

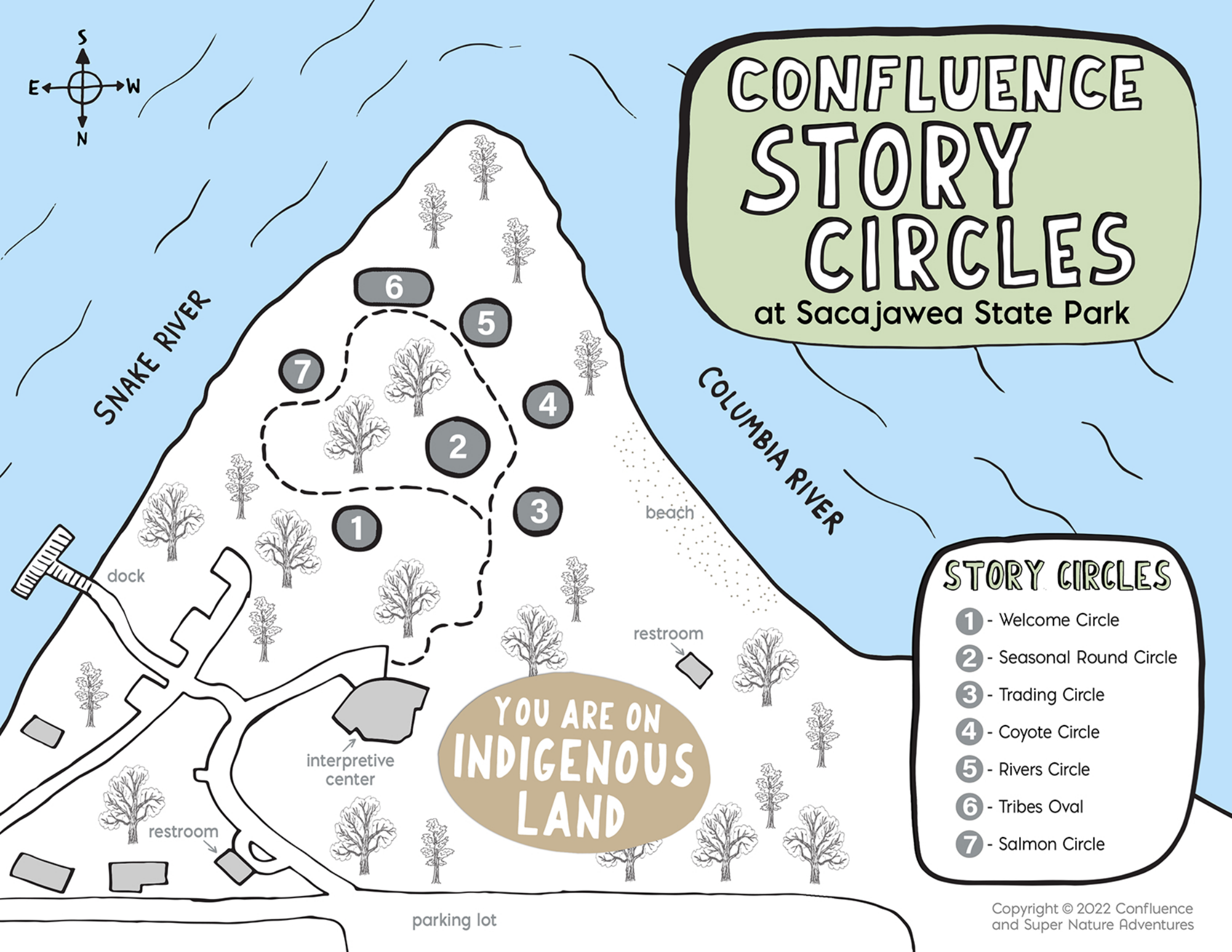
CONFLUENCE STORY CIRCLES

at Sacajawea State Park

STORY CIRCLES

- 1 - Welcome Circle
- 2 - Seasonal Round Circle
- 3 - Trading Circle
- 4 - Coyote Circle
- 5 - Rivers Circle
- 6 - Tribes Oval
- 7 - Salmon Circle

YOU ARE ON
INDIGENOUS
LAND



A GATHERING PLACE

The confluence of the Columbia and Snake Rivers has been a gathering place for Native people for more than 10,000 years.

LOOKING FAR

As you enter the area of the park with the Story Circles, choose one circle to sit or stand inside. Spend some time in the space.

Before you read the inscription inside the circle, look out to the distance on all sides of you.

