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Culture and Conservation: Living Ho-Chunk History in Monona Parks

Ho-Chunk Nation Cultural Preservation through the Monona Parks and Recreation Website

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New Tab on Website

UW-Madison Nelson Institute Collaboration

Slideshow at top of Tab:



Ho-Chunk Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Bill Quackenbush instructs students from the Nelson Institute on how to construct a typical Ciporoke in Woodland Park.



Ho-Chunk Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Bill Quackenbush shows students from the Nelson Institute how to read a Ground Penetrating Radar equipment, used to look at Mounds.



This is one of the maps created by the mapping team. It highlights Ho-Chunk presence in the Dejeo-Four Lakes-area.

The UniverCity Alliance between the Ho-Chunk Nation, UW-Madison Nelson Institute with Monona Parks and Recreation presents a unique opportunity for these three partners to learn from one another about collaboration and communication in the context of Monona Parks and the influence of the Ho-Chunk Nation. Participating students produced cultural outreach projects. The students were part of an Environmental Studies capstone class, *Living Ho-Chunk History in Monona Parks*, facilitated by the UW-Madison Nelson Institute. Each project utilizes a different approach to cultural preservation, to increase the recognition of the Ho-Chunk Nation, their history and the importance of their continued presence within the Monona community.

Below is a brief overview of each project:

Woodland Park Signage: Signage was created in the park that reflected both an ecological and cultural perspective of the Woodlands Park landscape. Signs explained fire ecology and Mound management, culture, and etiquette. Additionally, the signage included Ho-Chunk language to aid in the cultural interpretation of places within the park.

→ QR Code on new Woodland sign “Life in Woodland Park”, links to Plant ID Info.



(link for your own reference: <http://eekwi.org/veg/treekey/index.htm>)

Ahuska and Winnequah Park Signage: Similar to the signage project for Woodland Park, signs were created throughout these parks that explained significance to the Ho-Chunk Nation. These signs also explained land coverage past and present.

QR Code for Ahuska Park Memorial Sign with pictures of Ho-Chunk Veterans:



Curriculum Project: This project focused on creating new curriculum about the Ho-Chunk Nation for non-Native students. This curriculum properly represented Native American culture and history in a way that Native American people want to be represented. The goal of this project was to create curricula that will break down harmful stereotypes that create a gap between Native and non-Native students.

→ Placeholder for Curriculum link to their project here

Cultural Management Plan/Brochure : The cultural management team crafted recommendations for the Monona Parks and Recreation Department on how to better preserve and maintain Ho-Chunk resources within the parks. This team created a brochure that educated the public about Native culture and positively influenced

perceptions of cultural landscapes. The goal of the brochure was to create accessible information that accurately described appropriate Mound preservation.

→ Placeholder for Brochure link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzn2kFEHONpTVUtXZVVITHFodU0/view>

Cultural Resources Map: Student mappers created maps to highlight Ho-Chunk presence in the DeJope-Four Lakes-area. Additionally the team created a map that displayed the different trails at Woodland Park.

New Tab on Website

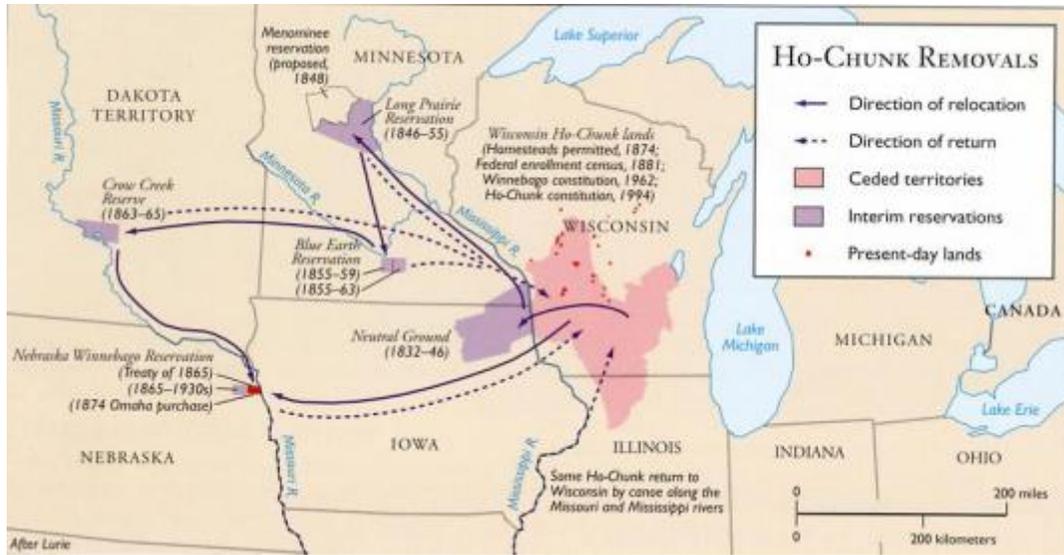
“Native Culture and History in Monona Area”

Slideshow at top of Tab:



Studio portrait of three Ho-Chunk Women in Black River Falls (Source: Charles Van Schaick, date unknown, Wisconsin Historical Society)

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=Ny:True,Ro:0,Nrc:id-4294956401-dynrank-disabled,N:4294963828-4294955414&dsNavOnly=N:1142&dsRecordDetails=R:IM62328&dsDimensionSearch=D:Ho-Chunk+,Dxm:All,Dxp:3&dsCompoundDimensionSearch=D:Ho-Chunk+,Dxm:All,Dxp:3>



