



**A PROCLAMATION IN CELEBRATION OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY**

WHEREAS Metro Parks recognizes that Indigenous peoples around the world have been the caring, unyielding guardians of the Earth since time immemorial, and that their resilience and knowledge represent a fundamental way forward to protect thriving ecosystems and all our futures, and

WHEREAS Metro Parks honors and respects that the public lands on which we steward park, recreation, and zoological experiences are the ancestral homelands and the historically, culturally and spiritually significant sites of the Indigenous People of the Puyallup and Nisqually tribes, who continue to live and raise their families here, and

WHEREAS in 2022 Metro Parks formally adopted a land acknowledgement honoring that same historic Indigenous stewardship, to be shared by the agency across its physical, digital and meeting spaces, building on guidance previously provided by Puyallup tribal members in crafting such statements, and

WHEREAS Metro Parks has formally committed to reforming as an anti-racist agency by dismantling racist structures, partnering with communities to co-create solutions and continuing to learn and grow from Indigenous teachings and experiences while acknowledging that its own anti-racist efforts have just begun and

WHEREAS in 2018 the City of Tacoma joined in recognizing the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day in support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. And, on this Indigenous People's Day 2022 President Biden stated that, "For centuries, Indigenous Peoples were forcibly removed from ancestral lands, displaced, assimilated, and banned from worshiping or performing many sacred ceremonies. Yet today, they remain some of our greatest environmental stewards." and,

WHEREAS Metro Parks is grateful for the generous collaboration of the Puyallup, Nisqually, Muckleshoot and Squaxin Island tribes in stewarding park lands, including active participation in the redesign of the newly reopened Owen Beach at Point Defiance in a manner reflecting and supporting their traditional use of the site since time immemorial, as exemplified in the Puyallup Tribe's recent local Canoe Journey landing, and

WHEREAS Metro Parks is grateful for the work of the Puyallup tribe in supporting and creating storytelling of their culture through artworks at Metro Parks locations such as the audio collage "Ghost Timbre" by Mary Coss to accompany her sculpture "Ghost Log" at Dickman Mill Park, which wove together Puyallup songs, stories and traditions with the site's recent industrial history, and

WHEREAS tribal members from the Puyallup, Nisqually, Muckleshoot, Steilacoom and Squaxin Island tribes have further supported culturally appropriate and historically accurate storytelling through partnering with Fort Nisqually Living History Museum on the Indigenous Voices podcast series; and

WHEREAS Metro Parks acknowledges the commitment to land protection shown by the Ireta P'urhépecha Mexican Indigenous group, who have offered traditional blessings and worked to clean up litter from Swan Creek Park, and

WHEREAS Metro Parks is also grateful for the Puyallup tribe's continued support of wildlife and habitat by partnering this year with Metro Parks, Tacoma Public Schools and others by donating 50,000 Chinook salmon fry for students to raise as part of the Chinook Orca Research and Education project at Point Defiance Marina, and

WHEREAS Metro Parks and Tacomans alike are honored that respected tribal elders have joined in community celebrations to offer sacred blessings for our public park lands this year, especially Owen Beach and Swan Creek Park, as well as being our guests for this proclamation today,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Andrea Smith, President, on behalf of the Board of Park Commissioners, do hereby recognize October 10, 2022 as Indigenous Peoples' Day, honoring the presence and land stewardship of all Indigenous tribes and committing to continued partnership with them in caring for our lands and restoring equity in our communities.

ATTEST:

Board President

Board Clerk