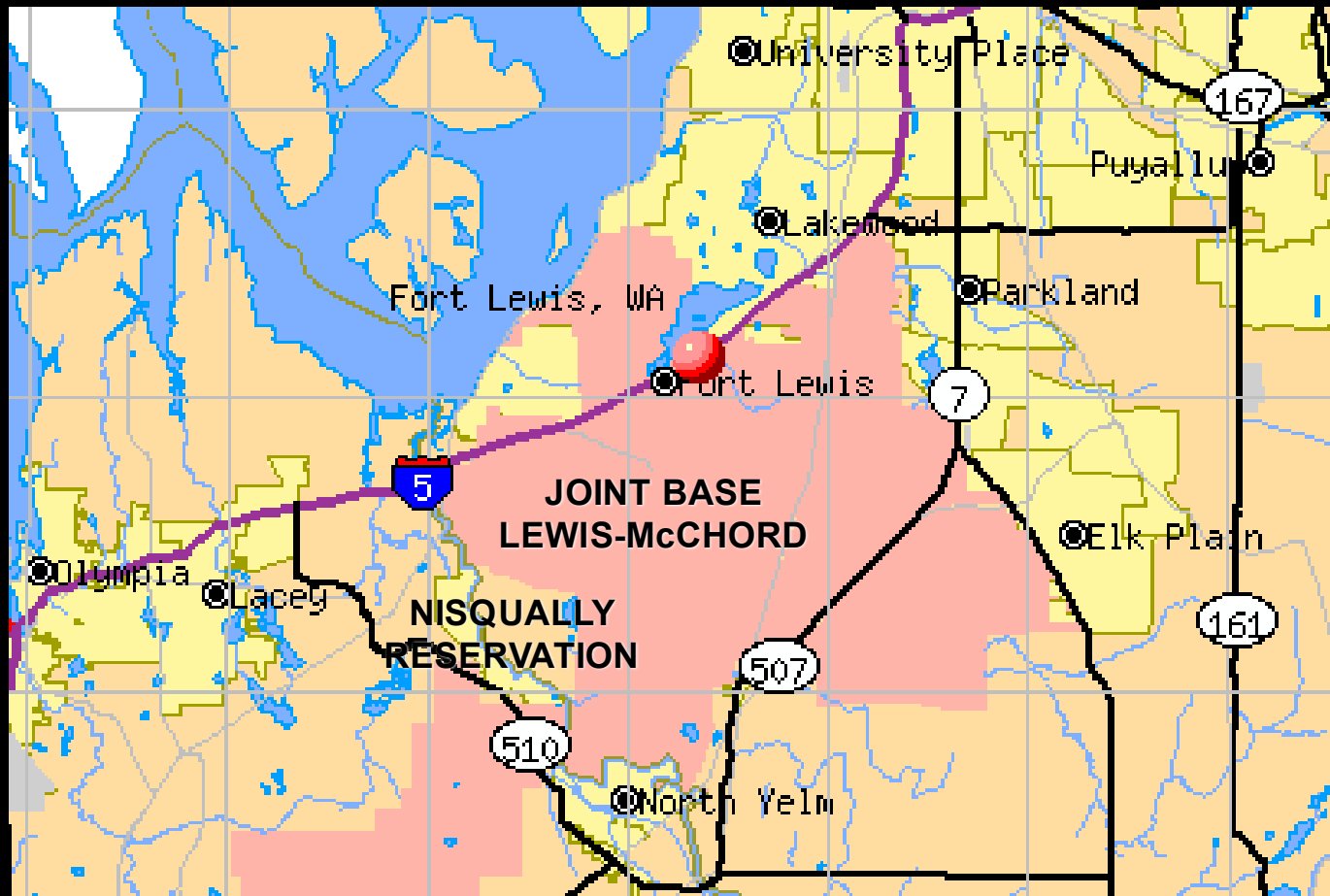


***NISQUALLY LAND:***  
**Placemaking and Reclaiming Space**  
**at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington**

**DR. ZOLTÁN GROSSMAN,**  
**Geography / Native American & World Indigenous Peoples Studies,**  
**The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA**  
<http://academic.evergreen.edu/g/grossmaz>

# Imperial Placemaking

Legacies of conquest imprinted on place in historical “layers”



Fort Lewis (Army), McChord Air Force Base merged in 2010  
to form Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM)

# Conceptualizing Native Place class at Frank's Landing, 2009



Podcast minidocumentaries



# Nisqually Tribe and Valley

Tribal identity centered on  
Nisqually watershed downstream  
from Mount Rainier

Fishing in Nisqually River and  
creek tributaries



# Nisqually Tribe and Valley

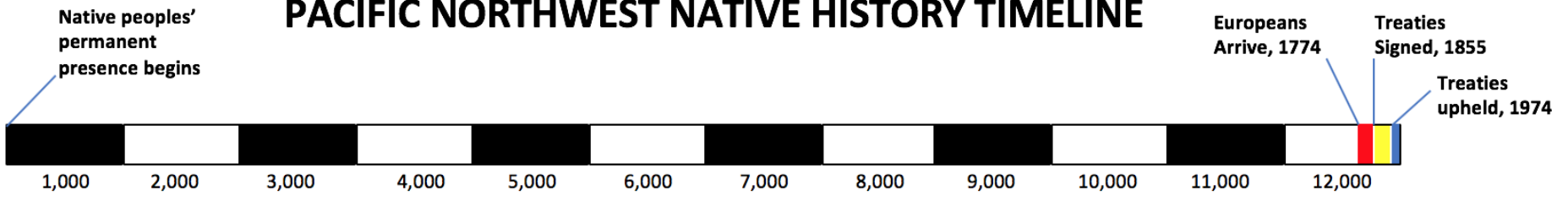
Huge prairie for camas bulbs,  
gathering, hunting deer and elk

*Squally-absch* =  
“People of The Meadow”

