Wiicimiihkimomaataawi!
‘Let’s work together!’

Collaborating with Tribes in Heritage Tourism

Morgan Lippert and Logan York
Cultural Resources Office
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

with

Christy Brocken
Historic Resource Manager
Strawtown Koteewi Park, Hamilton County Parks and Rec.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

myaamiaki *— the downstream people*



Government seat: Miami, OK

Land base: Miami, OK (reservation) and Fort Wayne, IN (45-acre property with trust status, cultural office)

Citizens: 7,300+ living in diaspora in all 50 states and abroad

Ancestral Homelands: present-day Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, parts of lower Michigan and Wisconsin

Hamilton County Parks and Recreation

- Over 1,854.32 acres
- 19 properties
- 13 public parks
- Over 210 archaeological sites





mihtami myaamiaki nipinkonci saakaciweeciki

"At first the Miami came out of the water."

Mural by Myaamia artists Jody Gamble, Royce Carter, and Katrina Mitten
Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center



Šikaakonki
Chicago

Saakiiweeyonki
South Bend

Mihšiiwiateehi
Elkhart

Kiihkayonki
Fort Wayne

Kineepikomeekwa
Logansport

Wiipicahkionki
Huntington

Aciipihkahkionki
Vincennes

Peeyankihšionki
Cayuga

Waayaahtanonki
Lafayette

Pinkwaawilenionki
Piqua (OH)

Kiteepihkwana
Lafayette/Delphi

myaamiaki eehi mihtoseeniwiciki

Where the Miami culture was practiced and maintained, circa 1650-1850

**major villages included, not an exhaustive list*

Relationships to Place: Agrarian society, forest and prairie management





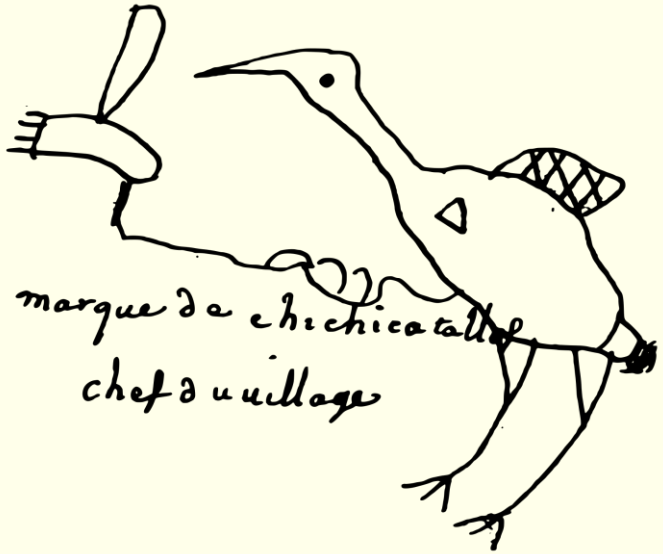
Meehtikoošiaki 'French' Encounters, Beaver Wars (1640 - 1701)



Miami-Illinois speaker with calumet pipe



Fur trader Nicholas Perot (right), the first French person to have sustained contact with Myaamiaaki



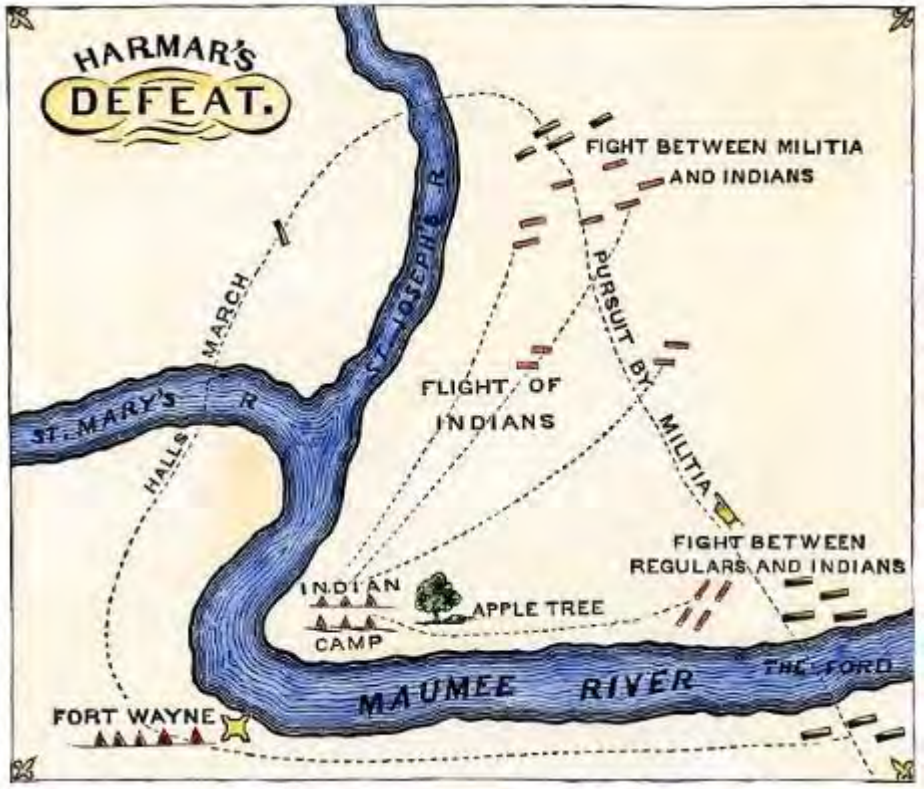
Great Peace of Montreal, 1701

Treaty Signature of Myaamia Akima 'Miami chief' Chichicatallo


Then, in the **1763** Treaty of Paris, the French gave the British their claims in Myaamionki.
Myaamionki
SPANISH CLAIMS
BRITISH CLAIMS


Two decades later, at the **1783** Treaty of Paris, the British ceded their claimed lands to the Mihši-maalhsaki.
Myaamionki
SPANISH CLAIMS
AMERICAN CLAIMS
DISPUTED

Mihši-maalhsa Wars (1778 – 1794)



Harmar's Defeat, 1790
(Battle of Kiihkayonki 'Fort Wayne')

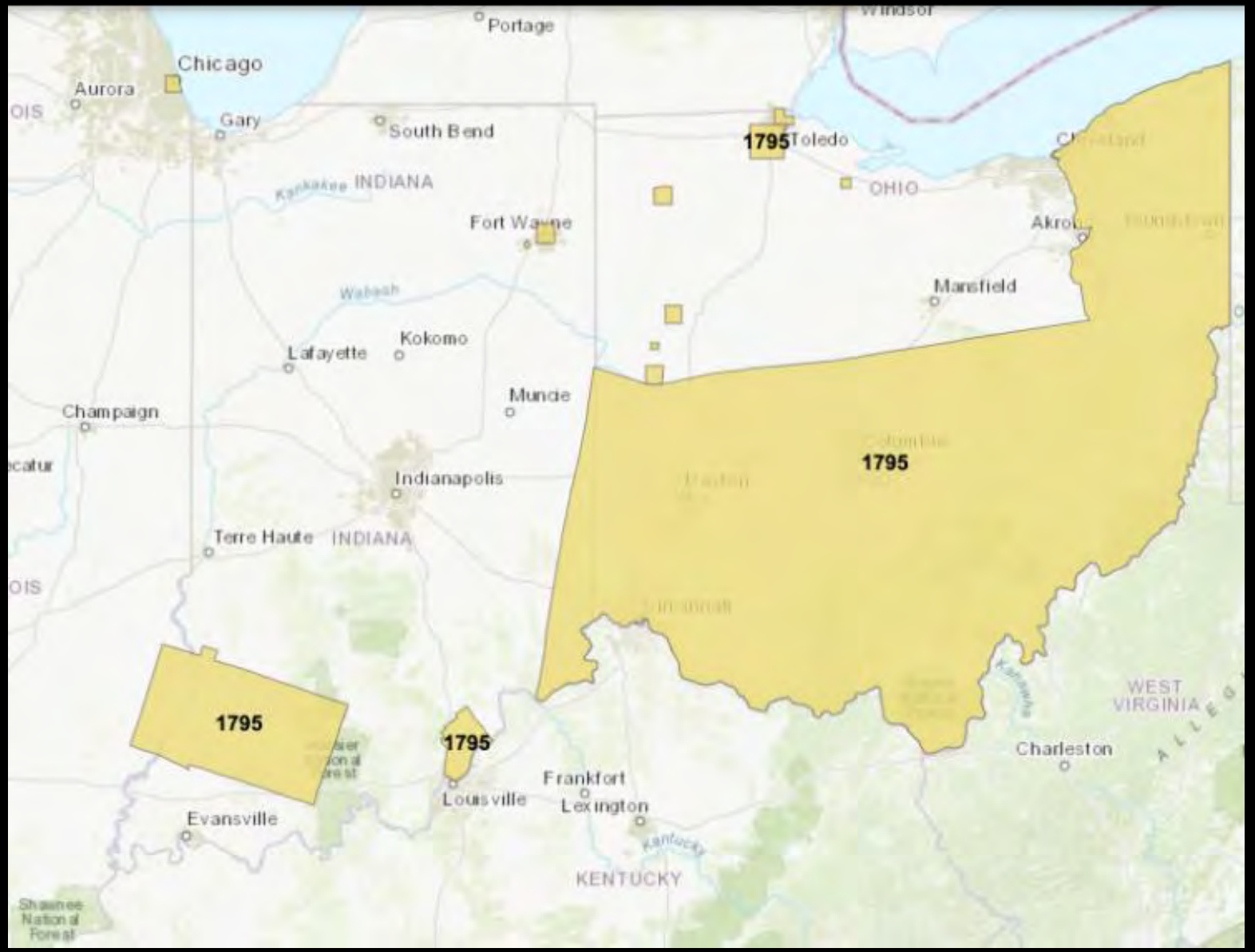


Akima Mihšihkinaahkwa
'Chief Little Turtle'

