Have you heard the term "Native Erasure" and wondered what it meant? Here's an introduction.
The erasure and destruction of Native people and culture has taken many different forms throughout history. 

Today, Native erasure often occurs through signage on our ancestral lands. Sometimes intentional, sometimes not, it’s crucial that Native erasure not occur.
Here are 4 ways in which native erasure appears on trail and park signage:

1. **A rewriting of history or narratives about Native people and culture.**
   This often appears when a tribe is not appropriately consulted with regarding content, and the information shared comes from an individual who does not have authority to speak on the matter.

2. **A complete absence of inclusion.**
   This often appears in signage that shares the history of an ancestral land as beginning when settlers arrived in the 1800s.

Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Movement
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3. **Natives referenced in a very broad way**
   This can be an attempt to “include” but in the process, the lack of detail about which specific Native people are connected to the land dilutes to become less meaningful, and abstract.

4. **Tribes and Natives being described in anthropological terms**
   We have been here since time immemorial, and we are still here. Tribes and Native people are not museum artifacts. We are living, breathing people with a rich culture in the modern day.

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Why is Native Erasure Damaging?
Why Native Erasure is Damaging

• Because of perpetual Native erasure throughout history, many non-native individuals have embraced false stories about Native people, without even knowing it – because the true facts have been buried.

• Erasure leads individuals to falsely believe that Natives are invisible, and no longer present on these lands.

• Native erasure contributes to treaty and inherent indigenous rights being denied, broken, and violated.
What you can do to help
How You Can Help As A... 

Recreator

Call it out!

Do you see signage that perpetuates the idea that history of a space or land began when settlers arrived? Do you see signage that uses language and messaging that frames Natives and tribes only in a past tense? Report it here, take a photo and document in the Survey 123 application, or send us a private message.

Contact the organization or government agency responsible for the signage, share a photo on social media to make others aware that change is needed.

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How You Can Help As An Organization, Employer, or Governmental Agency

Contact the local tribes if you are putting in signage – any signage – and ask for input. Ask for input very early on in the process, so that the tribe(s) may contribute in a meaningful way. Make sure that tribal voices are elevated, and follow through on the input provided.

Do not consult with a tribe to then cast the input aside. That is damaging, disingenuous and committing Native erasure.

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Can you think of examples of Native erasure on Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands? Share in the comments, or reach out to us.