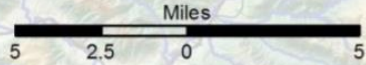
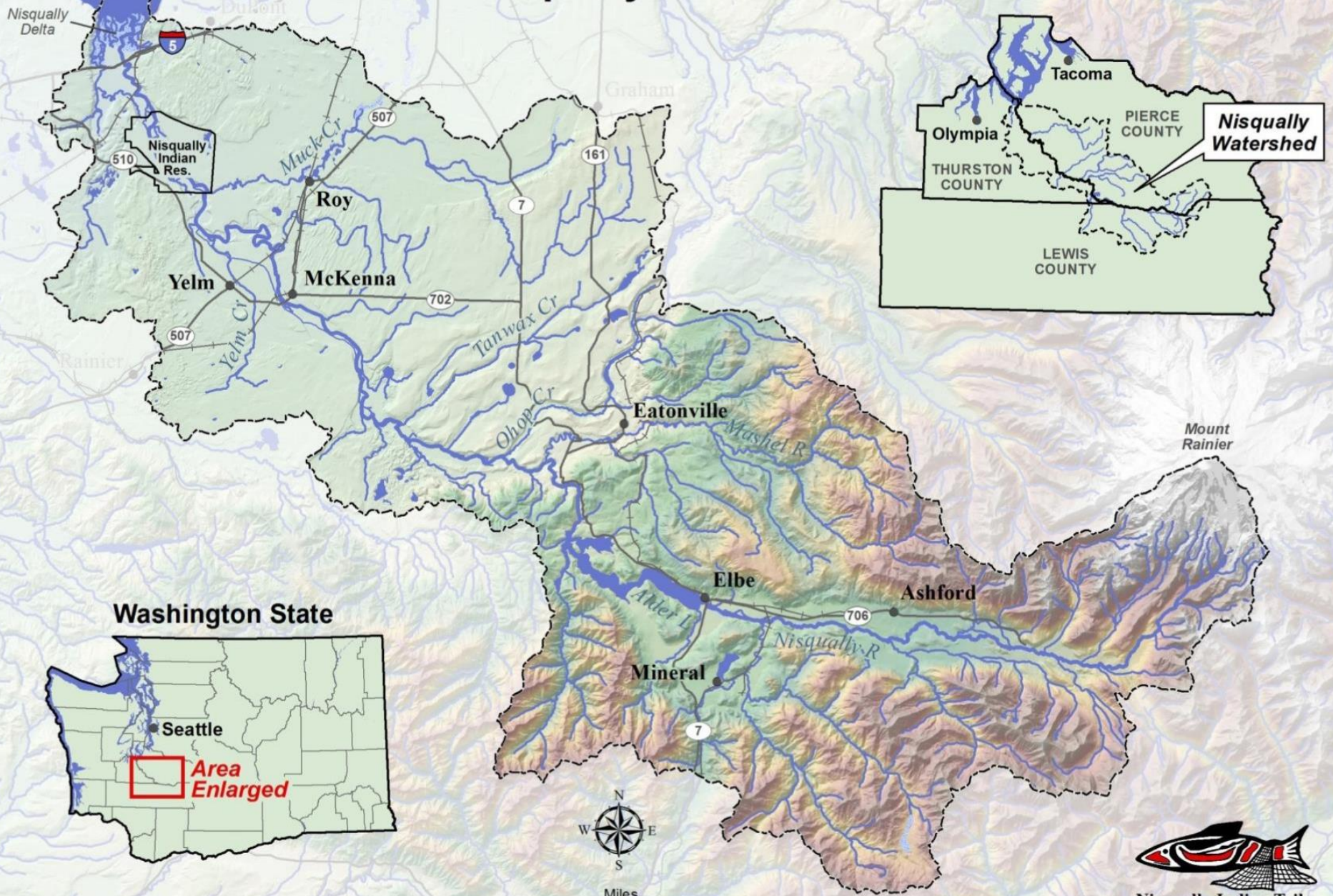




# PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIVE HISTORY TIMELINE



# Nisqually Watershed



Nisqually Indian Tribe

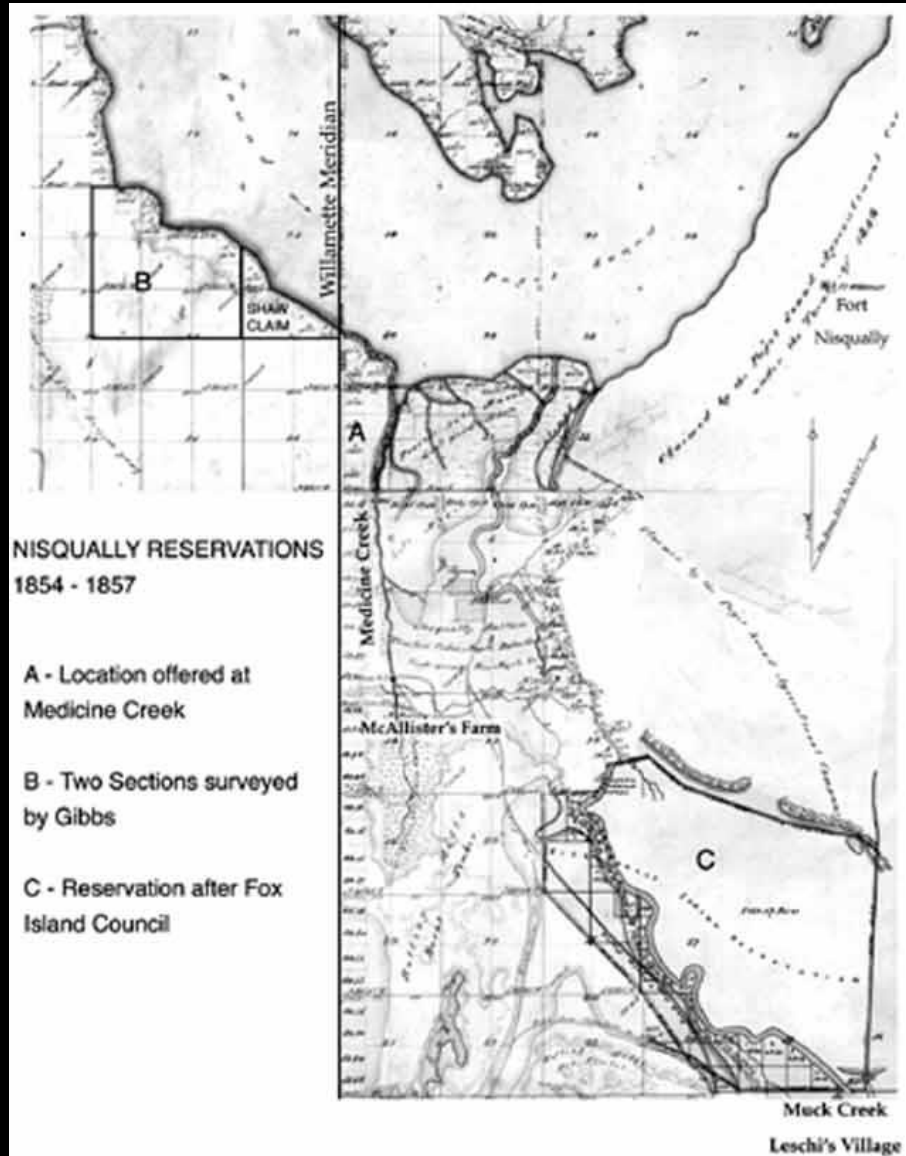
Cartography by: J.Cutler, Oct. 2014

# Struggle for Nisqually Reservation

Nisqually sign Medicine Creek Treaty but offered tiny, isolated reservation sites, 1854