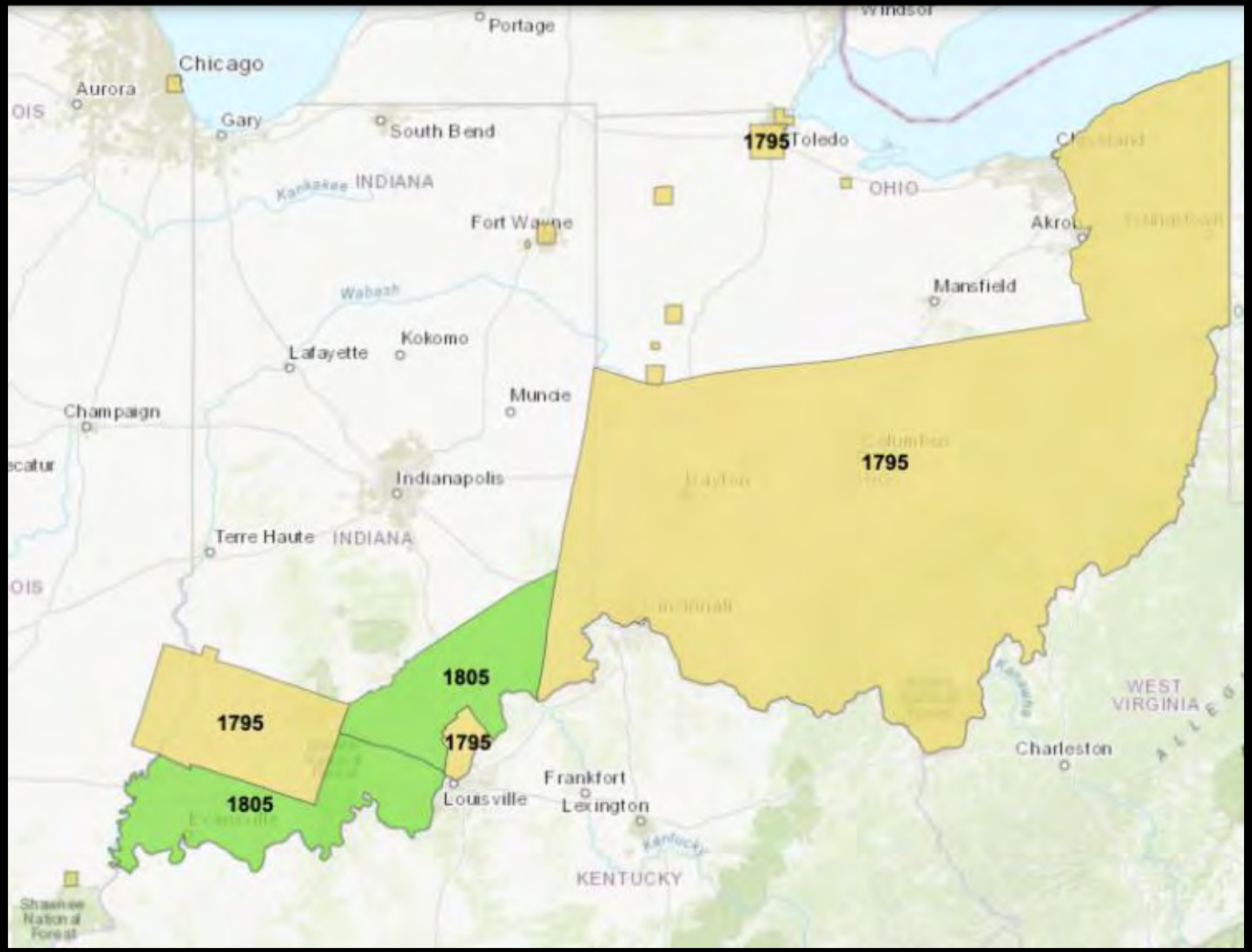


General Anthony Wayne

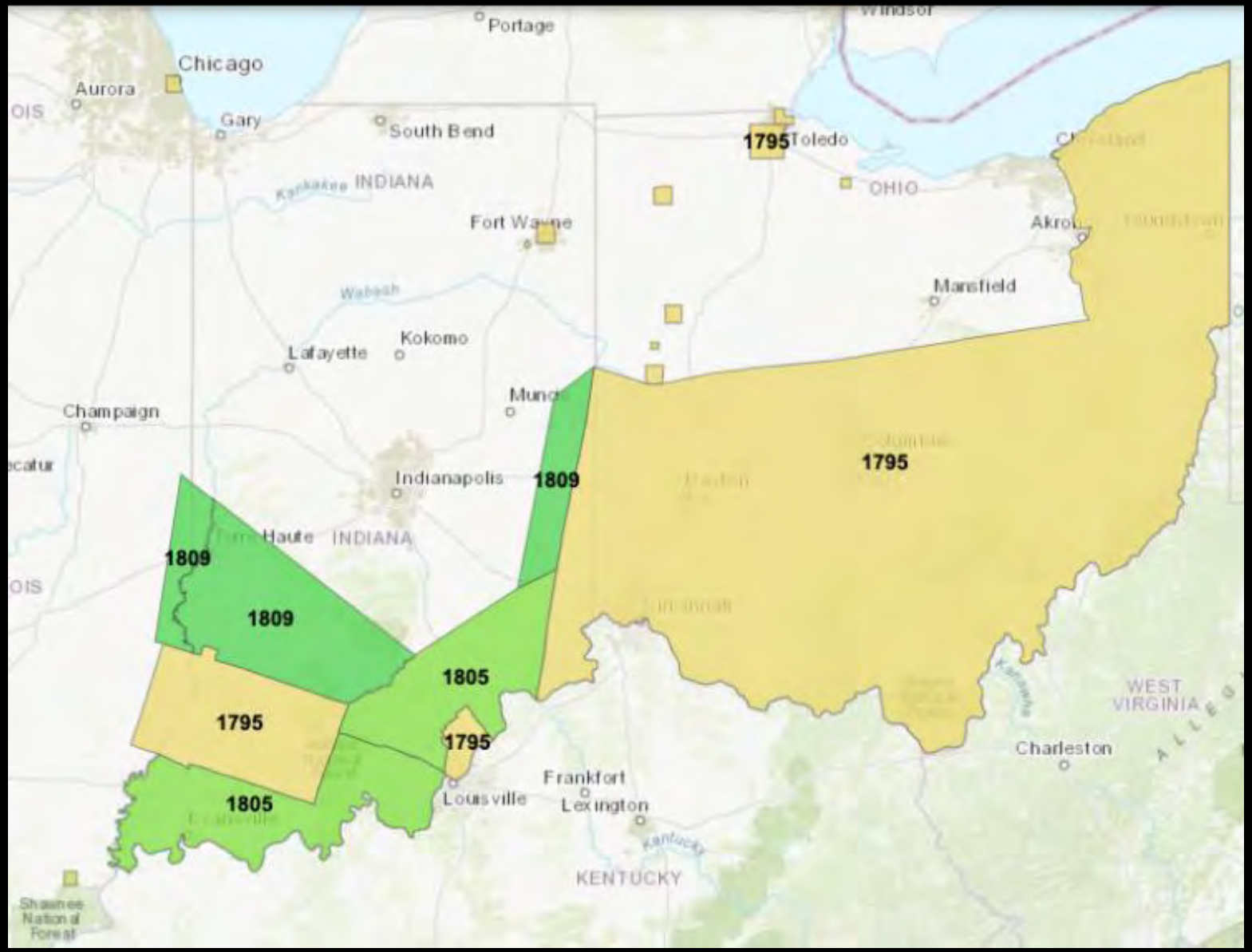
1795: Treaty of Greenville



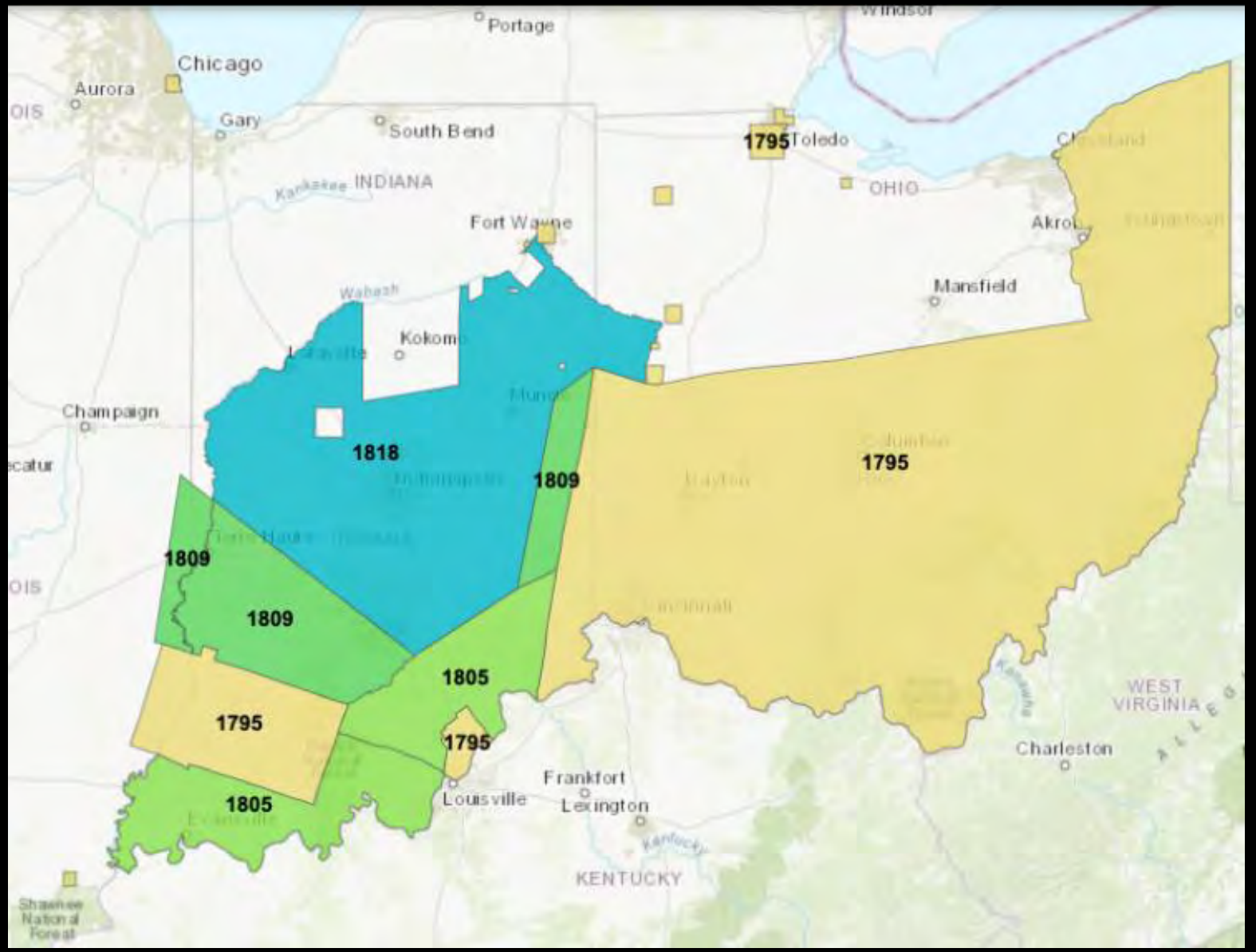
1805: Treaty of Grouseland



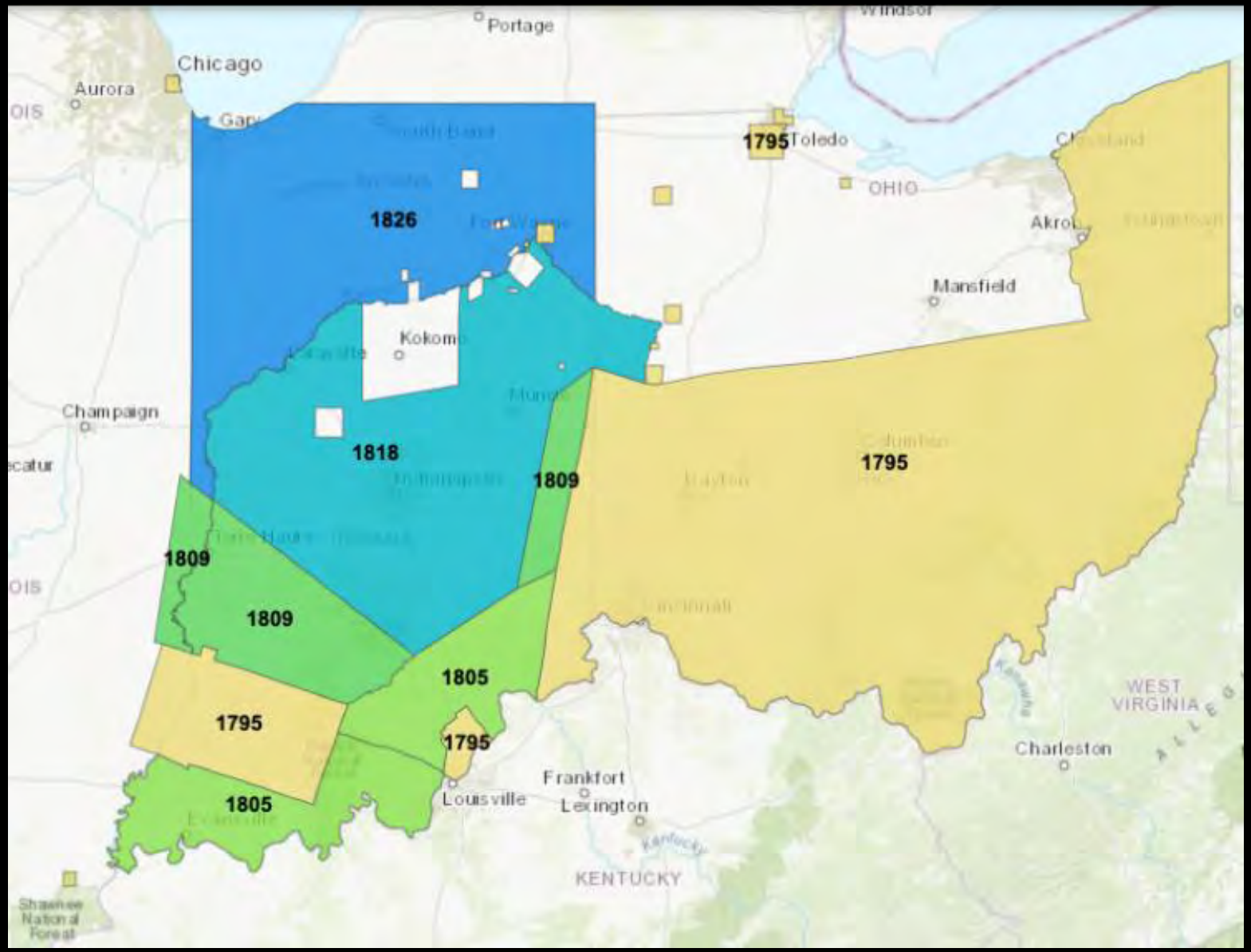
1809: Treaty of Fort Wayne



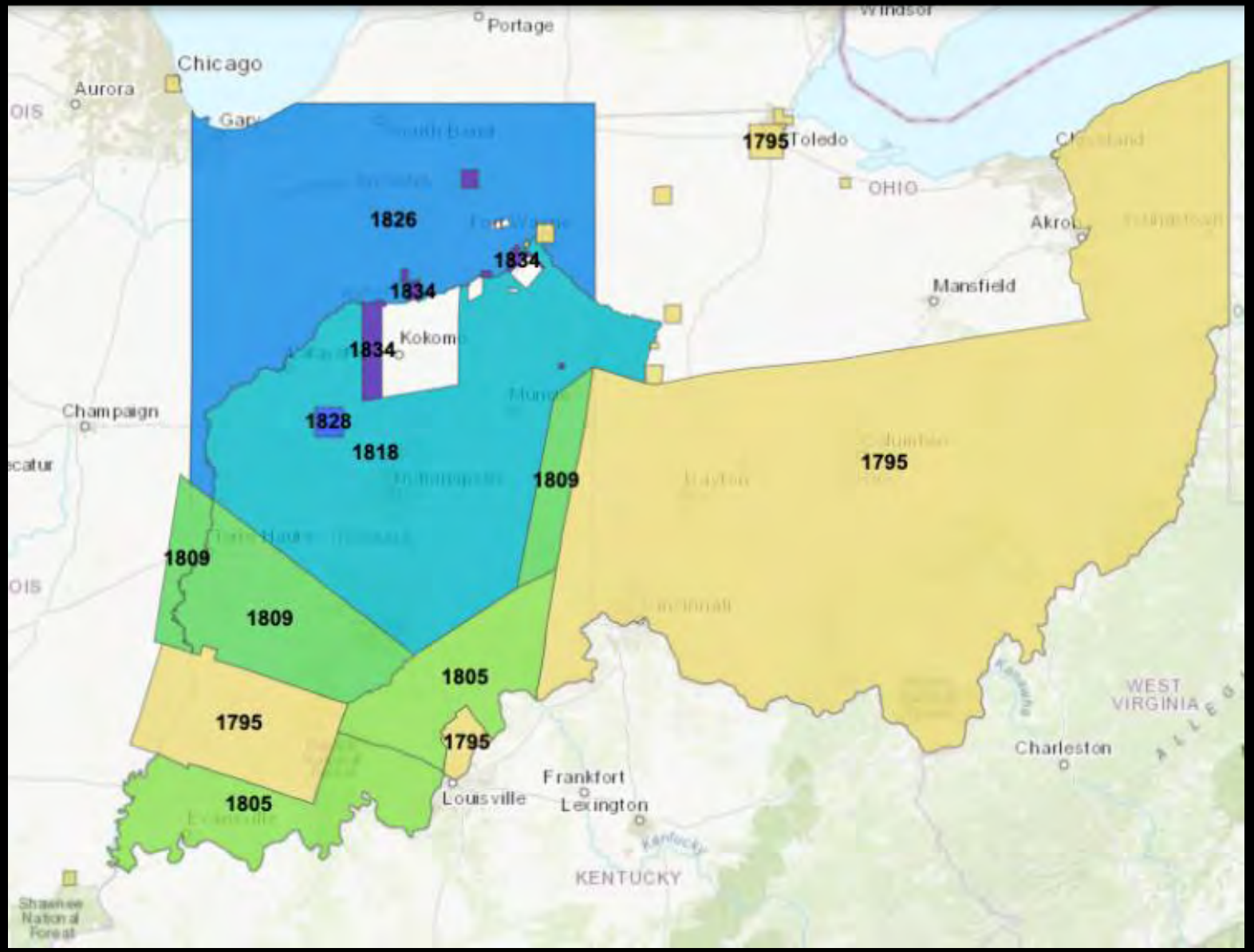
1818: Treaty of St. Mary's



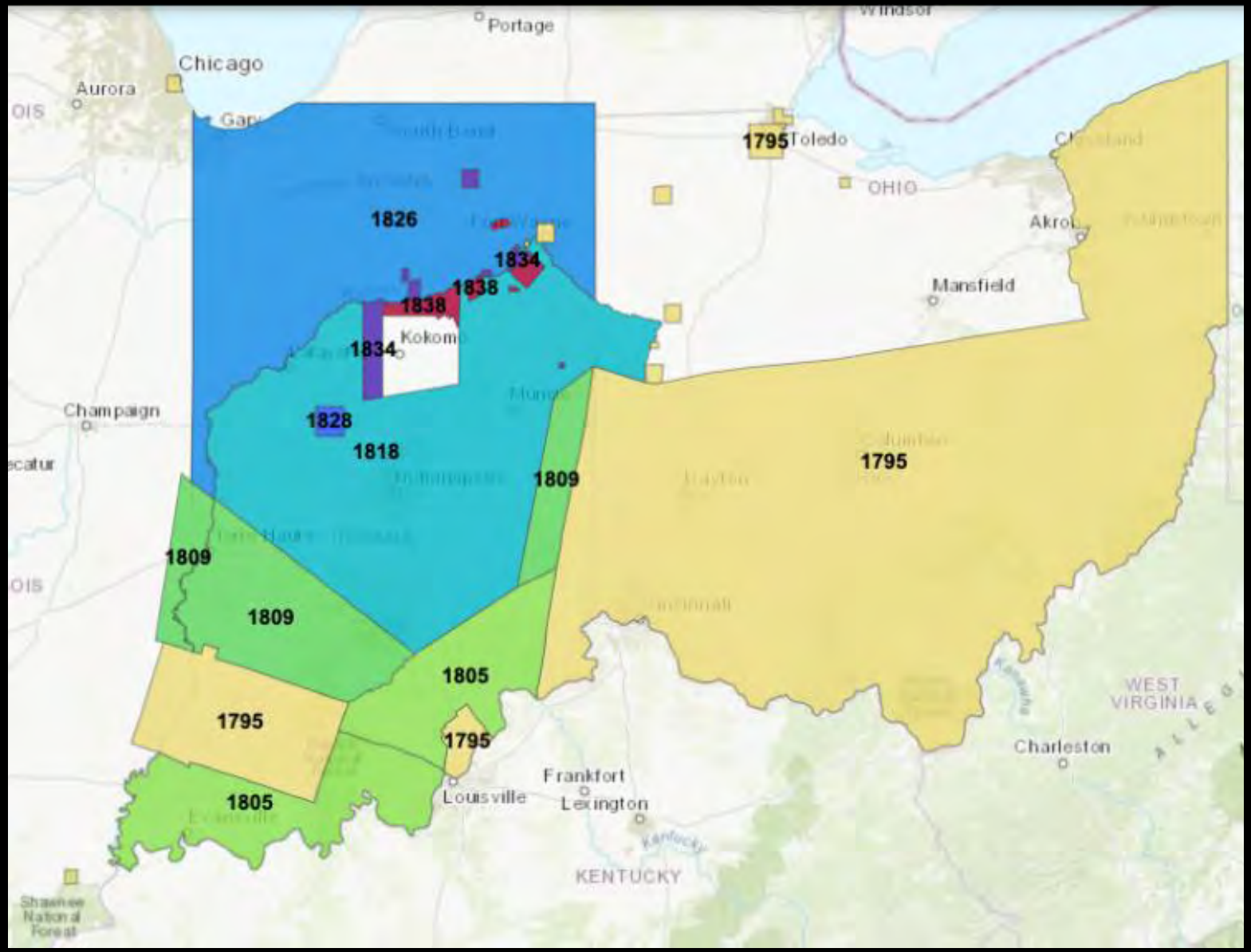
1826: Treaty of Mississinewa



1834: Treaty at the Forks of the Wabash



1838: Treaty at the Forks of the Wabash





Akima Pinšiwa 'Chief J.B. Richardville'

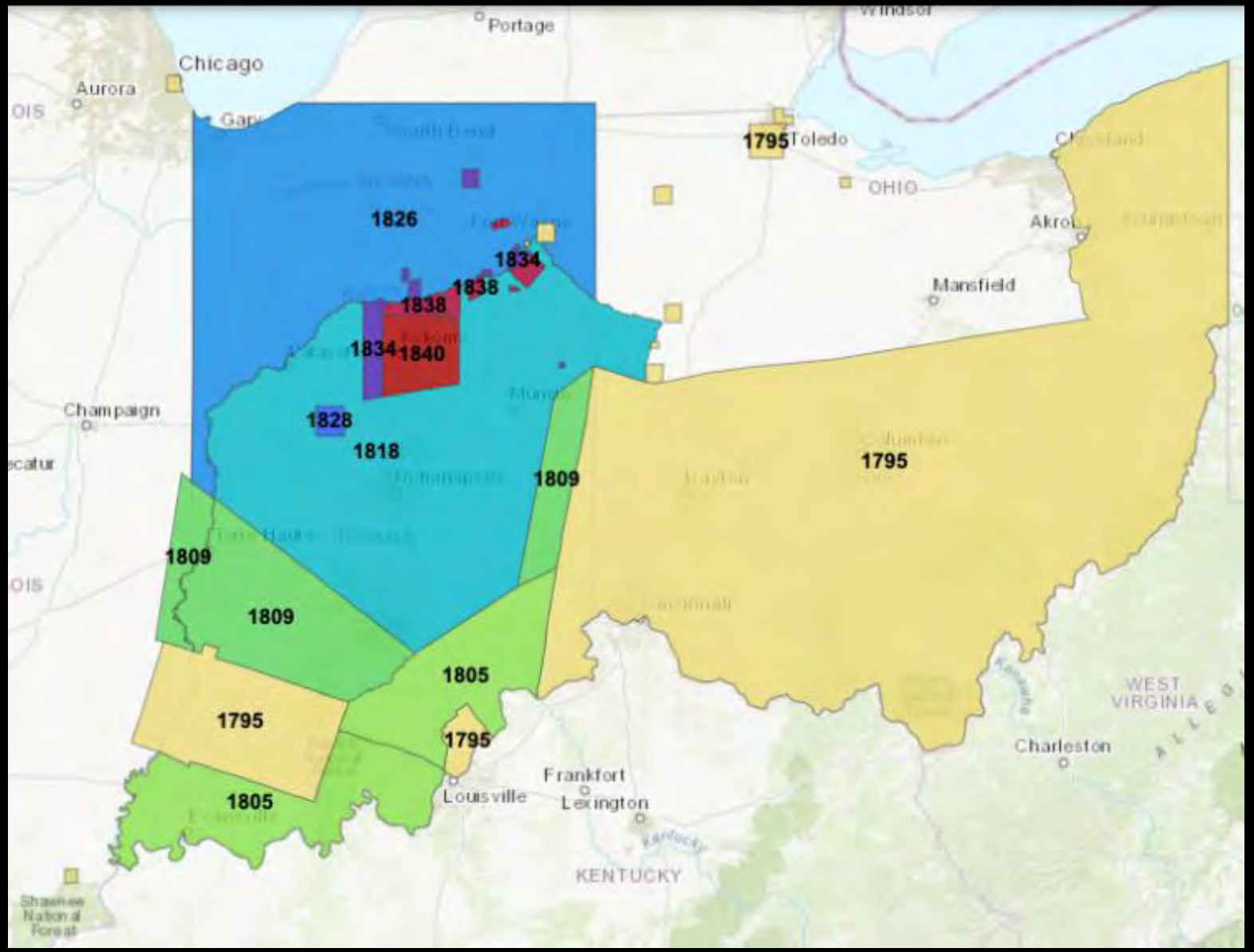


Akima Pinšiwa Awikiiki

'Chief Richardville House'

National Historic Landmark

1840: Treaty of the Wabash



September 26, 1846
