

The Impact of Forced Treaties - Stephanie Charging Eagle - OSEU #6

There are some things that were put in place called treaties, federal policies, acts, you know, from a government. And those kept us from enjoying land like we used to as Oceti Sakowin people, and that these are things that were not done by our own people, ideally.

And so, you know, I think what I would like the lesson, the objective of that lesson, would be to understand that these are things that were put upon us and that they have nothing to do with what we think about the land, about where we are, and what we are forced to do, or that we have been, that we've understood that we do, and that it's not part of who we are, that we buy land because we live there. We were forced to give up some parts of our land by treaty acts, but we still have connection to that land.

And that in today's society, sometimes we have to do things that go against our beliefs just to maintain the environmental stewardship of that land. Like, for example, the one that comes to mind is the Presla, Presla, the baldie head on the whole land thing that just happened with all the tribes contributing to buy that. That is, you know, some people said, why should we buy land back that was stolen? You know, and that's very much a, it's very much a relevant argument.

But at the same time, you have to look at how times have changed, and sometimes we have to do what needs to be done to get that land back so that we can now be stewards again of that land. And if that means we have to do something that is contrary to our beliefs, for that time, for that situation, that's what we'll do. But we will never lose the concept of why we acquired, reacquired that land. And it was for our children, our generations, and not just because we, you know, we want that land.

You know, for all I know, you know, maybe it's Prime Valley, you know, I don't know. And that, I don't think, was the primary goal of the tribes who bought it, you know.