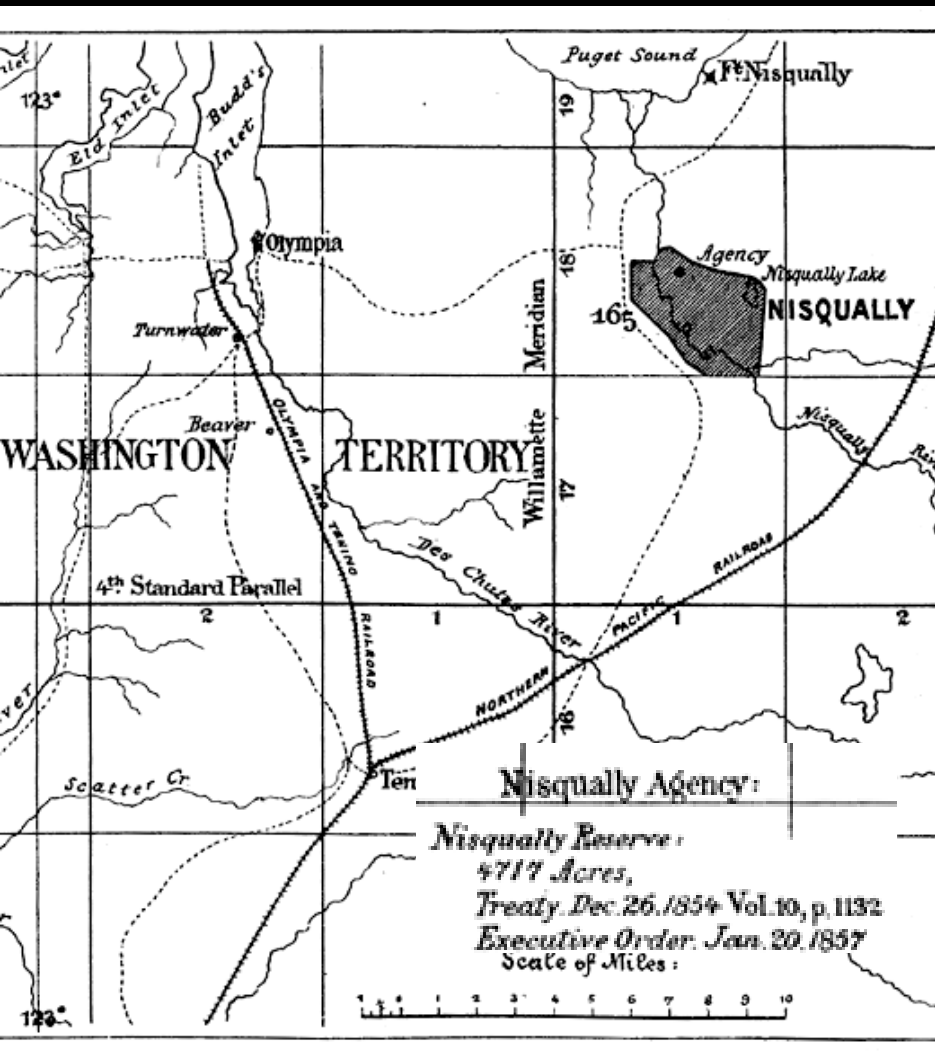
Fought for better reservation site in Puget Sound War, 1855-56

Secured larger reservation with access to river and prairie, 1857



Leschi, Nisqually/  
Klickitat leader  
executed in 1858

# Reservation period, 1857-1917



Fishing rights restricted at river mouth; fewer fish harvested

Access to river and prairie needed for cultural survival

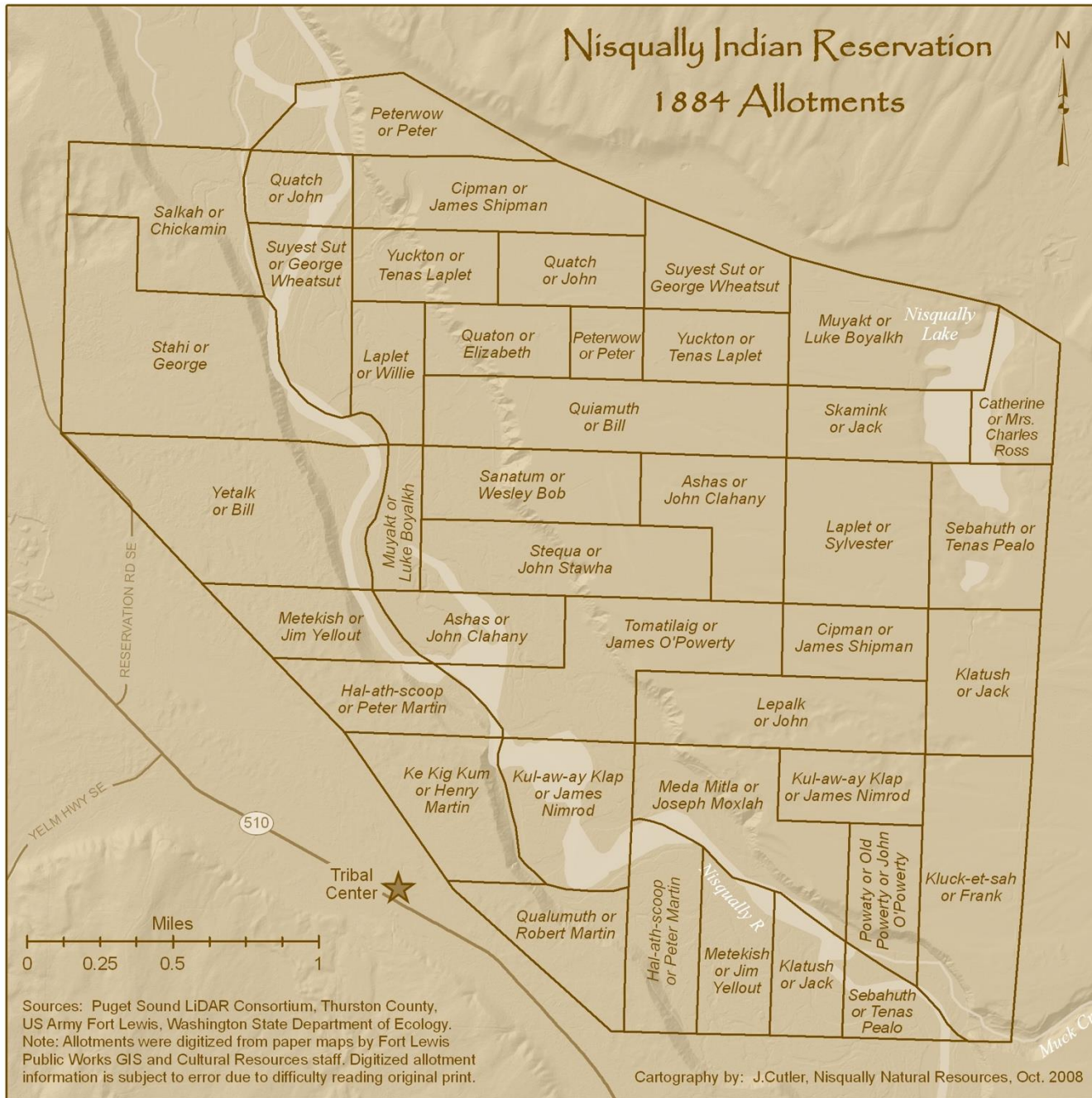
Individual allotments under Dawes Act, 1884