U.S. Army Arrives

THE MIAMI INDIANS.

Some time since it was stated in the papers that the Miami Indians were reluctant to remove from the lands they now occupy, in Indiana, and that a military force would be called into requisition to coerce them. A military force was sent among the red men; and, according to a letter in the 'Union,' they were removed 'peaceably and quietly.'



Red dot marks approx. location of Myaamia prisoner camp in Peru, IN

Division of Maps
FEB 28 1941
Library of Congress
G4094 .P4A3 1868 .R8 Ruq 46

October 6, 1846
Removal

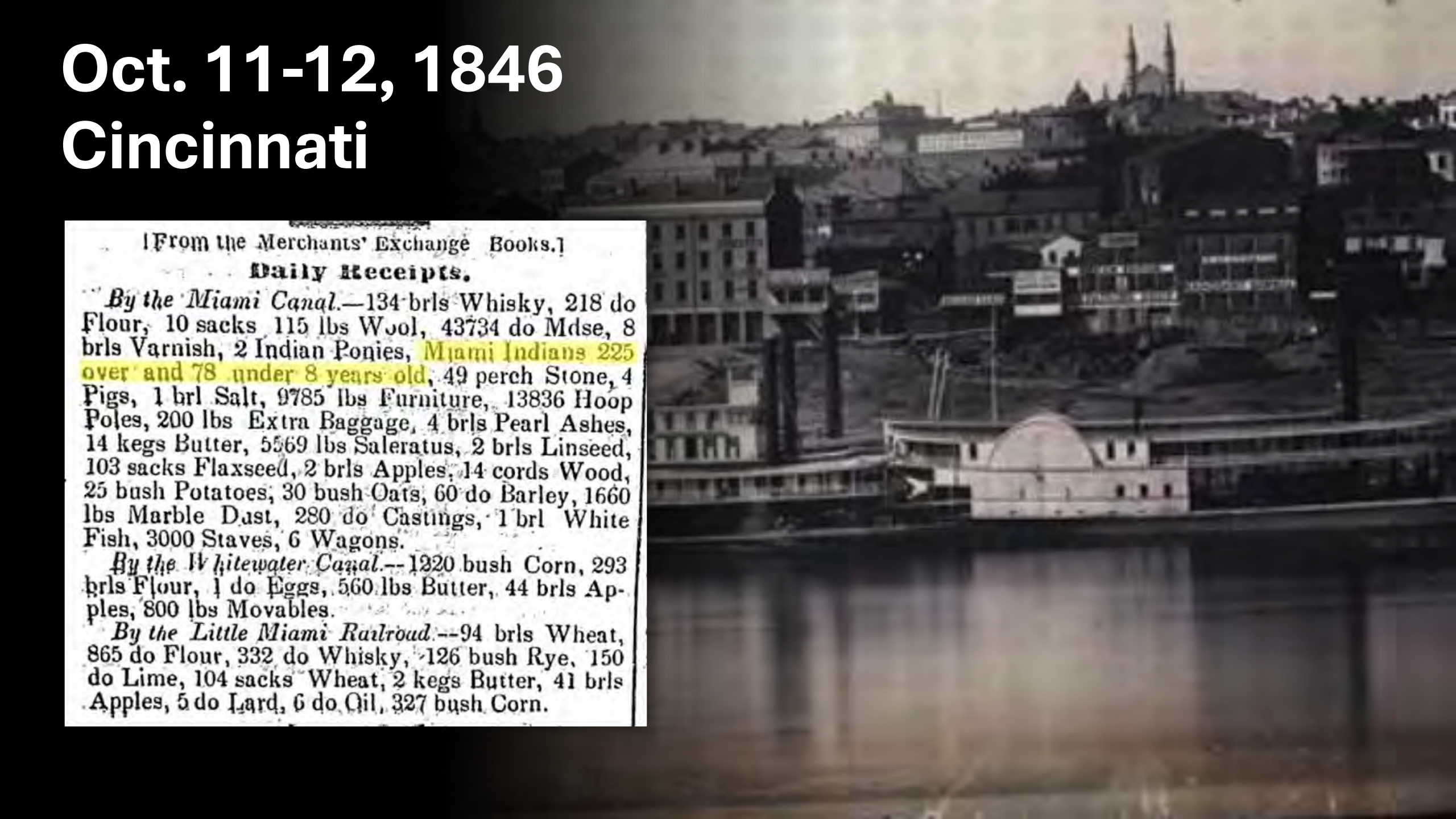


Myaamia Removal Route, 1846



This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of Interior, National Park Service.

