

A. Land Acknowledgement

“Rusk Ranch Nature Center and One Discovery Center honor the original stewards of this land with respect and acknowledge the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians (“Tribe” or “Cow Creek”), who have stewarded these lands since time immemorial. We want to further acknowledge the Tribe’s deep cultural and spiritual connection to these lands in addition to its entire interest and ancestral areas, which includes over 6 million acres located within the Rogue and Umpqua River Watersheds. These lands and the vibrant resources within them have been important since time immemorial and will continue to be a vibrant part of the Tribe’s cultural identity for generations to come. We recognize the pre-existing and continued sovereignty of the Tribe and thank them for continuing to share their indigenous knowledge and perspective on how we might work together to manage and care for these shared resources sustainably, with mutually beneficial outcomes. We commit to engaging in a respectful, meaningful, and successful partnerships as we explore shared stewardship of these lands.” ~ *Approved by Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians Board of Directors on July 13, 2022*

B. Labor (enslavement) Acknowledgement

In addition Rusk Ranch Nature Center and One Discovery acknowledge that the economic growth, and development throughout history and across time, has been made possible by the labor of enslaved people, primarily of African descent who provided exploited labor on which this country was built, with little to no recognition. In particular, enslaved Africans and their descendants suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking of their people, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow. We are indebted to their labor and their sacrifice, and we must acknowledge the tremors of that violence throughout the generations and the resulting impact that can still be felt and witnessed today.

C. Statement of respect for the inherent rights of nature.

**"The way we see the world shapes the way we treat it.
If a mountain is a deity, not a pile of ore;
if a river is one of the veins of the land, not potential irrigation water;
if a forest is a sacred grove, not timber;
if other species are our biological kin, not resources;
or if the planet is our mother, not an opportunity -
then we will treat each one with greater respect.**

That is the challenge, to look at the world from a different perspective.” ~ *David Suzuki*

The purposes of colonialism included economic exploitation of people and natural resources, creation of new markets for the colonizer, and extension of the colonizer’s way of life beyond their national borders. This is essentially treating nature as something to be dominated and controlled for the benefit of the colonizing power; this often results in widespread environmental degradation and disruption of ecosystems. This mindset is still with us today.

We support the inherent rights of nature to exist, sustain and regenerate. The Earth is a precious entity that gives us life, an entity of which we are a part. The forests, soils, waters and biological systems of living organisms are all our relations and we are inseparably deeply interconnected. As such we honor them and care for them and recognize that all life, all ecosystems on our planet are intertwined and interdependent.