Leschi's brother Quiemuth killed in Governor's office, 1856

# Nisqually Indian Reservation

## 1884 Allotments



Sources: Puget Sound LiDAR Consortium, Thurston County, US Army Fort Lewis, Washington State Department of Ecology.  
 Note: Allotments were digitized from paper maps by Fort Lewis Public Works GIS and Cultural Resources staff. Digitized allotment information is subject to error due to difficulty reading original print.

Cartography by: J.Cutler, Nisqually Natural Resources, Oct. 2008

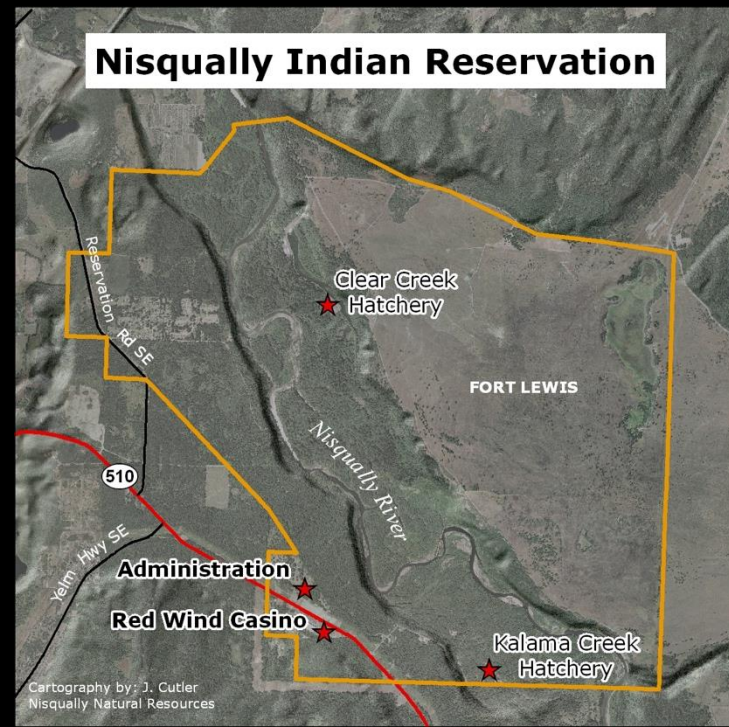
# Army takes 70% of Reservation, 1917

In World War I, Pierce County condemns 60,000 acres east of river (incl. ~3,300 condemned illegally in reservation), and transfers to military control for new Army base

2/3rds of Nisqually families forcibly removed to Thurston County side of reservation, west of river

Most land west of river already owned and occupied

Many tribal members lose homes and farms, leave for cities and other reservations





“The initial relationship between the Army and the Tribe was one of stark conflict. These people were literally run off their land, scattered to the winds... White farmers were taken off their land and they were paid a fair market value for it. They could go someplace else, buy another farm... But for the Nisqually folks here, they got fair market value for their land, but that wasn't how they measured their relationship to the land... It's a huge testament to the Nisqually Tribe that they survived that event, after decades of other events of similar catastrophe.” -- Fort Lewis Cultural Resources Manager Bret Ruby

# Army use of Nisqually prairie



Open meadow used as artillery impact and tank range

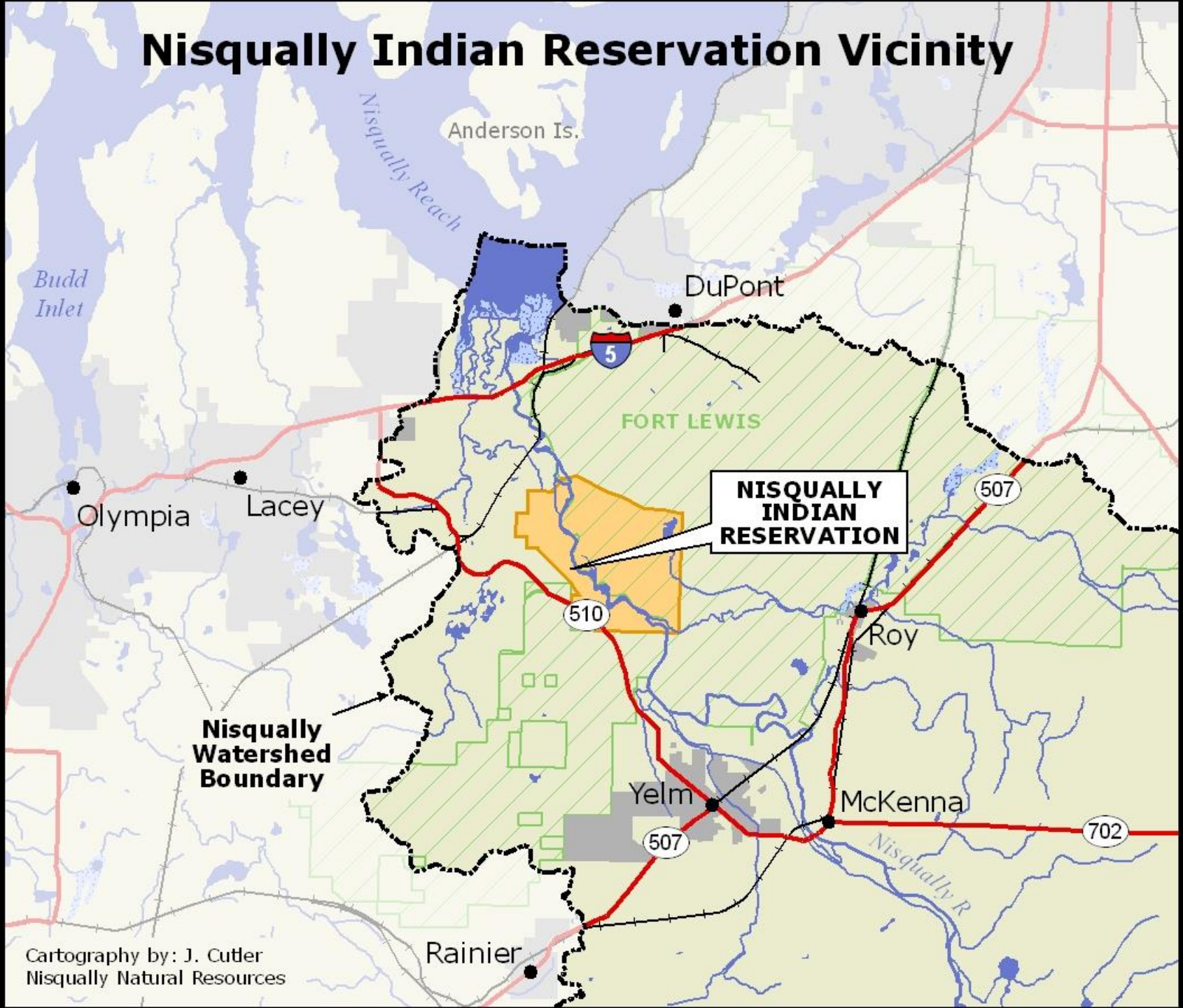
New parcels on river purchased by relocated families  
(Frank's Landing homestead)