Oct. 11-12, 1846
Cincinnati



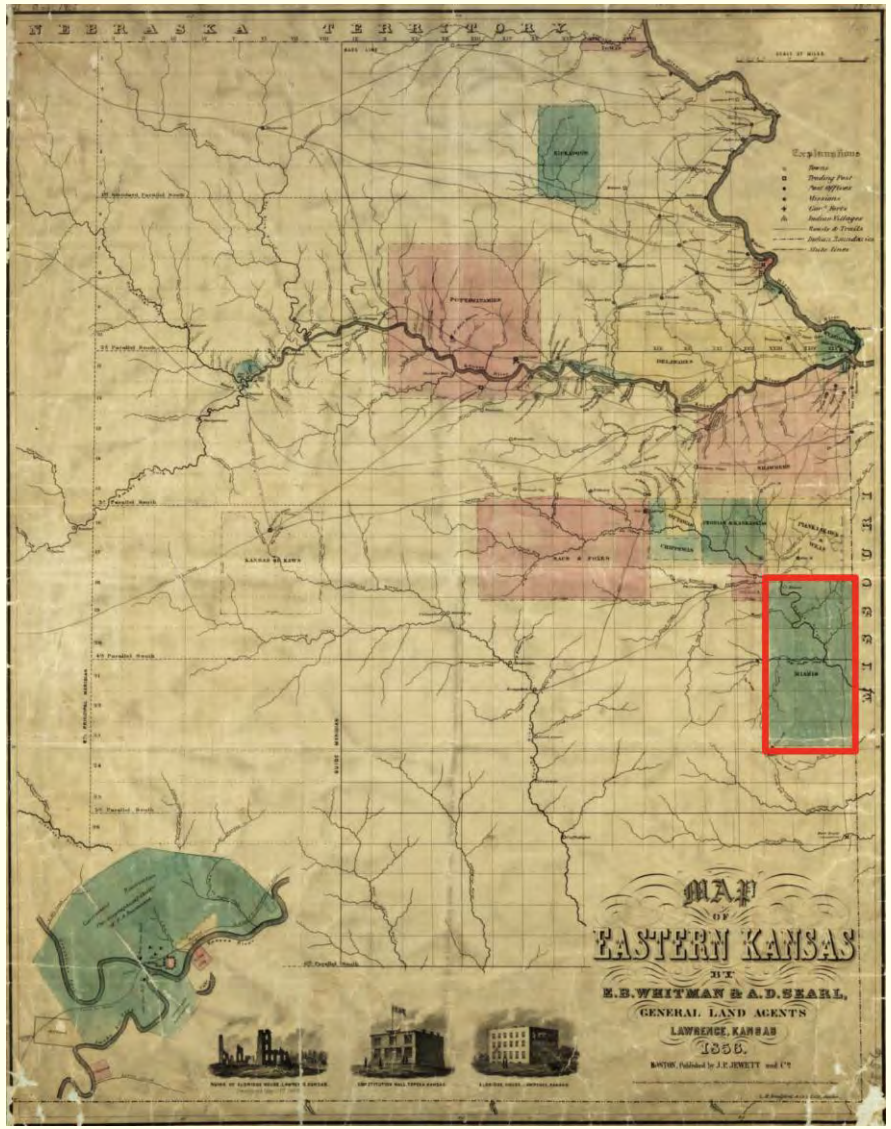
[From the Merchants' Exchange Books.]

Daily Receipts.

By the Miami Canal.—134 brls Whisky, 218 do Flour, 10 sacks 115 lbs Wool, 43734 do Mdse, 8 brls Varnish, 2 Indian Ponies, Miami Indians 225 over and 78 under 8 years old, 49 perch Stone, 4 Pigs, 1 brl Salt, 9785 lbs Furniture, 13836 Hoop Poles, 200 lbs Extra Baggage, 4 brls Pearl Ashes, 14 kegs Butter, 5569 lbs Saleratus, 2 brls Linseed, 103 sacks Flaxseed, 2 brls Apples, 14 cords Wood, 25 bush Potatoes, 30 bush Oats, 60 do Barley, 1660 lbs Marble Dust, 280 do Castings, 1 brl White Fish, 3000 Staves, 6 Wagons.

By the Whitewater Canal.—1220 bush Corn, 293 brls Flour, 1 do Eggs, 560 lbs Butter, 44 brls Apples, 800 lbs Movables.

By the Little Miami Railroad.—94 brls Wheat, 865 do Flour, 332 do Whisky, 126 bush Rye, 150 do Lime, 104 sacks Wheat, 2 kegs Butter, 41 brls Apples, 5 do Lard, 6 do Oil, 327 bush Corn.



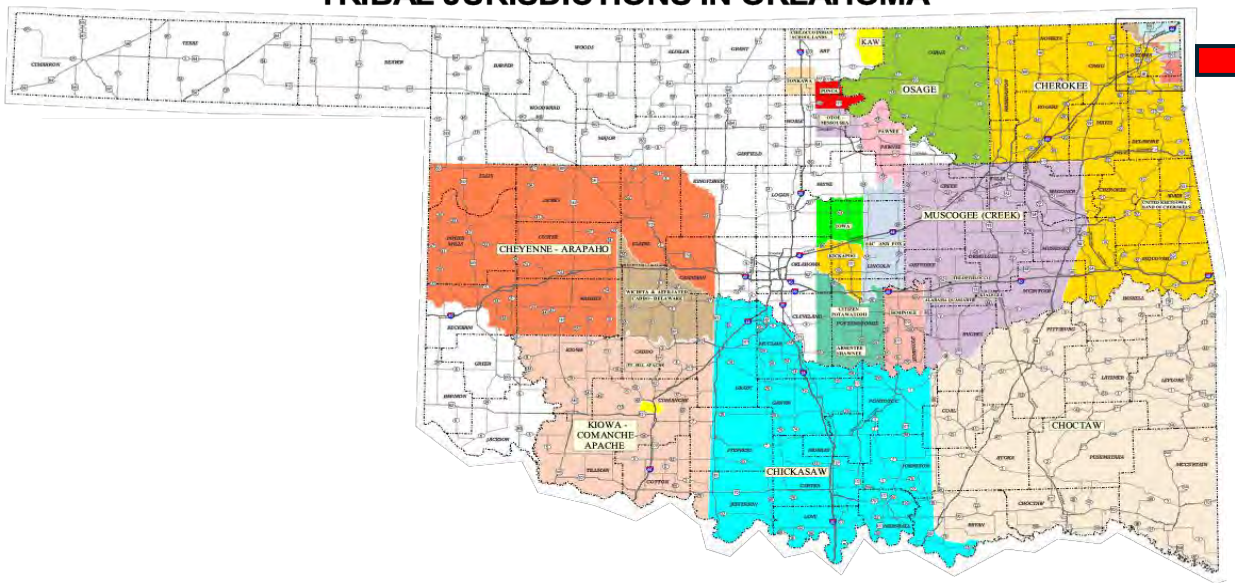
Miami Reservation
Eastern Kansas (1846-1867)





Marais des Cygnes River

TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS IN OKLAHOMA









Miami Tribe Leadership

Councilperson Nate Poyfair, Secretary-Treasurer Donya Williams, Chief Doug Lankford, Councilperson Tera Hatley, Second Chief Dustin Olds



Chief Lankford testifying in front of Congress





Miami Nation Reservation



Cultural Resources Extension Office

Fort Wayne, IN

MIAMI NATION POLICE DEPARTMENT

MNE
Miami Nation Enterprises

MYAAMIA
Autism Center
"Awakening the ability to soar."

MTOCRO

MIAMI TRIBE
INDIAN CHILD WELFARE

MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA
Justice Compassion Healing
ŠAAŠAAŠHKWEEKANI
TRIBAL COURT

MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING DEPARTMENT

CCDF
MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

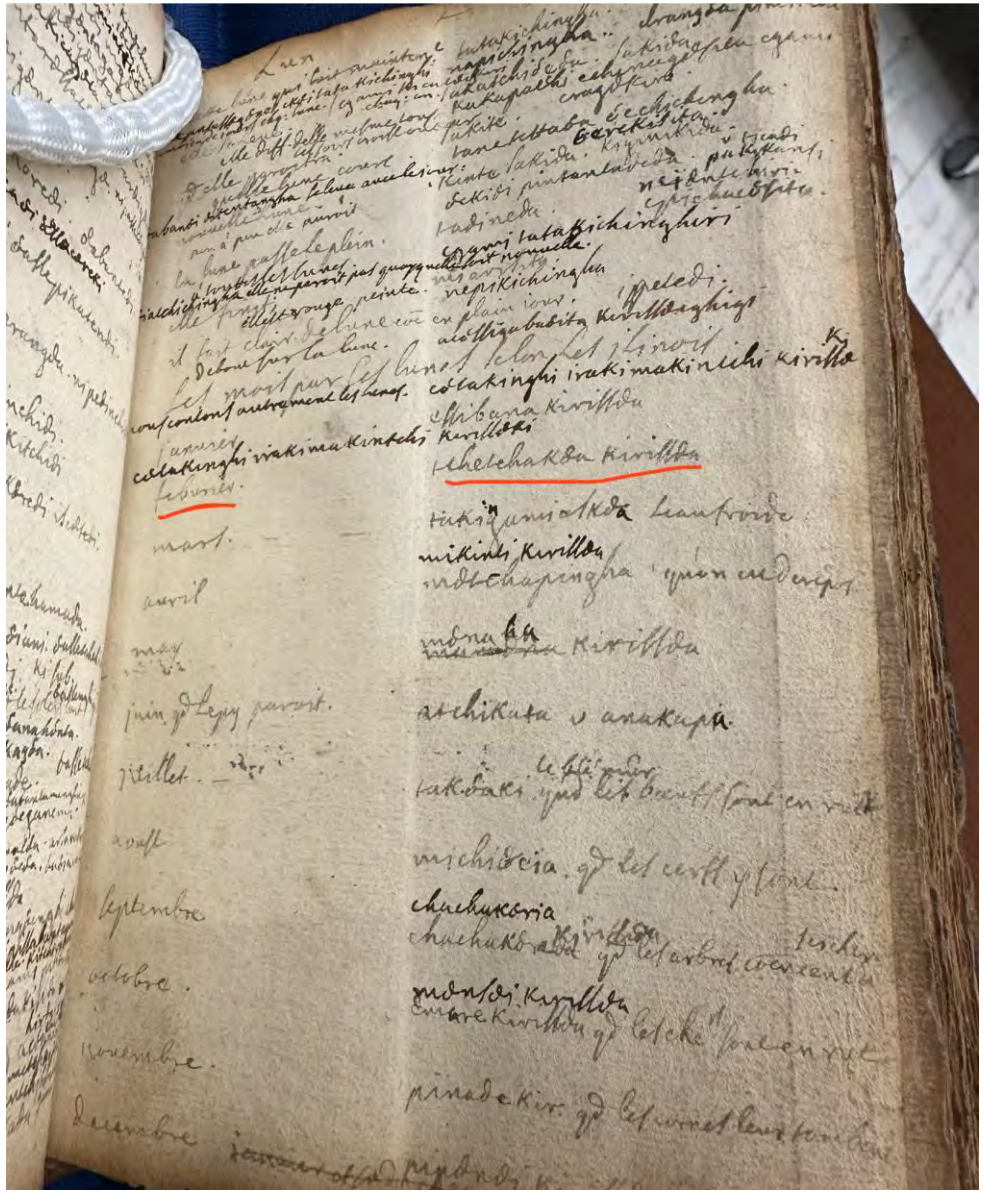
PRAIRIE SKY MARKET
ON THE MOTHER ROAD

MYAAMIA HERITAGE
FOUNDATION

PREPARE · PROTECT · RECOVER
MIAMI NATION
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

MIAMI NATION
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY

PRAIRIE SKY
PROCESSING
MIAMI NATION
918-541-1400
EST. 2021



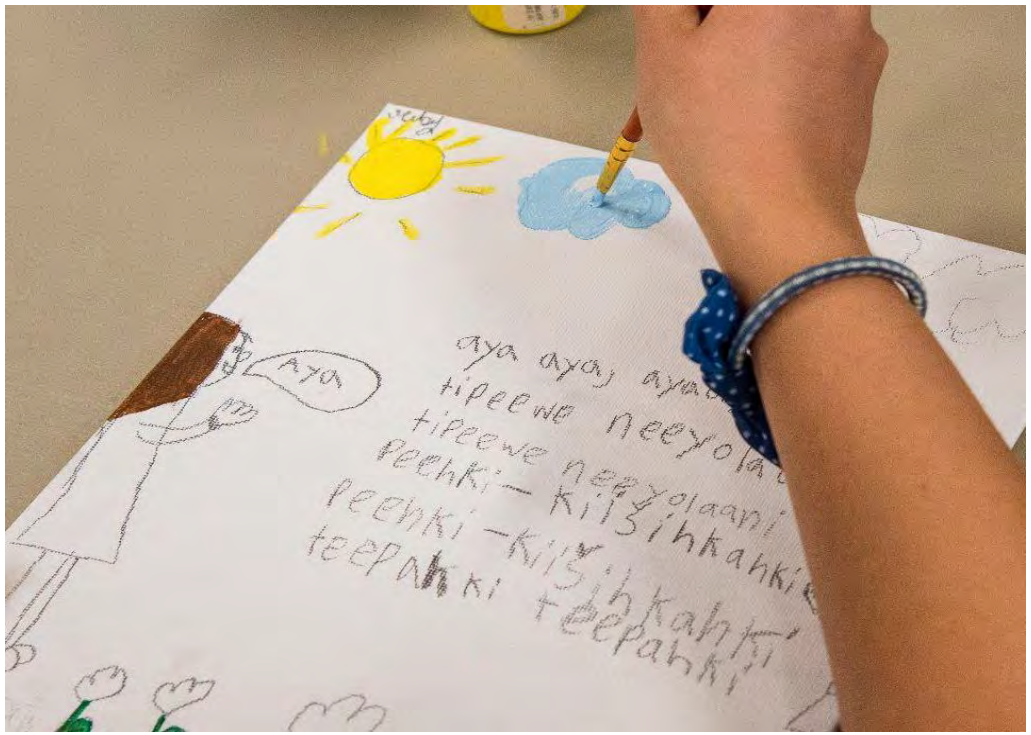
Myaamia lunar months in Jesuit Dictionary, late 17th century



Myaamia lunar month matching game, February 2024






Ayo
tipeewe neeyola
tipeewe neeyolaani
peehki- kiisihkahki
peehki -kiisihkahki
teepahki teepahki


STRONG.
RESILIENT.
MYAAMIA.


WOODSTOCK
1969

Today's Presentation

1. Develop an understanding of culturally appropriate and **respectful** heritage tourism programs that honor Indigenous histories and traditions.

