For time immemorial, the Spokane Tribe of Indians lived on, protected and respected our ancestral homelands of approximately 3 million acres. For many generations, Spokane Tribal families relied on river waterways for nourishment, medicinal and spiritual purposes, with the grand Spokane Falls a gathering place for many Spokane Tribal Ancestors.

Now we share that gathering place—and the name of our tribe itself—with the modern, thriving city of Spokane.

Originally, the Spokane Tribe of Indians lived along the Spokane River in three bands known as the Upper, Middle and Lower Spokane Indians. Spokane Tribal members hunted, fished and collected roots and berries to feed their families throughout the year.

Today, many of the same fishing and hunting practices are used, just as the same roots and berries are collected by modern Spokane Tribal families. Spokane Tribal Elders continue to teach the Salish language to the youngest members of our tribe. Salish language classes are held within the classrooms on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Oral history remains the main source of history preservation.

These are just a few of the ways we continue to protect our history, our language and our culture.

In January of 1881, President Hayes declared approximately 157,000 acres as the new and smaller home of the Tribe, moving the Spokane Tribe of Indians from our ancestral homelands to the Spokane Indian Reservation. The Spokane Tribal headquarters are located in Wellpinit, Washington, approximately 50 miles northwest of Spokane.

But ties to our ancestral lands run deep, and we in the Spokane Tribe are planning new ways to honor those ties. For instance, our STEP development plan includes careful preservation of an existing wetlands area located on our West Plains property. It also includes a 10,480 sq.ft. Cultural Center to highlight the importance of preserving the wetlands and its wildlife, as well as the importance of preserving the rich, diverse heritage of our people.