WWII enlargement of base to  
~86,000 acres, 1942

Nisqually join armed forces in  
large numbers



# Nisqually Indian Reservation Vicinity



Cartography by: J. Cutler  
Nisqually Natural Resources

# Washington Fish Wars



State wardens confiscate  
Nisqually nets at Frank's Landing



INDIAN FISH-INS in the Nisqually River, such as the one pictured above, have their drier side-  
... such as the recent rally on the steps of Washington's state capitol in Olympia, which cul-  
... when the demonstrators marched to the house of Washington's Governor, Daniel J. Evans,  
... deposited a "freedom salmon" on his doorstep. The fish-ins are a continuing activity in the  
... of Indians and their supporters to gain their treaty rights. (See story below for details.)

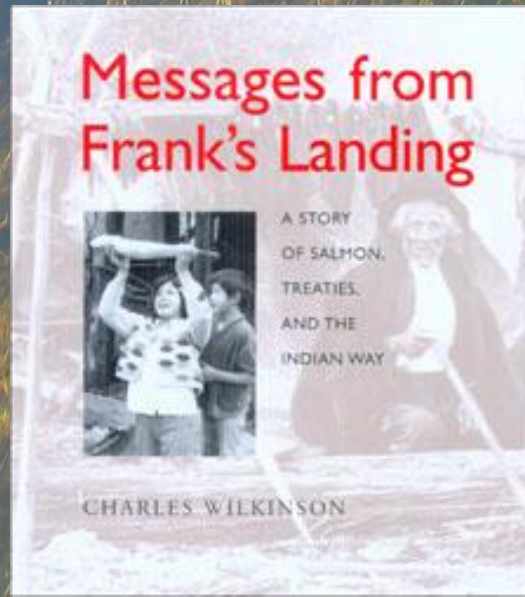
## Olympia rally highlights Indian fish-in actions



Tear gas raid on Puyallup  
treaty fishing encampment

# Salmon politics strengthen tribal powers

- Harvest**      **Boldt Decision recognizes treaty rights to fish, 1974**
- Habitat**      **Tribal-State Co-Management of resources, 1989**
- Hatcheries**      **Tribal hatchery opened inside Fort Lewis, 1991**
- Hydropower**      **Tacoma dam compensates tribe for fishery loss, 1991**



# Clear Creek Hatchery Deal



USFWS identified “weeping bluff” springs site as ideal, 1979

Tribe negotiates with Army for construction of hatchery, 1981-84

Tribe operates hatchery (part of USFWS system), with perpetual Army lease to 56-acre site, 1991

Fort Lewis recognizes pre-1917 reservation extent; tribal members regain access





# Safety Issues

Shells fired over reservation in 1970s, sometimes fell short (causing fires, near-injuries)

Army no longer fires artillery over Thurston County side of reservation

Tribe informed of training schedules, noise issues

Removal of Unexploded Ordnance in harvesting and restoration areas



# Cultural sites protection

375 sites inside Fort Lewis up to 8,000 years old (including two main tribal villages).

Army to return artifacts to certified Nisqually Archives.

Ancient tribal burial ground used by “pioneers” marrying into Native families; Army helped clear and fence site

Other Reservation-era tribal family cemeteries protected



Base archeologist Bret Ruby, cultural resources manager and continuous liaison to tribe



Army allows Yil-whaltz village site to grow over, to deter looters

# Tribal Members' Access to Fort Lewis



Tribal members gained access  
sticker on vehicles

Fishing, berry-picking, hunting

Precedents in Hawai'i

Cultural and ceremonial access,  
including tribal canoe landing, 2008

Nisqually Honor Walk to cultural  
sites inside Fort Lewis, 2009

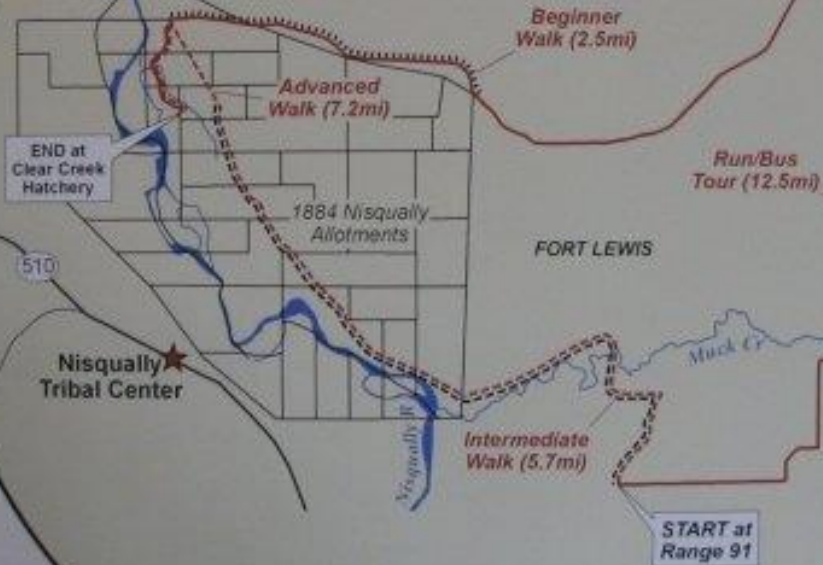


# Fort Lewis: Tribal Space

Honor Walk visits Nisqually former homesteads, cultural sites



## 2009 Leschi-Quiemuth Honor Walk



# **Ironic Advantages of Fort Lewis**

**“The Army is a much better land manager than the Forest Service.....The commanding general is the boss....when I go across the river to Fort Lewis, I know who’s in charge. When he tells the soldiers ‘Don’t drive any more tanks across Muck Creek’...--that’s what going to happen. Boy, that is powerful, when you’ve gotten a handshake with the General...”**