2. Learn to engage tribes as **equal partners** to ensure tourism initiatives **support cultural preservation rather than exploitation.**

3. Understand the importance and process of a cultural and respectful collaboration with **federally-recognized tribes**.

4. Become familiar with the role of **tribal sovereignty** and community input in **co-creating** heritage tourism experiences.

What is Heritage Tourism?

*"Traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that **authentically** represent the stories and people of the **past and present**."*

- National Trust for Historic Preservation

- Archaeology sites
- Living history museums
- Monuments
- Historic houses/buildings
- Battlefields



Colonial Williamsburg, VA



Taos Pueblo, NM

Heritage Tourism

Why?

- Seeking authenticity
- Education-driven, not just entertainment
- Often a pilgrimage, going for a specific purpose
- A desire to connect with the past

Benefits

- Study by the Travel Industry Association of America indicated that heritage tourists **stay longer and spend more** per trip than those who travel for business or personal reasons



Independence Hall



Route 66

Strawtown Koteewi Park

- Largest park in Hamilton County
- 800 acres with 9 miles of trails
- Stretches 3 miles along the White River
- Horseback riding, archery, biking, canoeing, aerial/ziplining, fishing



Purchased by Hamilton County Parks in 1999 from Dan Taylor's Trust

Dan D. Taylor

NOBLESVILLE — Dan D. Taylor, 83, of Noblesville, died Tuesday, Sept. 21, 1999, at his home near Strawtown.

Mr. Taylor was a master farmer. He raised canning vegetables for the military during World War II on farms in Strawtown and Danville, Ind.

He was born Sept. 3, 1916, in Indianapolis, the son of Gustavius and Susan (Davis) Taylor.

He married Betty (Schorn) Taylor. She survives in Noblesville.

Mr. Taylor graduated from Shortridge High School in 1934. He attended DePauw and Purdue universities and was a member of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity. He also was a member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilot Association and the Flying Farmers organization. He was a licensed pilot for 57 years, and was one of the first Hamilton County farmers to have motorized equipment.



Taylor

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a stepson, Whitney Fischer of Indianapolis.

Calling will be 4 to 8 p.m. Friday at Randall & Roberts Funeral Home, Noblesville. Services will be 10 a.m. Saturday at the funeral home. The Rev. Richard D. Bell will officiate. Burial will be in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the donor's favorite charity.





Archaeological Sites at Strawtown Koteewi Park

- Located in Noblesville, IN
- 810 acres
- 138+ archaeological sites
- 4 sites listed on the National Register
- Artifacts dating back 10,500 years



All Time Periods Represented





Two Known Village Sites

The Strawtown Enclosure Site
12H883

- Oliver Phase Site
- 700 years ago

The Castor Farm Site 12H3

- Type Site for the Castor Farm people
- 900 years ago
- Six different Architectural Styles



Looking Back



Archaeological Excavations at Strawtown Koteewi Park

- From 2001 – 2011 archaeological research and archaeological excavations open to the public were held at Strawtown Koteewi Park
- Primarily during archaeology month and lasting between 1-3 weeks
- These excavations were done by local universities and permitted by the state of Indiana
- The park thought they were following correct protocol, but failed to consult with federally-recognized Tribes about the excavations under Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)



Exercising Miami Tribe Sovereignty

How a Native American burial site was desecrated in Hamilton County

County, university officials aggressively excavated ancient burial site at Strawtown Park, trampling on rights of tribes to protect their dead

Chris Sikich chris.sikich@indystar.com

Nov. 5, 2016 | Updated Nov. 11, 2016, 12:24 p.m. ET



An open field at Strawtown Koteewi Park in Noblesville, Ind., that was formerly a Native American village, seen Wednesday, October 12, 2016. *Jenna Watson/IndyStar*

Strawtown Koteewi Park Repatriation Nears Completion

By Julie Olds, Cultural Resources Officer



National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Beyond Compliance

NAGPRA forced many institutions to consult with tribal nations. By sharing our work with Strawtown Koteewi Park, we highlight what's possible when consultation **goes beyond compliance.**

NAGPRA establishes a legal floor, not an ethical ceiling.

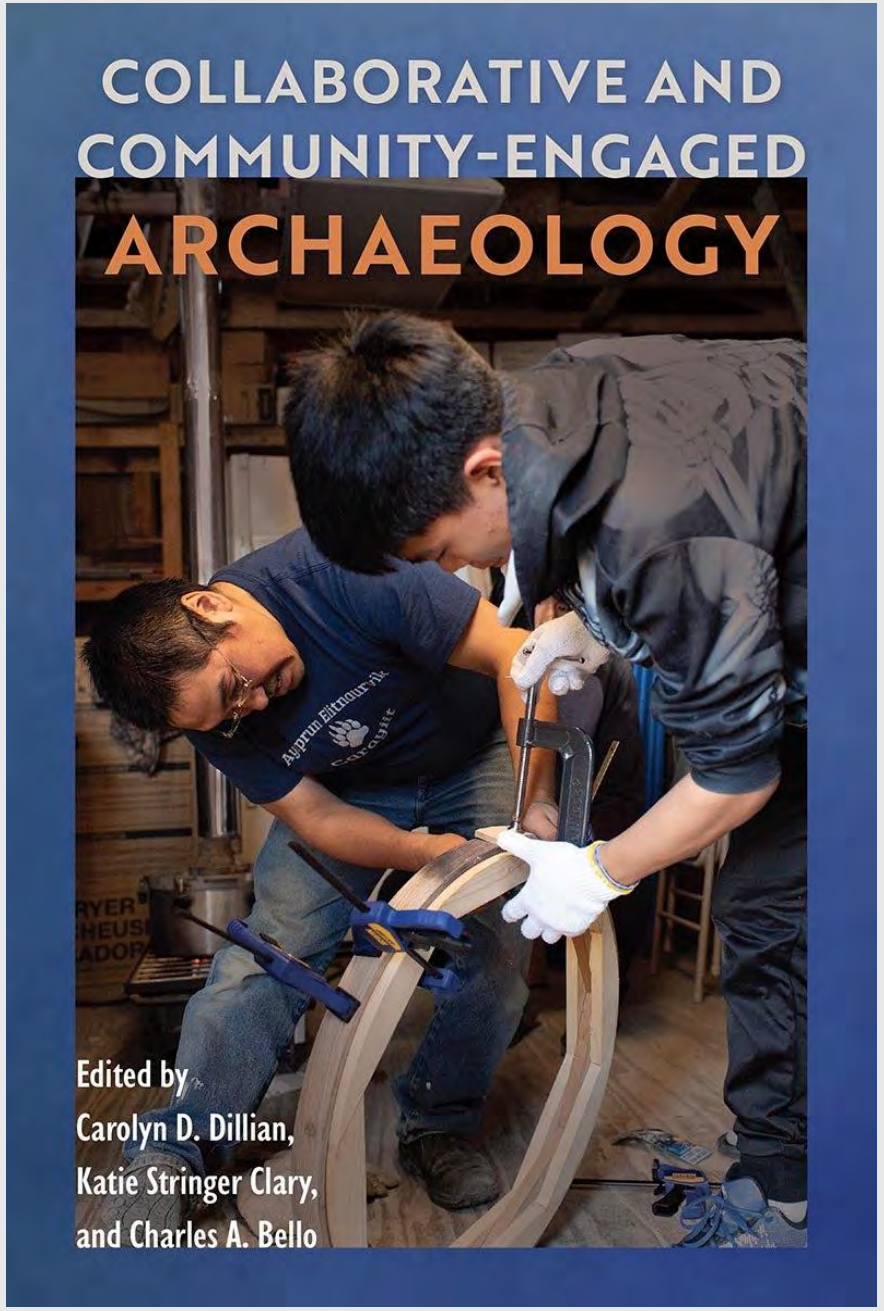
Healing Period



“At the speed of trust”

“From the tribe’s perspective, what are a few years when compared to almost a century of institutional neglect of not only our interests, but our basic human rights to bury our dead and narrate our own history?

Building a relationship with the Miami Tribe is a **process**. If you want to collaborate with us, you will have to engage in the process, which begins with meaningful consultation and **requires ample time and earnest effort.**”



5

At the Speed of Trust

Building Collaborative Tribal-Institutional Relationships

Rebecca A. Hawkins, R. Scott Willard,
Julie L. Olds, Jayne-Leigh Thomas,
and Edward W. Herrmann

It appears to be all the rage, of late, for archaeologists and their institutions to collaborate, or to want to collaborate, or to say they collaborate with tribes. Such enthusiasm for tribal collaboration is a relatively recent development—not exclusively so, perhaps, but certainly for most tribes it is. A desire to collaborate with tribes is reflective of a twenty-first-century archaeological ethos to be more community-facing and more multivocal, while being less colonially minded (Atalay 2006, 2012). It is also reflective, at least in part, of an archaeological idealism that collaboration will be redemptive of a disciplinary history of











Healing period meant Strawtown Koteewi

Park emphasized public programs

focused on nature, art, and science.









Timeline

2019: Christy wrote down goals, making a concentrated effort to prioritize relationship building

March 2020: Visit to Fort Wayne, tour by Doug Peconge

September 2020: MTO staff visit and meet new Park Director

2022: Storytelling with Doug Peconge

2023: Program with Dani Tippmann and Doug Peconge (left)



Moving Forward

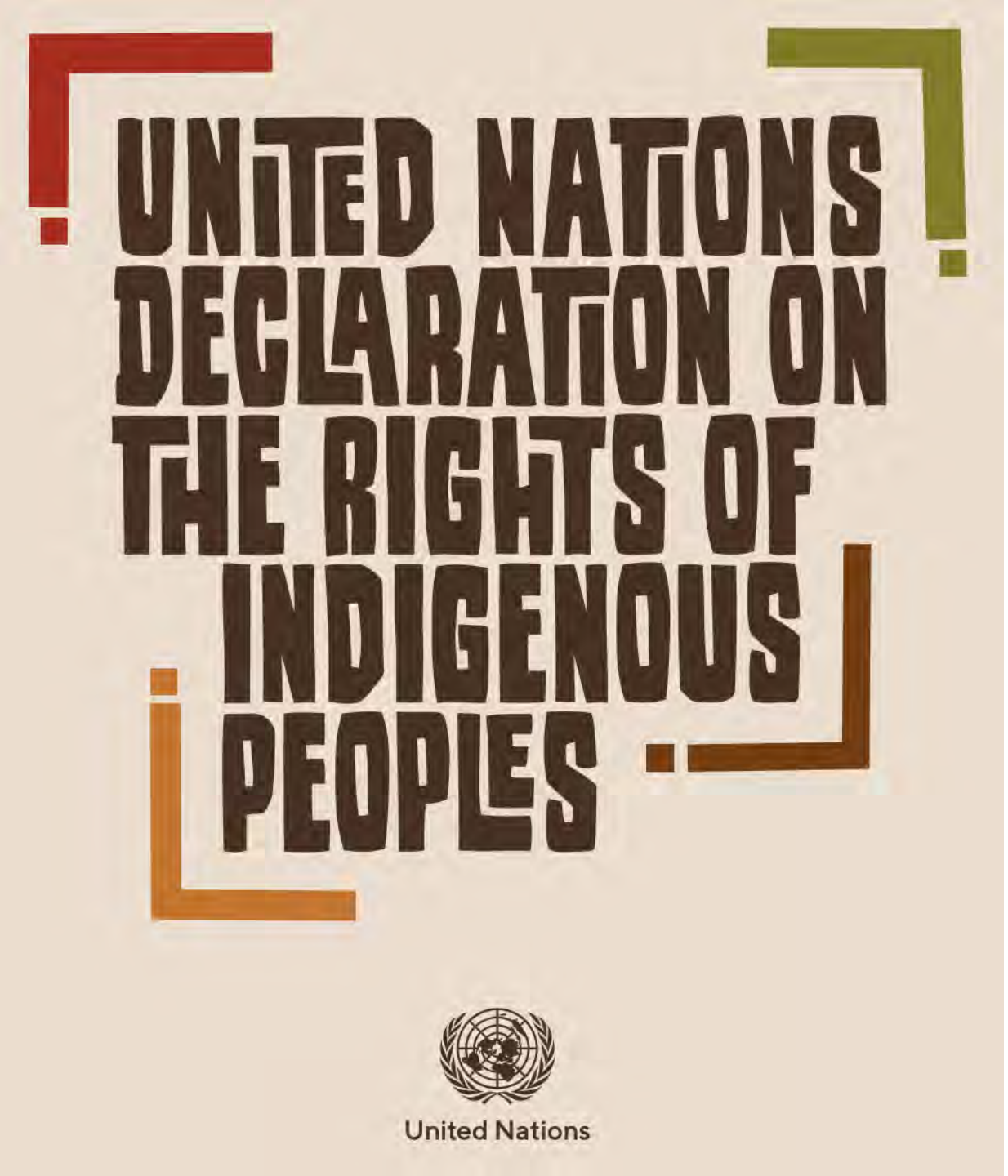
*"Traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that **authentically** represent the stories and people of the **past and present**."*

- National Trust for Historic Preservation

We have to ask ourselves:

Whose heritage is being experienced?

Who has the authority to represent that heritage?



Article 31:

"Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage."