What do you notice? What sounds can you hear that might be far away?

LOOKING CLOSE

Now, focus your attention on the Story Circles themselves.

What do you notice about them? What are their colors and textures? What are their shapes and sizes?

What does the inscription say on the circle you chose to sit or stand inside?



What do you notice, hear, or feel?

“ Confluence intends to reveal the deeper history of the place. Go out and read each Story Circle. Each one frames and tells you a little bit more about this place, the Tribes who came here, and the importance of this place for them. ”

—Maya Lin, artist and creator of the Story Circles

EXPLORE & OBSERVE

Find a spot where there is a river view, such as the dock or beach locations marked on the map in this guide.

Take a moment to observe the confluence of these rivers.
What do you notice?
What do you hear?

More than 14,000 years ago, Ice Age floodwaters flowed through this area, carving river channels and forming a giant lake where you stand.

How might future environmental changes affect the rivers & landscape of this region?

In 1953, the McNary Dam was completed on the Columbia River about 35 miles downstream. This dam was created to generate electricity. It has also disrupted the flow of the river and caused the waters in this area to rise.

How do you think this dam has changed the rivers you see today? How do you think it has affected the people who have called this place home since time immemorial?

RIVERS OF CHANGE

“Realize the power of the river—feel the significance of the place through its geography: a confluence of economy, living culture, subsistence, business and ceremonies. Look closer to understand better the confluence of the great Columbia River with the Snake River supporting activities, towns and people—to help people live. We are one with it.”

—Antone Minthorn, Umatilla Leader and Elder

PROTECT & RESTORE

How do you think human use is changing this place today?

What are some ways that you can help protect and restore the rivers and the land?

NOTICE

The information on the Story Circles comes from tribal stories, Yakama elder and Sahaptin speaker Dr. Virginia Beavert, Lewis and Clark's journals, and the natural history of this site.

Move around the circles in whatever order you wish. Spend time reading the inscriptions.

AT THE STORY CIRCLES

Notice that Circle 6 is not actually a circle. This oval shape echoes the traditional longhouses of the Columbia Plateau Tribes.

Spend time walking around Circles 2 and 7 to observe the engravings. What are some of the native plants, animals, and fish you see represented on these circles?

OBSERVE & LEARN

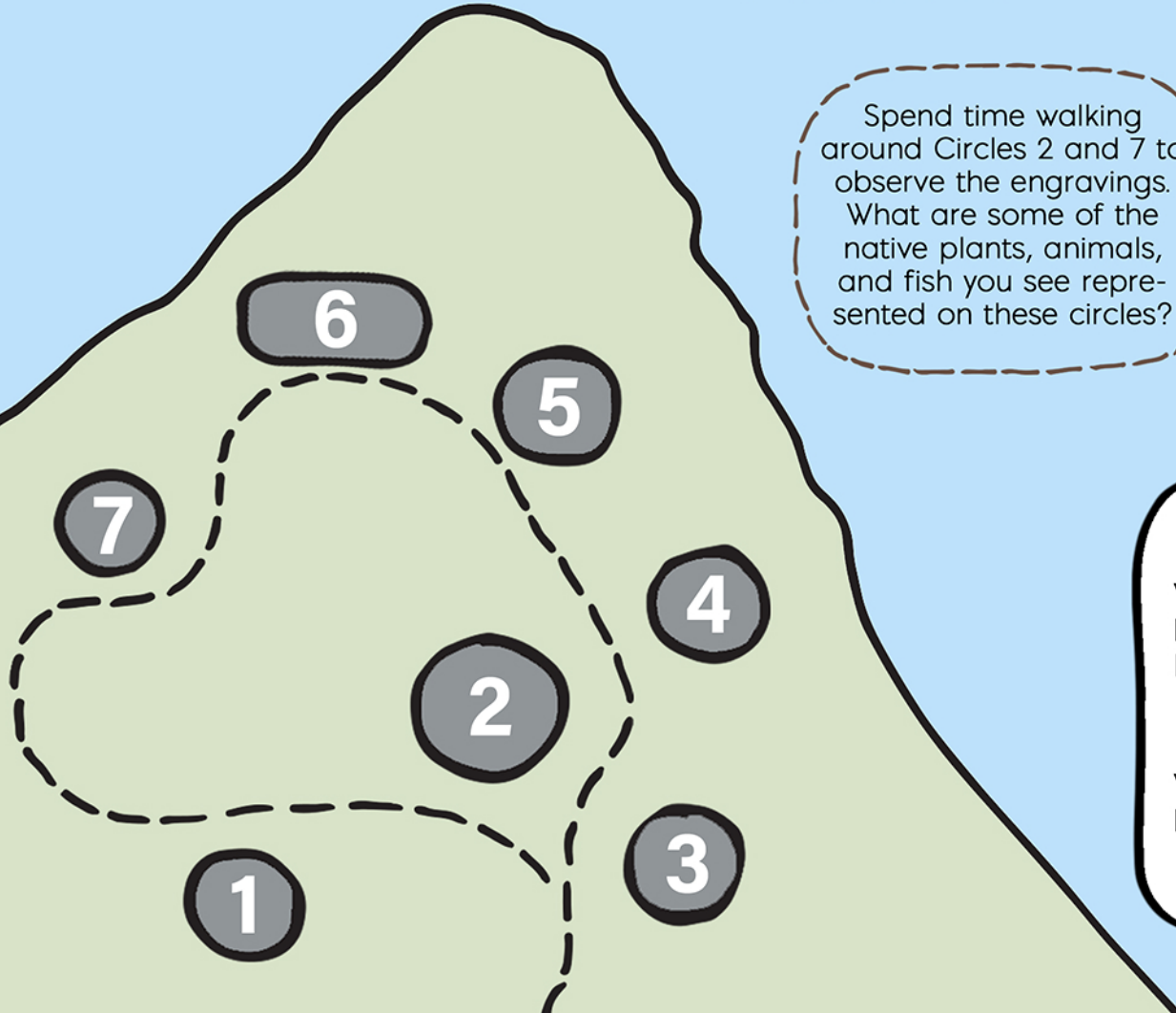
What are some themes you notice in the inscriptions?