**--Billy Frank Jr.  
in *Messages from  
Frank’s Landing*, p. 80**



# **Ironic Advantages of Fort Lewis**

**Lack of agriculture, urban development “protected”  
the land and its rare species**

*(80% of western WA prairie habitat on base;  
12% of Nisqually Watershed)*

**Fires from shelling mimic tribal fire  
management of prairie (Ruby)**

**“You can say that the Army was our enemy when  
they took our land on the other side of the river....**

**These are different times. It has to do with  
the survival of a people....”**

**--Billy Frank Jr., *Messages from Frank's Landing*, p. 80**

# Protection of natural resources



Tanks, armored vehicles no longer drive through salmon habitat, new bridges constructed

Fragile habitat area and springs no longer shelled or logged

Groundwater monitored; RDX levels safe for fish but not drinking



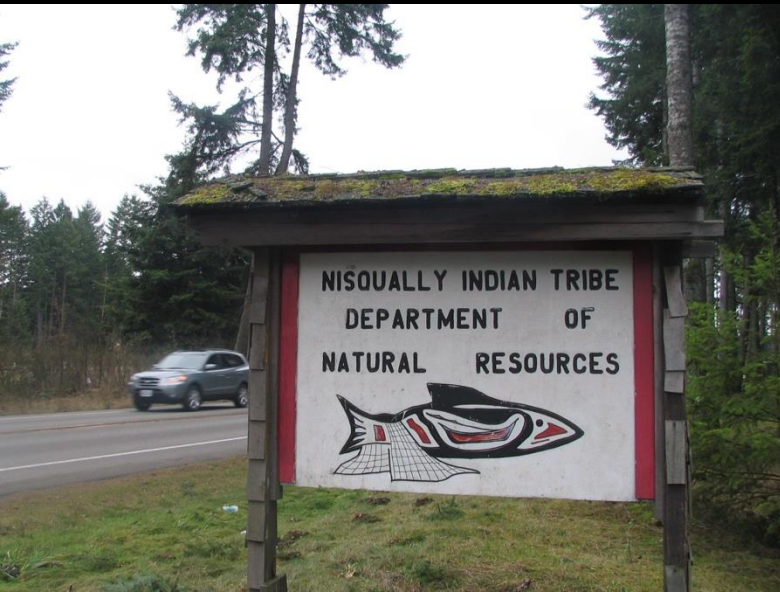
# Management of natural resources



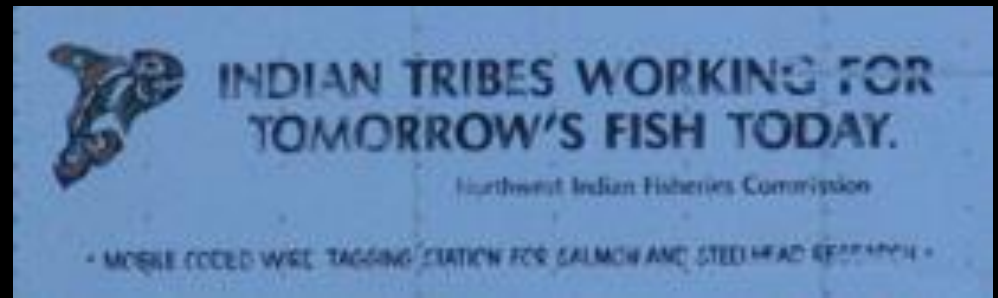
Selective timber harvesting; not old growth along river

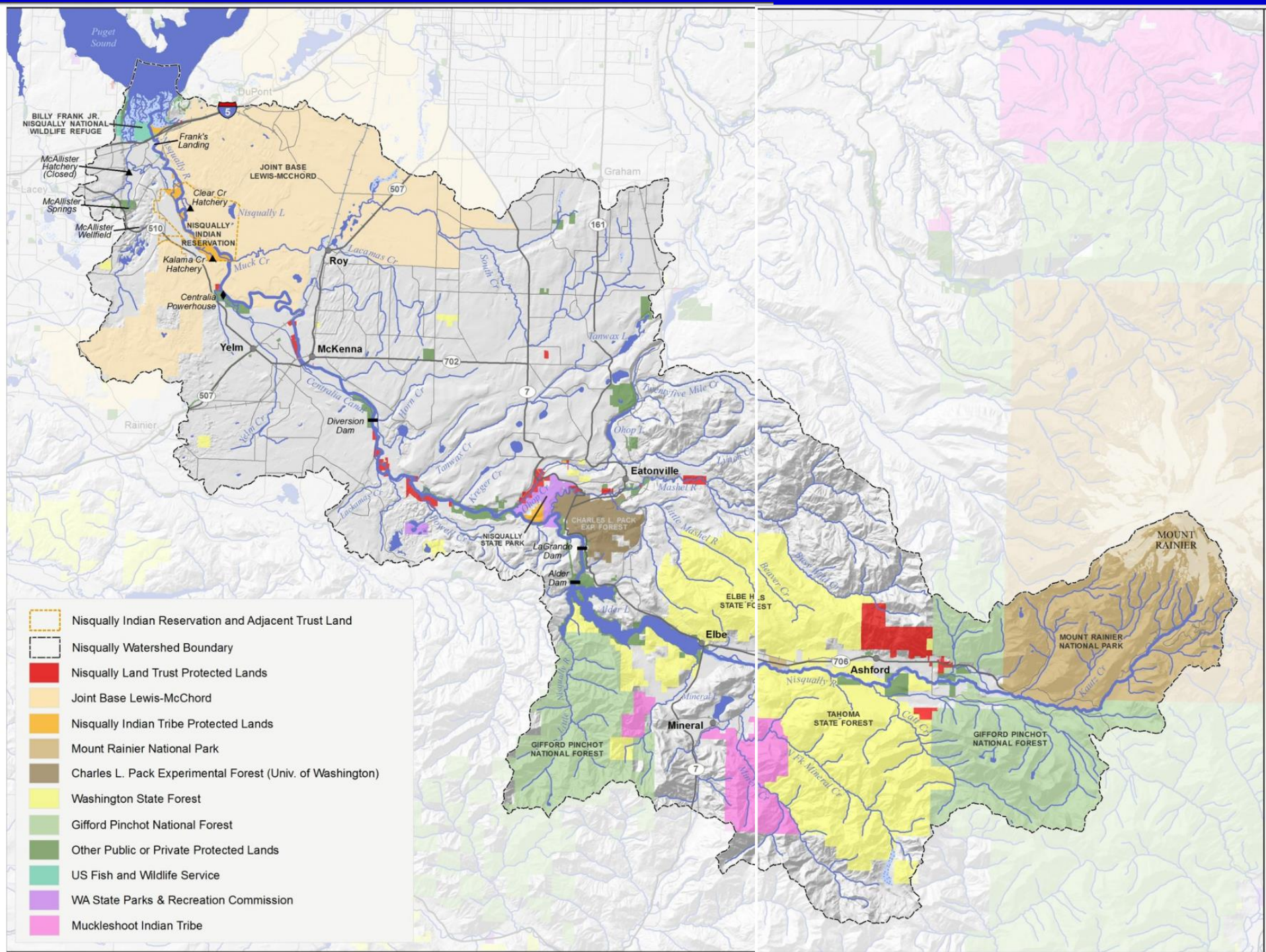
Army/Tribe cooperate to shore up riparian zones with native plants