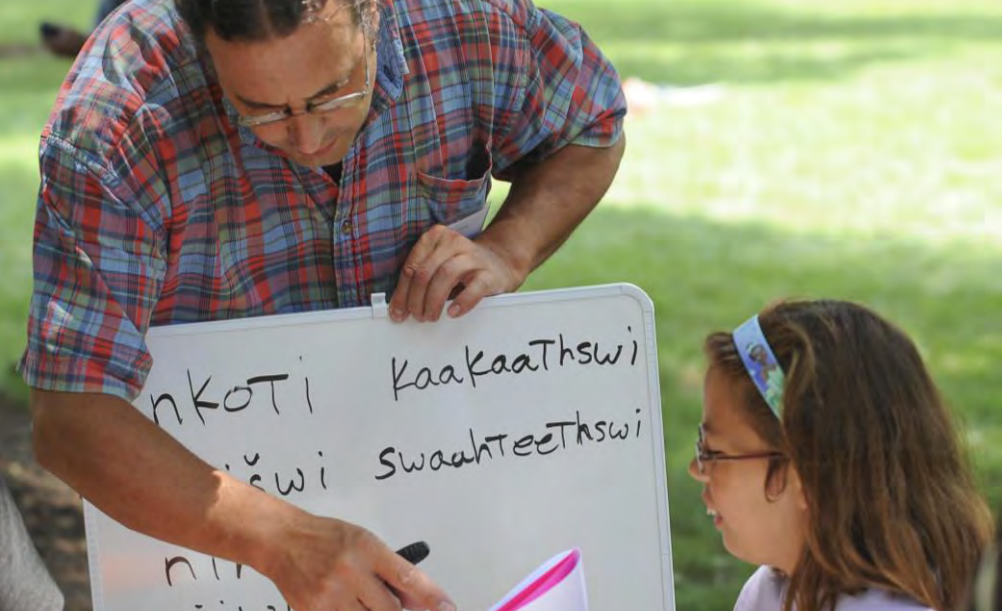
Canadian Archaeological Association
Association Canadienne d'Archéologie

National Trust for Canada

SAA
Society for American Archaeology

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ACHP
1966

ICOMOS
international council on monuments and sites





Myaamia heritage cannot be authentically interpreted without Myaamia people.





What does meaningful Tribal involvement look like?



Lesson 1: Reach Out with the Three T's

Tribal sovereignty, Timely, Transparent

*Lesson 1: Reach Out – **Tribal Sovereignty***

Who do you reach out to?

Tribal member ≠ Tribal consultation

Group of Native people ≠ Tribal nation



Federal recognition matters.

It recognizes Tribes as sovereign political entities with a continuing relationship to their histories, homelands, cultural practices, and community.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma flag represented alongside international flags at Miami University 2016 president inauguration parade.

*Lesson 1: Reach Out – **Timely***

The best time to consult was years ago.
The second best time is **now.**

Reach out at the **very beginning** of a project.

"Nothing About Us Without Us"

*Lesson 1: Reach Out – **Timely***

Spring 2024:

Christy reaches out

to the Tribe's Fort

Wayne office

"collaborate…in partnership"

"I am in the absolute beginning phases"

"welcome any and all input"

"change direction if preferred"

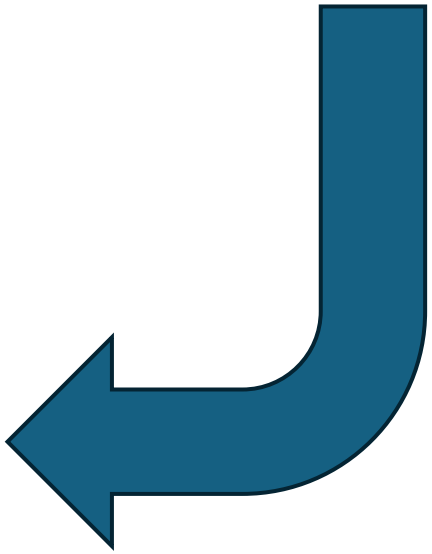
"We can duplicate the exhibit so the Tribe could have a copy as well"

*Lesson 1: Reach Out – **Timely***

Reaching out at the beginning of a project



Equal Partners



Supports cultural preservation, not exploitation and extraction

*Lesson 1: Reach Out – **Transparency***

Be transparent about your institution's history and about any lack of consultation.

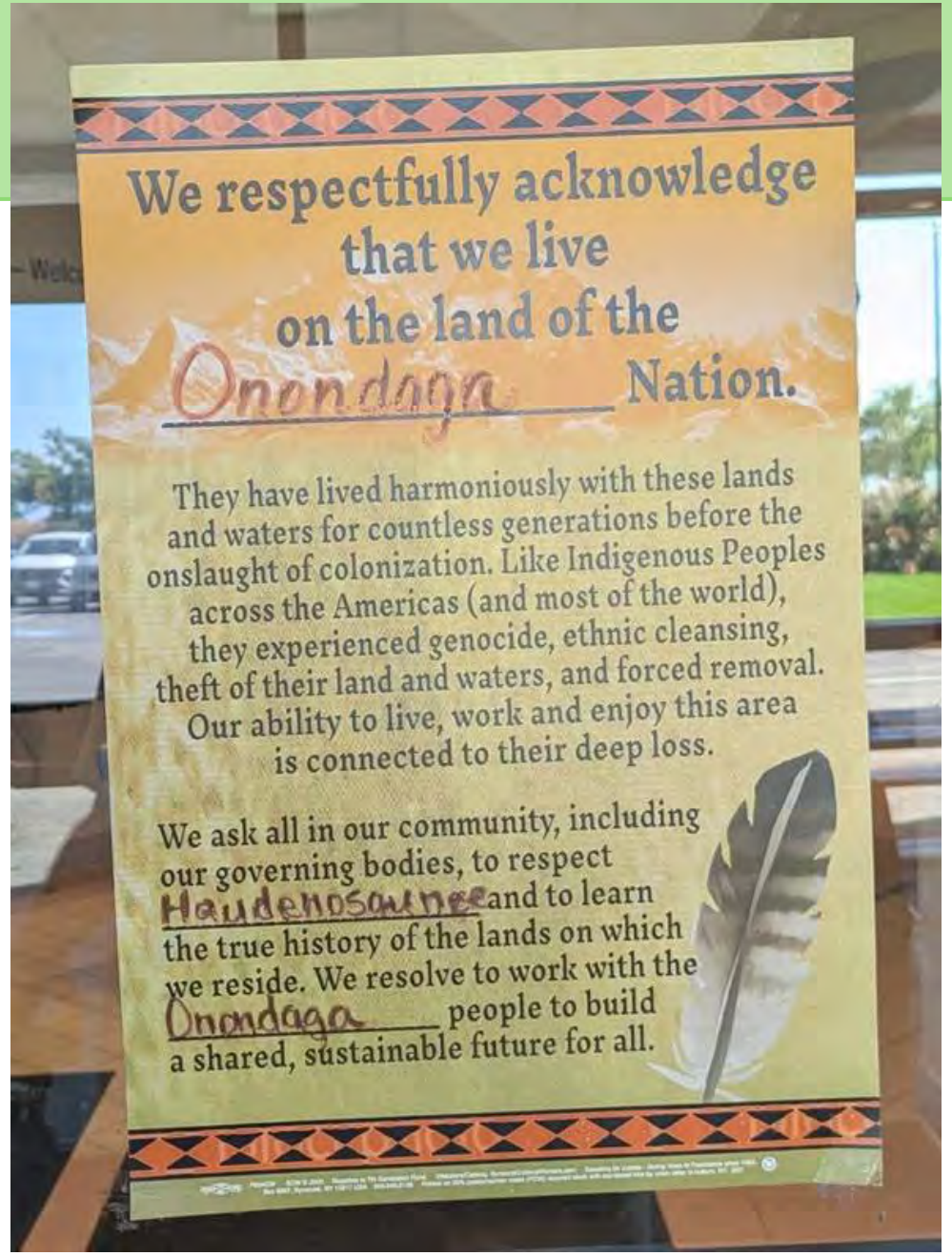
You personally aren't responsible for the actions of those before you, but you are responsible for the now.

Lesson 2
Intent ≠ Impact

Lesson 2: Intent ≠ Impact

Land Acknowledgements





Lesson 2: Intent ≠ Impact

"A good land acknowledgment will also provide resources and plans for following through with supporting Indigenous people of today and the future."

- Dr. Haley Shea (Miami Tribe of Oklahoma)



Miami University President Gregory Crawford and Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Chief Douglas Lankford signing a Memorandum of Agreement in 2017

Lesson 2: Intent ≠ Impact

Land Acknowledgement Best Practices

- Include an **action plan** that includes **building relationships** and/or giving back resources (time, money, emotional labor, etc.).

- Talk about tribal nations in the **present tense.**

Lesson 2: Intent ≠ Impact

"No matter how you say it…you gotta see it!"

Marking campaign that failed to:

- consider the complete picture of language revitalization

- Research the Tribe's publicly-available language resources (including online dictionary with audio files)

It does matter how you say it.



Koteewi 'fire'





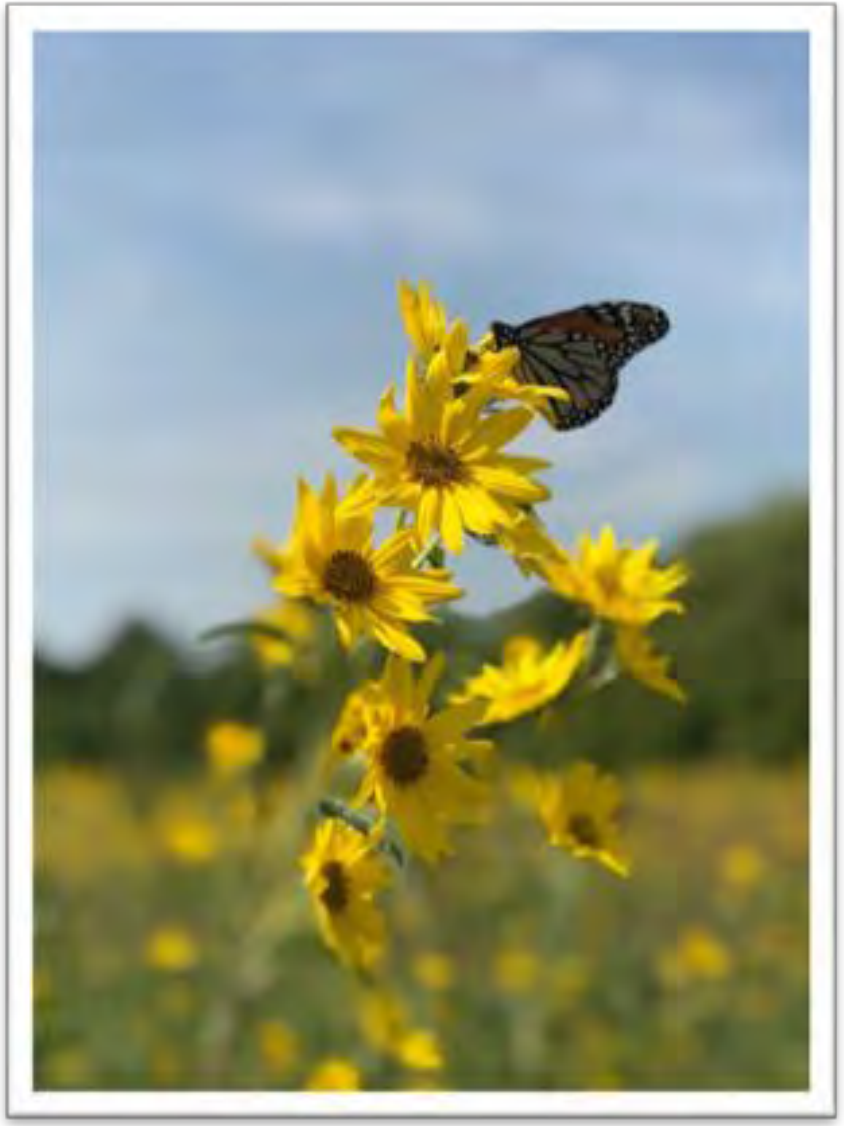
More than a Word, More Than a Name

It is said a specific way by a **living** community

kiiwahtekaataawi **koteenki**

'stomp dance, we dance around the fire'

What the Work Looks Like:



- Conversations
- Monthly meetings
- Talking about uncomfortable truths
- Sitting with uncertainty
- Doing hard things

Bringing the language back to the land

- Board Meeting

- Teach staff and visitors the importance of proper pronunciation and the history behind language revitalization

- Field Trips
- Exhibits
- Staff Meetings



Bringing the language back to the land



(Re)connecting

- Restores Myaamia presence to places where the language and Tribe have been displaced
- Helps visitors recognize the longstanding relationship between Myaamia people, their language, and the land

Affirming contemporary Myaamia identity

- demonstrates that Myaamia people and culture are not just in the past
- Myaamiataweenki is a living language, and the Tribe remains connected to these landscapes today

Cross Roads Kiosk

- Consulted with the Myaamia Center to create words for the signs

- Furthering language revitalization, demonstrated it’s a living language

Riparian Corridor
pipyaawe siipionki

“alongside the river"