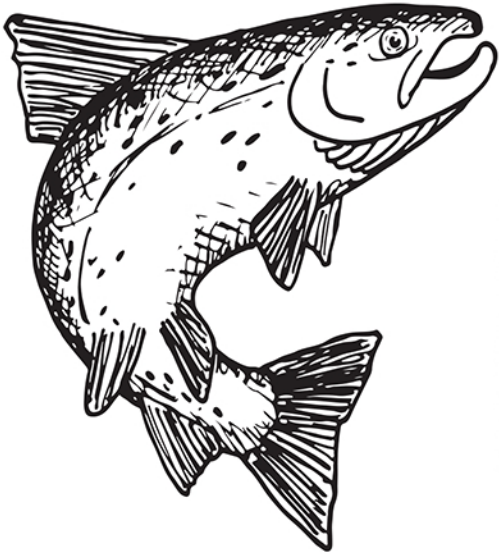
Based on the stories you find in the circles, what are some ways this river confluence has been a space of gathering as well as economic, ecological, and cultural significance, especially for those who have called this place home since time immemorial?

REFLECT

What do you think this place might have looked and sounded like in 1805, when Lewis & Clark passed through this region?

What do you think it might look and sound like in another 200 years?





GIVING BACK

What are some ways you will give back to this place & keep it special for future generations?

GRATITUDE

We offer thanks to the many Indigenous Tribes and Bands who have traveled, traded, fished, and lived along the Columbia River system.

These include people whose descendants are now members of the Chinook Indian Nation, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

We encourage you to offer gratitude & learn more about the unique living cultures, customs, and people from the Indigenous Nations who have called this land home since time immemorial.

“ Because of that relationship that we have with the river, with the salmon, and with the plant life around that area, I feel a very heavy responsibility to that environment. ”

—*Patricia Whitefoot,
Yakama Nation*

LEARN MORE

Connect with additional resources, videos, and information about the history, culture, and ecology at Sacajawea State Park by visiting Confluence's website.



Scan this QR code or visit the website below:

confluenceproject.org/storycirclesresources

GET INVOLVED

Confluence volunteers take care of our River Sites through work parties, outreach events, and many other ways. Learn more at:

confluenceproject.org

CREDITS

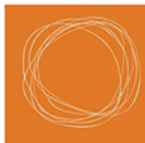
This guide was created as part of Confluence's education programs connecting students with the history, culture, and ecology at Sacajawea State Park.

Project Team: Betsy Henning, Heather Shá xat k'ei Gurko (Tlingit and Dutch), Lily Hart, Courtney Yilk, and Colin Fogarty.

Designed and illustrated by Mike Murawski & Bryna Campbell with Super Nature Adventures.



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