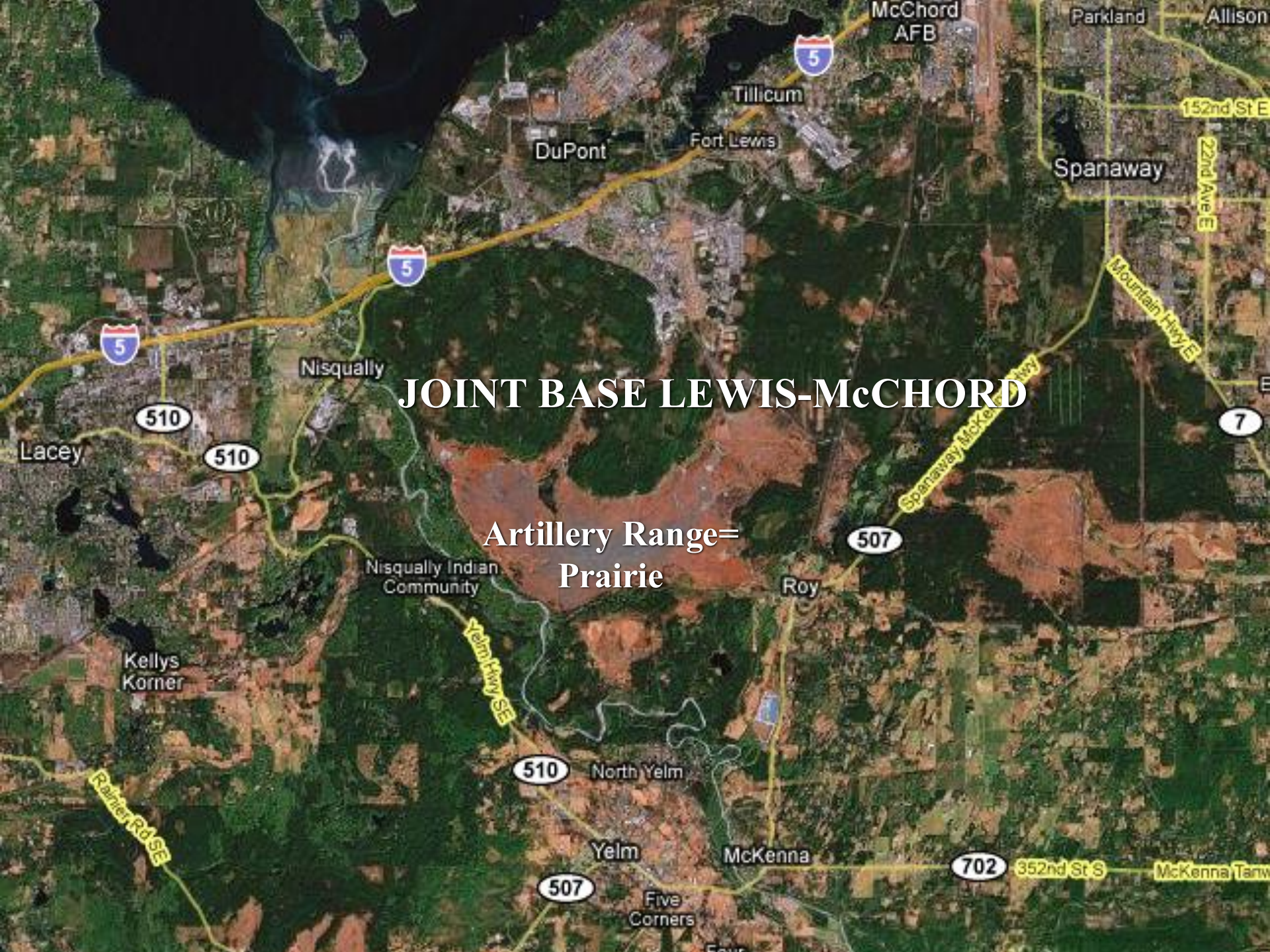
Sustainability Plan to limit toxic discharges, restore endangered species



70% of Nisqually mainstem protected ownership; no logging on 20-mile segment in Fort







# JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD

Artillery Range=  
Prairie

# Future Base Closure?

*Very unlikely:* Post growing dramatically in Iraq/Afghan wars

Tribe would secure and protect Pierce County reservation lands

Tribe could have Right to First Refusal for other lands on post

Tribe fears privatization, condo development into rest of base

# Army-Tribe Conflicts

Multiple-Launch Rocket System (HIMARS) project planned;  
sonic booms could affect salmon and bird eggs

Stryker Brigades enlarging operations in Fort Lewis;  
“Grow the Army” EIS hearings on sprawl of base and housing



# Native images in military training



Urban warfare training for Iraqi cities now held in “Leschi Town” in Fort Lewis, named after Nisqually leader executed for killing a militia officer in the Puget Sound War



“Leschi Town”  
Military Operations  
Urban Terrain  
training center,  
Fort Lewis

“Operation  
Tomahawk  
Shock”  
exercise by  
Stryker Brigade



PHOTOS BY PETER HALEY/THE NEWS TRIBUNE

Playing the roles of mother and wounded daughter, Cindy Bocott, left, and Melanie Bowers contribute to the chaos soldiers face in a simulation Monday. About 40 troops from the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division spent Sunday night and most of Monday in an exercise called “Operation Tomahawk Shock.”