Cross Roads Kiosk

Ribbonwork-inspired Designs

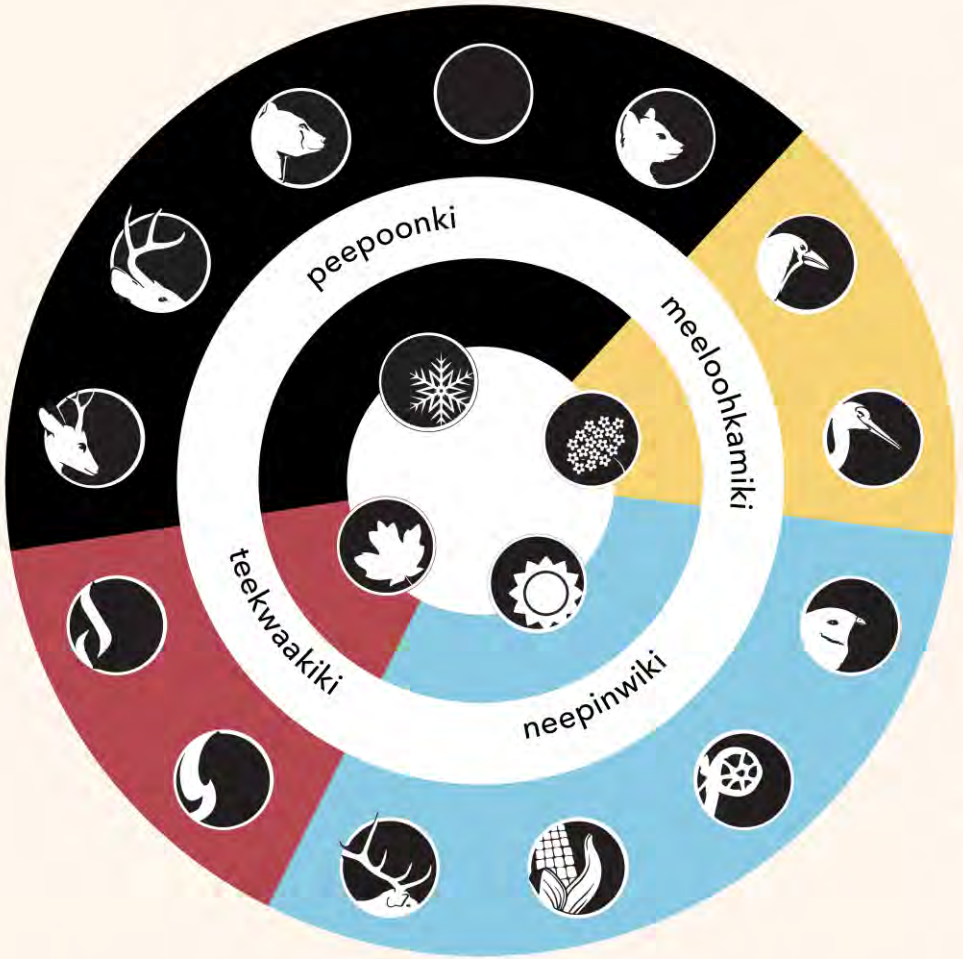












mahkoonsa kiilhswa 'young bear moon'
- *First moon, winter*
- *When black bear cubs leave their dens, it's time to collect maple tree sap*

aanteekwa kiilhswa 'crow moon'
- *Second moon, spring*
- *When crows nest and breed, it's time to turn sap into maple syrup and sugar*

cecaahkwa kiilhswa 'sandhill crane moon'
- *Third moon, spring*
- *Cranes are a powerful icon for Myaamia People, and during this month cranes return from their southern migration*

wiihkoowia kiilhswa 'whippoorwill moon'
- *Fourth moon, summer*
- *When whippoorwills begin nesting on the ground, it is warm enough to begin planting miincipi 'Miami corn'*

paaphsaahka niipinwiki 'mid-summer moon'
- *Fifth moon, summer*
- *Period between planting and harvesting—a time to relax, play games, and have community dances*

kiišiinkwia kiilhswa 'green corn moon'
- *Sixth moon, summer*
- *When kiišiinkwia 'ironweed' blooms, that means myaamia miincipi 'Miami corn' can be eaten raw off the cob*

mihšiiwia kiilhswa 'elk moon'
- *Seventh moon, summer*
- *The historic mating season for the extinct mihšiiwia 'Eastern Elk'*

šaašaakayolia kiilhswa 'grass burning moon'
- *Eighth moon, fall*
- *A period for intentionally lit low-intensity fires to clear underbrush and keep the prairie grass healthy*

kiiyolia kiilhswa 'smoky burning moon'
- *Ninth moon, fall*
- *Second month of controlled burns, which created a healthy habitat for plants and animals*

ayaapeensa kiilhswa 'young buck moon'
- *Tenth moon, winter*
- *Beginning of the breeding cycle for moohswa 'white-tailed deer,' when younger males lose their antlers*

ayaapia kiilhswa 'buck moon'
- *Eleventh moon, winter*
- *The end of the breeding cycle, when older males lose their antlers*

mahkwa kiilhswa 'bear moon'
- *Twelfth moon, winter*
- *When female black bears give birth to their cubs*

waawiita kiilhswa 'lost moon'
- *Added once every three years between the bear moons, it acts like a "leap" month to keep the lunar months aligned with their ecological changes*
- *This is necessary because the lunar year is 11 days shorter than a solar year*

Myaamia Lunar Calendar

myaamia kiilhswaakani • 'Miami Lunar Calendar'

Strawtown Koteewi Park is a cultural landscape, and the Myaamia lunar calendar reflects the Tribe's ecological perspectives and environmental relationships throughout the year. Each month is based on the phases of the moon and focuses on a specific ecological change within a twelve-month lunar year. Since the lunar cycle doesn't align with the solar year, approximately every three years, the Myaamia lunar calendar adds a thirteenth month called waawiita kiilhswa or 'lost moon.'

Myaamiaki • 'Miami People'



Myaamia Peekitahaminki 'Miami Lacrosse'
Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

Strawtown Koteewi Park recognizes it is within Myaamionki, the traditional homelands of the federally recognized Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The park has partnered with the Tribe to highlight the shared and continued connections to the place we know today as Strawtown Koteewi Park by including Myaamia language, culture, and ecological perspectives throughout the park.

About the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

"Niiloona Myaamiaki 'we are the downstream people.'"
~Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

Myaamia People trace their origins to Saakiiweeyonki, near present-day South Bend, Indiana. In 1846, the Tribe was forcibly removed from its traditional homelands—now Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin—to what is today Kansas, and eventually Oklahoma where its government is currently seated. Today, the Tribe maintains a government presence in Indiana through the Cultural Resources Extension Office in Fort Wayne.



Myaamia kiiwahtekaataawi koteenki 'Miami Stomp Dance'
Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma is a vibrant and resilient community with citizens now living across all 50 states and abroad, with large communities in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Indiana. The Tribe is committed to sustaining Myaamia culture through ongoing efforts in reclamation, revitalization, and preservation, which includes partnering with Strawtown Koteewi Park to share Myaamia culture and history.

MiamiNation.com

Koteewi

Strawtown Koteewi Park shares its name with koteewi, the Myaamia word for "fire," because of the park's extensive prairies and the Tribe's cultural practice of fire management. The Tribe traditionally set low-intensity fires in the fall to clear forest underbrush and maintain healthy prairie grasses. These fires helped create ideal habitats for hunting animals like deer, elk, and bison.



American settlers later abandoned the practice of intentional burning, disrupting an ecological balance that had been maintained for thousands of years. This change has harmed the health of forests and prairies. Today, parks like Strawtown Koteewi Park are working to restore that balance by using controlled burns. These burns eliminate invasive species and support the growth of native prairie plants, keeping prairies open and healthy by preventing trees and shrubs from blocking sunlight.



Using Myaamia Language

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma supports Strawtown Koteewi Park in reintroducing this important practice and thanks the Park for supporting Myaamia cultural revitalization by incorporating Myaamia language and knowledge throughout the park's signage, programming, and educational materials.

By using Myaamia names for places, plants, and animals, Strawtown Koteewi Park helps make the language visible on the landscape once again. Just as fire helps restore balance to prairie ecosystems, these efforts help restore cultural continuity and ensure that Myaamia knowledge thrives for future generations.

Myaamia History & Culture

Myaamia Language

Myaamia Ethnobotany

Prairie • mahkoteewi

One of our largest and most significant ecosystems at this park is the over 300-acre prairie. This historical prairie, along with the river, drew Native Americans and European settlers through this area for centuries. Prairie ecosystems host a unique blend of native grasses, wildflowers, and woody plants, including trees and shrubs. The vegetation associated with prairies creates a wide variety of foraging and habitat opportunities for wildlife, as well as soil stability.



Wetland • mahkiikwi

Strawtown Koteewi Park features one of the most pristine and historically significant wetlands remaining in Hamilton County. Commonly underappreciated, wetlands provide natural flood control by purifying water and replenishing groundwater supplies. It is estimated that over 50 percent of all federally endangered and threatened species depend on wetlands for their survival.



Woodland • ahtawaanahki

The woodlands found at Strawtown Koteewi Park host a wide variety of shrubs, wildflowers, and trees, including sycamore, tulip, hackberry, dogwood, and various maples species. Our wooded habitats often provide the framework for some of the wetland areas and border the picturesque White River.



Ecology Map

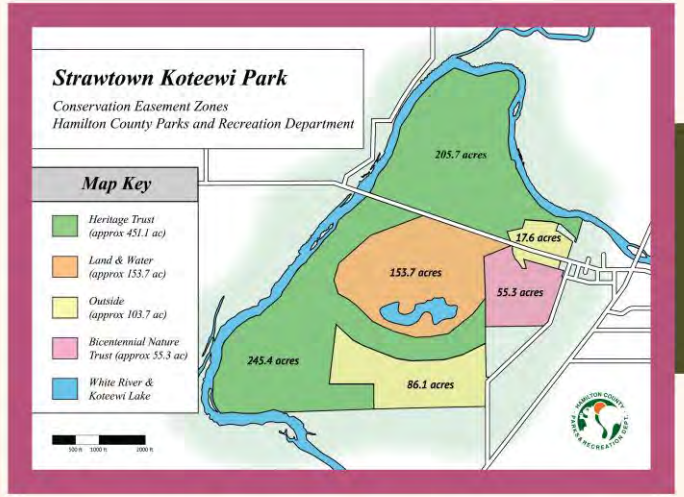


Riparian Corridor pipyaawe siipionki

The park is bordered by approximately 3.25 miles of the White River (waapikamiiki). The land around a river is called a "riparian corridor." This corridor provides species with migration routes, breeding habitat, and essential foraging opportunities. Also critical to the park's overall health is the floodplain along the White River. Its annual flood patterns help nourish the prairie soils, wetland, and forested areas throughout the park. The flooding also helps absorb water that would otherwise flow downstream to communities like Noblesville and Indianapolis.

Strawtown Koteewi Park Ecology

The biodiversity of Strawtown Koteewi Park is truly remarkable. Within this 800-acre park you can find woodlands (ahtawaanahka), historical wetlands (mahkiikwa), and an immense prairie (mahkoteewi), which are all surrounded by over three miles of the White River (waapikamiiki). These complex ecosystems combine within this park to form a critical habitat for thousands of species, from mayflies to bobcats. The health and sustainability of this wonderful habitat relies on the survival and protection of each species of plant and animal that inhabits it. We hope that our visitors understand, respect, and appreciate the important status these habitats and species have at Strawtown Koteewi Park.





Previously known as the Indiana Heritage Trust, the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust is a state program focused on conservation projects using money generated by Environmental License Plates and other sources. In 1999, funds from this trust, in conjunction with money provided by the Department of Natural Resources and Hamilton County helped with the purchase of Strawtown Koteewi Park.

Taylor Center of Natural History

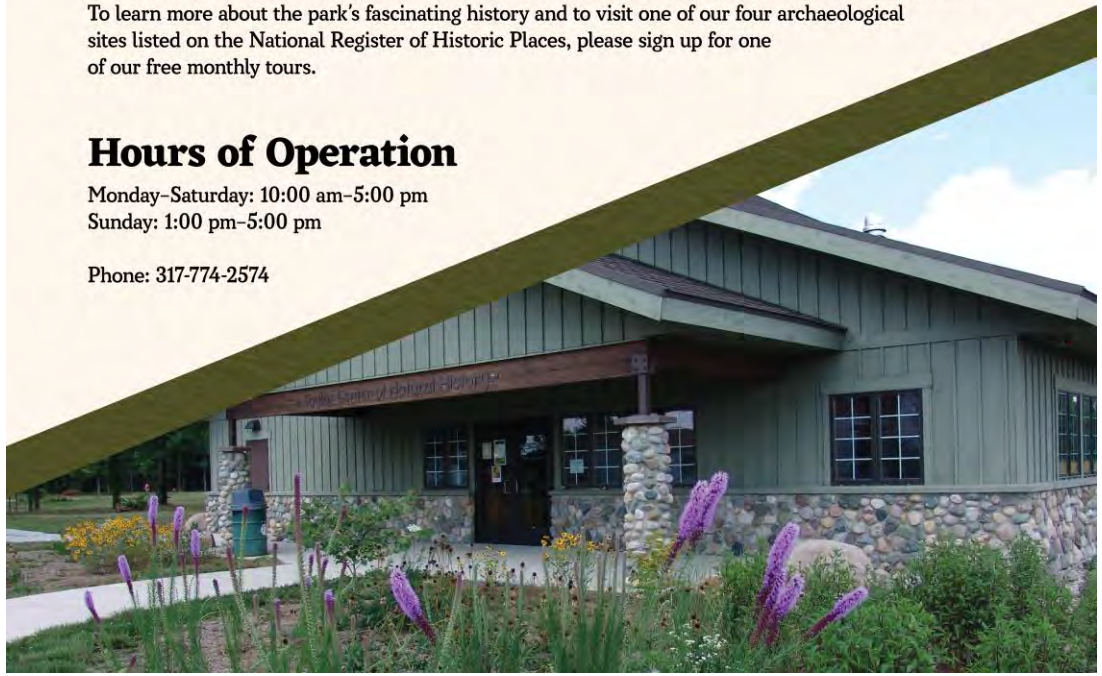
Welcome to Strawtown Koteewi Park! The park shares its name with the Myaamia word "koteewi," meaning "fire." The park acknowledges its connection to Myaamiaki 'Miami People' through its inclusion of Myaamia language and cultural perspectives.

The Taylor Center is open daily. Visitors are invited to explore the museum center and learn about the history of this beautiful land. Human interaction with the land stretches back thousands of years. Information about the Indigenous people who originally cared for and continue to care for this landscape, and artifacts recovered by professional archaeologists are displayed in the exhibit room. Guests are also encouraged to visit our Classroom of Curiosity for science and art exploration. To learn more about the park's fascinating history and to visit one of our four archaeological sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, please sign up for one of our free monthly tours.

Hours of Operation

Monday–Saturday: 10:00 am–5:00 pm
Sunday: 1:00 pm–5:00 pm

Phone: 317-774-2574



Programs

The Taylor Center of Natural History offers a wide variety of educational and creative programming for all ages. Program topics are centered around learning about history, science, art, culture, and tribal nations today. Programs include historic foodways, replica pottery workshops, nature journaling, and so much more! We provide quality programming for adults, children, and the whole family; sign up for one of our upcoming programs by calling the Taylor Center or visiting us online.



Educational Opportunities

Each year, thousands of schoolchildren visit Strawtown Koteewi Park to take part in one of our highly regarded field trip programs. Students are introduced to the park's local history, the science of archaeology, and the area's ecology. In addition to these topics, field trip participants walk away with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the resiliency and vibrancy of past and contemporary Native lifeways.

We host a variety of opportunities for school groups, scout groups, adult clubs, and other organizations. Contact us to learn more or to arrange a field trip.







Koteewi Trace

Koteewi Trace is an interpretive archaeological experience that allows visitors to connect with the history of place. Visitors can explore recreated structures based on ethnographic information and archaeological data recovered from professional archaeological excavations on park property. Our full-scale exhibit includes a community structure, a daily living structure, and a mock archaeological excavation. Guests are encouraged to step inside the recreated buildings to gain a glimpse into precontact architecture and to visit the mock archaeological excavation to learn about the science and methodology of archaeology.



WHITE RIVER CAMPGROUND
Recreational Camping

kihkihšitaawi
'Let's Camp!'



The campground is the perfect spot for a weekend getaway.

Strawtown Koteewi Park
KOTEEWI LAKE
Recreational Waters

pankihkwaašikotaawi
'Let's Fish!'



Provides ample fishing challenges for serious sportsmen, as well as novice anglers.

Strawtown Koteewi Park
TAYLOR CENTER
of Natural History

nipwaataawi
'Let's Learn!'



Explore the Taylor Center of Natural History with exhibits, artifacts, and hiking trails!

Strawtown Koteewi Park
KOTEEWI TRACE
Adventures in Archaeology

išiteeheeyohseetaawi
'Let's Think While Walking!'



An outdoor interpretive exhibit featuring life-sized replicas of Native American dwellings and a mock archaeological excavation.

Scan the QR code for information

Strawtown Koteewi Park
KOTEEWI AERIAL ADVENTURE
Treetop Trails

wilaantaweetaawi
'Let's Climb!'



Koteewi Aerial Adventure offers exciting obstacles for all to enjoy!

Strawtown Koteewi Park
KOTEEWI RANGE
Sport & Target Archery Center

pimoweetaawi
'Let's Shoot!'



Koteewi Range has archery ranges, lessons, and equipment for all skill levels.

Strawtown Koteewi Park
KOTEEWI STABLE & TRAILS
Horseback Riding Experience

neekatikašapitaawi
'Let's Ride Horses!'



Enjoy year-round horseback riding, pony rides, and more at Koteewi Stable & Trails!

Strawtown Koteewi Park
KOTEEWI RUN
Seasonal Slopes

šaahšoopihsaataawi
'Let's Slide Downhill!'



Experience all-day fun with snow tubing on Koteewi Run's specialized hill and custom tubes!

For more information on hours of operation, prices, and booking visit *myhamiltoncountyparks.com*

Winter Gathering 2026











Program Partnerships





WIIHSINITAAWI

Myaamia Foodways

Join staff from the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma for a program that explores the cultural, historical, and social traditions of Myaamia (Miami) foodways. Learn how food reflects Myaamia community, struggle, celebration, change, and cultural revitalization. Attendees will also learn how the Tribe continues to strengthen community health and revitalizes culture today through its food programs.

AGES 12+ | TAYLOR CENTER OF NATURAL HISTORY
12308 Strawtown Ave. Noblesville, IN 46060
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
MYHAMILTONCOUNTYPARKS.COM

11/08

Saturday 1:00 pm

HAMILTON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION DEPT.



Myaamionki neehi Myaamiaki 'Miami Land and Miami People'

The Taylor Center of Natural History is pleased to welcome Logan York, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. Logan will present Miami history and culture and share the connections the Miami have to place. Logan will also discuss the oldest story belonging to the Miami people, and where the Miami are going today.

AGES 12+ | TAYLOR CENTER OF NATURAL HISTORY

DATE	DAY	TIME	FEE	REGISTRATION
Jul 24	Fri	1:00 pm	Free	Required

Future Projects

- Visitor center exhibit updates
- Update signage throughout the park, trails
- Prairie Planting on a National Register Site
- Adding the park to the Miami Tribe’s Register of Historic Places
- Field Trip Educational Material

"But my institution doesn't have anything to do the Miami Tribe!"

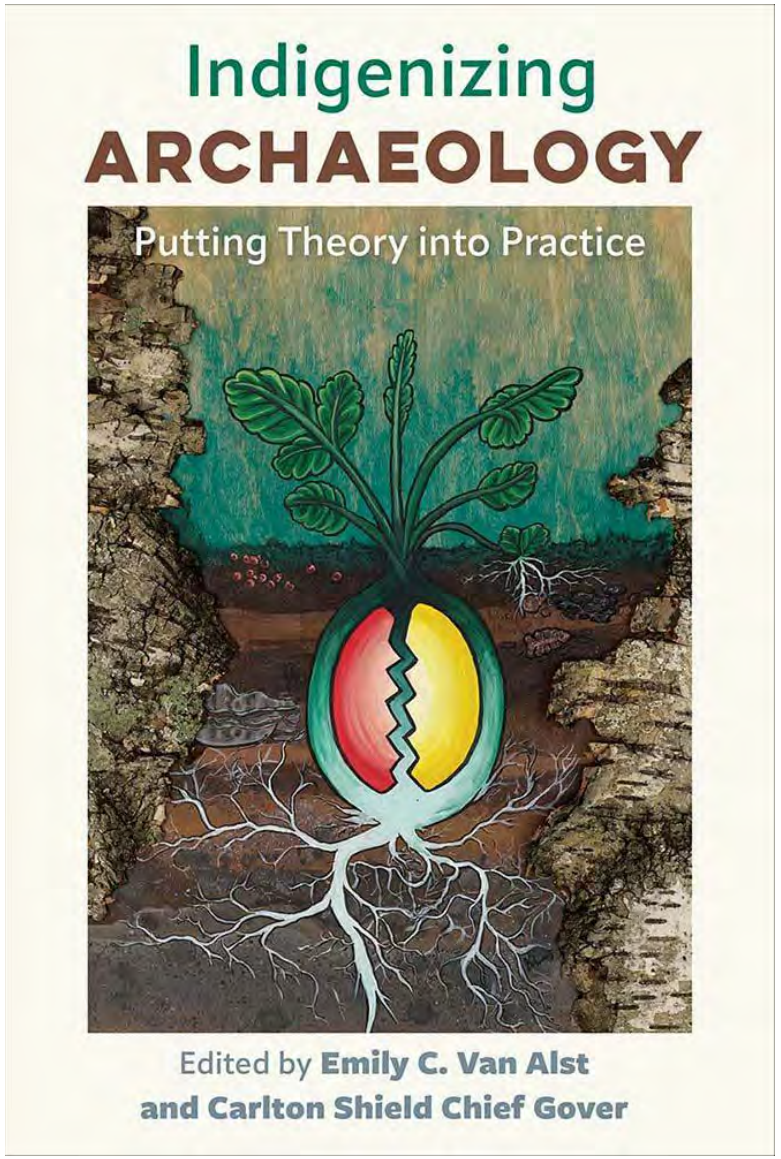
Everyone benefits from collaboration

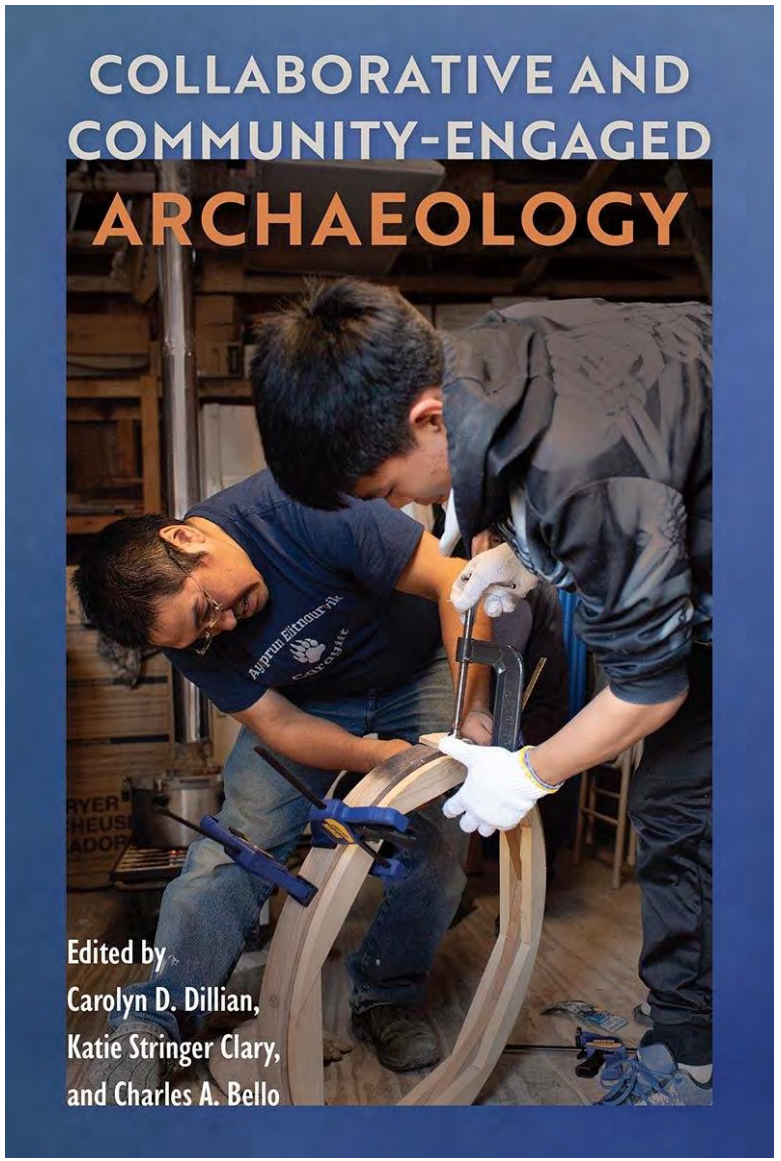


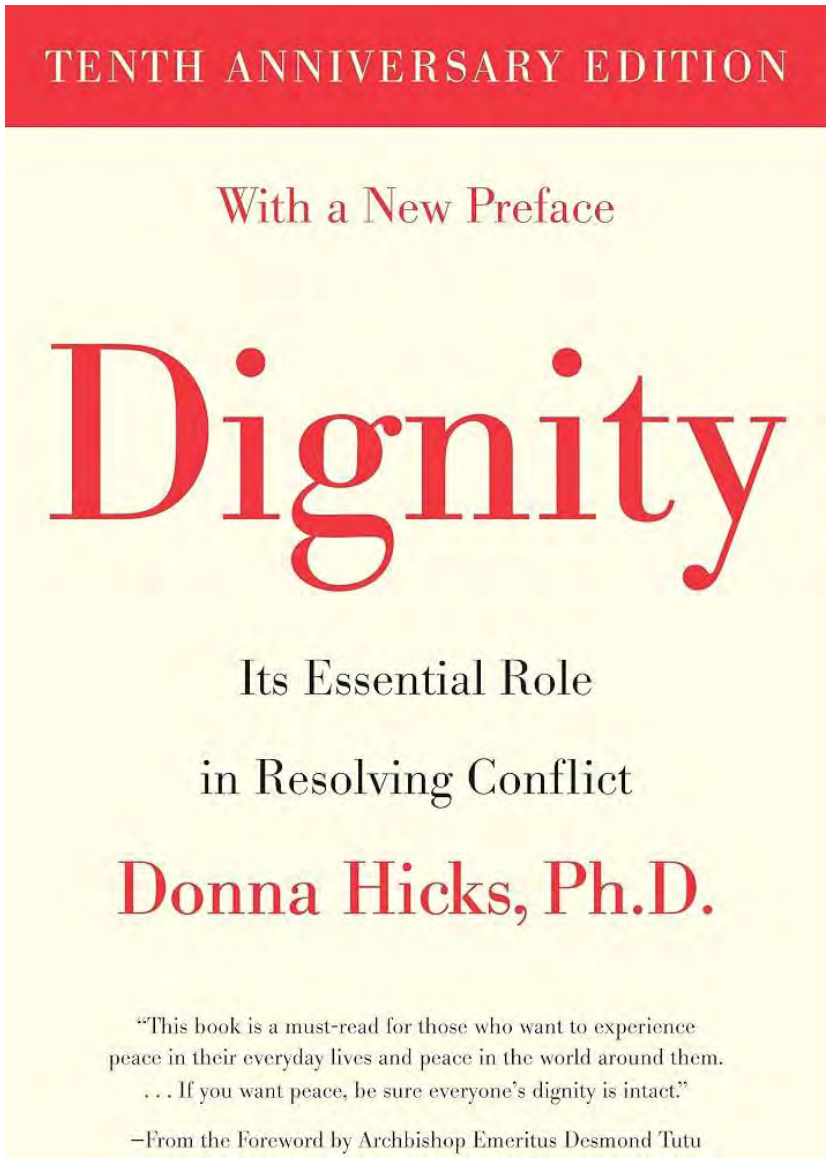
- Institutions
- The Tribe
- The Public
- The local community
- Educators

- Better programming, resources for educators, accuracy, providing more perspectives, nuance

Resources


Indigenizing
ARCHAEOLOGY
Putting Theory into Practice
Edited by Emily C. Van Alst
and Carlton Shield Chief Gover


COLLABORATIVE AND
COMMUNITY-ENGAGED
ARCHAEOLOGY
Edited by
Carolyn D. Dillian,
Katie Stringer Clary,
and Charles A. Bello


TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
With a New Preface
Dignity
Its Essential Role
in Resolving Conflict
Donna Hicks, Ph.D.
"This book is a must-read for those who want to experience peace in their everyday lives and peace in the world around them. . . . If you want peace, be sure everyone's dignity is intact."
—From the Foreword by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

Neewe ‘thank you’!



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Hamilton County Parks & Rec

miamination.com