# Native images in military training



State Supreme Court judges “clear” Leschi’s name in 2004, reversing his murder conviction. (Army had opposed the original execution)

Nisqually Tribal Council approved the urban warfare facility named after their “war hero”

Leschi, Nisqually/  
Klickitat leader  
executed in 1858



# Contesting space



# Reclaiming space

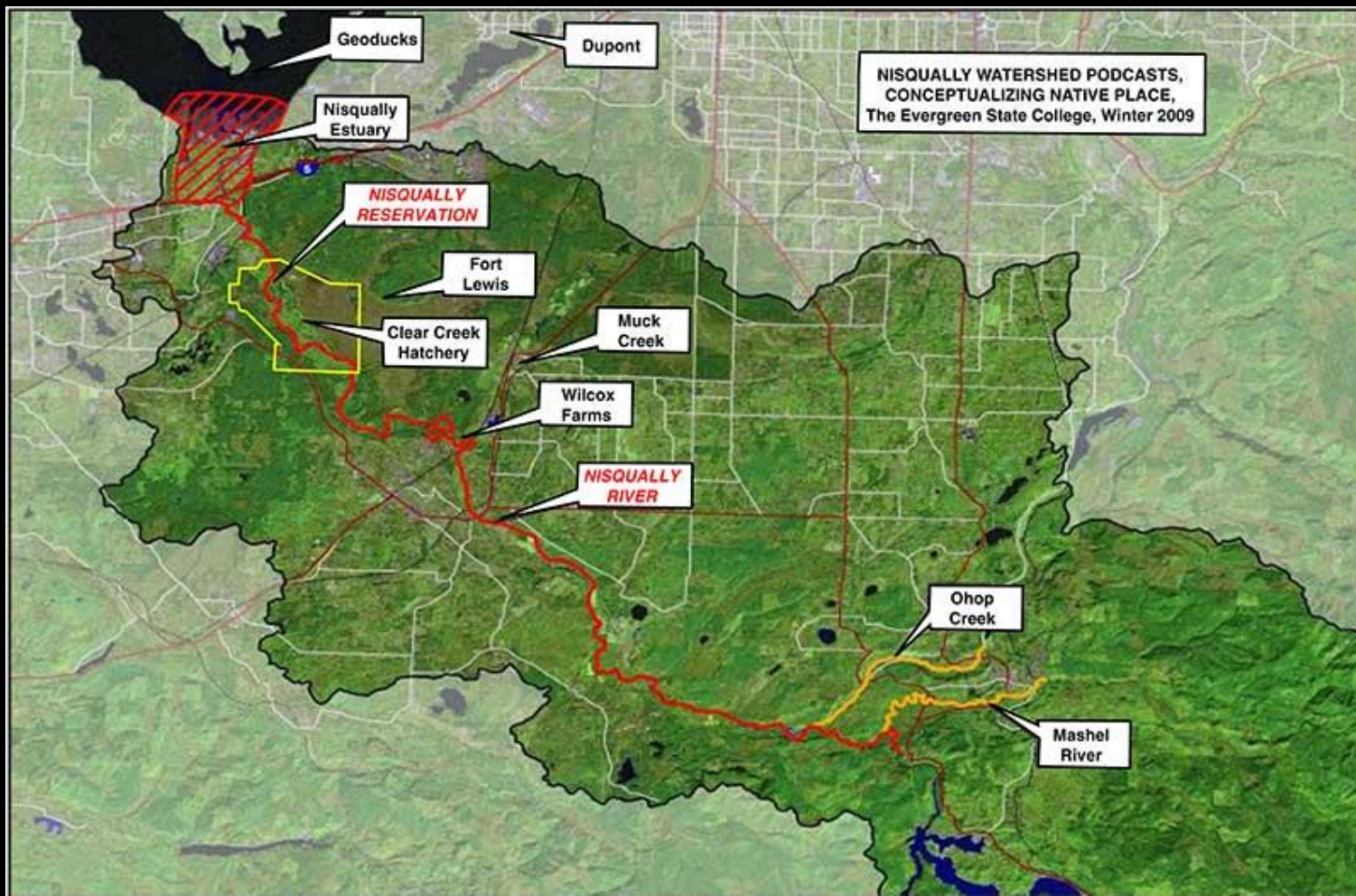


# Conceptualizing Native Place

Nisqually Watershed Podcasts

Nisqually Watershed Podcasts  
<http://blogs.evergreen.edu/nativeplace>

[Home](#) [About the Project](#)



## RESOURCES

Carpenter, Cecilia Svinth, (2002). *The Nisqually, My People*. Tahoma Research Service.

I Corps. History of Fort Lewis.  
[www.lewis.army.mil/lewis-camp.asp](http://www.lewis.army.mil/lewis-camp.asp)

Merrifield, Andy. (2006). *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction*. Routledge.

Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Secretary of the Army, and the Nisqually Indian Community. (1986).

Nisqually Indian Tribe. History.  
[www.nisqually-nsn.gov/history.html](http://www.nisqually-nsn.gov/history.html)

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.  
*NWIFC News* [www.nwifc.org](http://www.nwifc.org).

Waage, Sissel. (2001). "(Re)claiming Space and Place Through Collaborative Planning in Rural Oregon." *Political Geography*, 20.

Wilkinson, Charles. (2000). *Messages from Frank's Landing: A Story of Salmon, Treaties, and the American Way*. Univ. of Washington Press.

**DR. ZOLTÁN GROSSMAN**  
Member of the Faculty  
in Geography and  
Native American & World  
Indigenous Peoples Studies

The Evergreen State College  
Olympia, Washington



TESC Lab 1  
2700 Evergreen Pkwy. NW  
Olympia WA 98505  
(360) 867-6153  
[grossmaz@evergreen.edu](mailto:grossmaz@evergreen.edu)  
[https://sites.evergreen.edu/  
zoltan](https://sites.evergreen.edu/zoltan)

## THANKS TO...

Jeanette Dornier, Nisqually Tribe  
Natural Resources Department  
Salmon Recovery Manager

Georgiana Kautz, Nisqually Tribe  
Natural Resources Dept. Manager

Don Perry, Nisqually Tribe Natural  
Resources Department

David Troutt, Nisqually Tribe Natural  
Resources Department Director

George Walter, Nisqually Tribe  
Natural Resources Department

Bret Ruby, Fort Lewis Cultural  
Resources Manager

Lara Evans, Faculty, The Evergreen  
State College

Students in the Conceptualizing  
Native Place program, The Evergreen  
State College, Fall 2008 and Winter  
2009