Ho-Chunk removals and present day lands. (Source: Black River Falls High School)
<http://www.brf.org/rykken/ho-chunk-studies-research/>



Moš'ok (Linear Mound) at Paac (Woodland Park), 4/22/17, Gillian McBride



Black ash woven baskets were commonly made in the early 1800s by Ho-Chunk women as a for home uses. By the late 1800s, they were sold to tourists as a source of income.
(Source: Kohler Foundation, 2017)

<http://www.kohlerfoundation.org/preservation/other-artists/ho-chunk-baskets/>



Family Tree by Ho-Chunk artist, Harry Whitehorse, 2001. This piece depicts several Ho-Chunk people carved into a caašgegu (white oak) holding traditional foods in order to honor the Ho-Chunk who previously occupied the space which is now in a schoolyard.
(Source: Harry Whitehorse Gallery, 2001)

<http://www.harrywhitehorse.com/gallery5.htm>

The *Hoocqk* (Ho-Chunk) have occupied the *Teejop* (Four Lakes) area for thousands of years. Oral history states that the Ho-Chunk's first fires were lit in *Mogasuc* (Red Banks) in Green Bay, and they are believed to be the first inhabitants of the Great Lakes Region (Quackenbush, 2017). They had been previously called *Ouinipegouek* (Winnebago) which means "People of the Stinking Water" referring to the great amount of algae that grows in the Fox River and Lake Winnebago (Loew, 2013). The Otoe, Missouri, Iowa, and Siouan Tribes originated from the Ho-Chunk and refer to them as their Grandfather Tribe. These Tribes diverged around 1570, following issues after other Tribes migrated to the Great Lakes region from the East Coast. This created conflicts with land space and they had nowhere to expand. The Tribal name for Ho-Chunk means "People of the Big Voice" which refers to the four tribes that originated from them who they believe they represent.

The Nation is made up of different clans categorized by earth, "those who are below", or sky, "those who are above". The clans include the *Waukanja* (Thunder), *Caxsep* (Eagle), *Manape* (Hawk), *Wakcexi* (Water Spirit), *Ho* (Fish), *Waukau* (Snake), *Sukjak* (Wolf), *Huc* (Bear), *Ca* (Deer), *Huwa* (Elk), *Cexji* (Buffalo), and *Recuge* (Pigeon). Members of the various clans have different duties within the Nation. The war chiefs are from the Bear Clan, of the earth division, and the peace chiefs are from the Thunderbird Clan, of the sky division.

The earliest human inhabitants in southern Wisconsin relied on mammoths and mastodons for food as the last of the *nyux harukq* (glaciers) retreated. Around 800 BC, cultivation of native vegetation for food became more refined and there was an expansion of rituals, likely focusing on burial, which may have been the start of *Moš'ok* (Mound) building in the Madison area (Birmingham, 1994). The *Moš'ok* were conical and linear, often for the purposes of more than one burial. The Outlet *Moš'ok*, located at Indian Mounds Park in Monona, is the last remaining conical *Moš'ok* of what used to be a group of 19 conical and linear *Moš'ok* once located in this area. *Paac* (Woodland Park) in Monona contains two linear *Moš'ok* on top of a hill which was common for *Moš'ok* building. Through time, with greater social and economic changes, people began building many *Moš'ok* in the shapes of animals, often representing the different clans of the Tribe. They served as a gathering place for various activities to integrate the land and spiritual worlds.

The French first made contact with the Ho-Chunk in the 17th century, when there were 12,000 to 20,000 Tribal members who lived on about 10.5 million acres of land (Quackenbush, 2017). Intermarriage was common and encouraged. There was also a lot of trade; the Europeans sought fur while the Native people sought manufactured goods such as guns and utensils. It is around this time which the Ho-Chunk were believed to have become patrilineal, previously being matrilineal, because of the influence of the Europeans and involvement in fur trade which was seen as a male dominated activity (Loew, 2013). The Ho-Chunk fought alongside the French and British in wars following the first contacts. There was a dramatic decrease in Ho-Chunk population, mostly due to imported European diseases.

In the beginning of the 19th century, the US Government recognized the Ho-Chunk as a Sovereign Nation who had the right to own 10.5 million acres of land (Quackenbush, 2017).

Several treaties, such as the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1817, were signed with the US as an attempt to maintain peace, but soon after, the US Government changed its position. From 1825 to 1837, the Ho-Chunk were coerced into signing new treaties that forced them to cede their territories (Quackenbush, 2017). They were forced to relocate to reservations in Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Nebraska. The condition of some reservations were not ideal and the Sioux Tribe, who were not friendly with other Tribes, had surrounded the Ho-Chunk in South Dakota. Many Ho-Chunk had walked back to their homes in Wisconsin after forced relocations. These acts of resilience demonstrate the Ho-Chunk Nation's powerful connection to their ancestral lands.

Today, the enrollment number for the Ho-Chunk Nation is 7,300 who mostly live in Southern and Central Wisconsin as well as Minnesota and Illinois. They run many businesses such as gaming, wellness centers, and hotels and offer many services like dental and health. The Ho-Chunk Government includes four branches; the General Council (this includes all members of the Tribe to give everyone a voice), Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary.

→ QR Code linked to “Creation Story” video below from the Woodland “Ho-Chunk Nation and History of Mounds” sign.



(Link for your reference <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iI5zCWAEwhA>)

→ Placeholder for “Cultural Resources Map” here

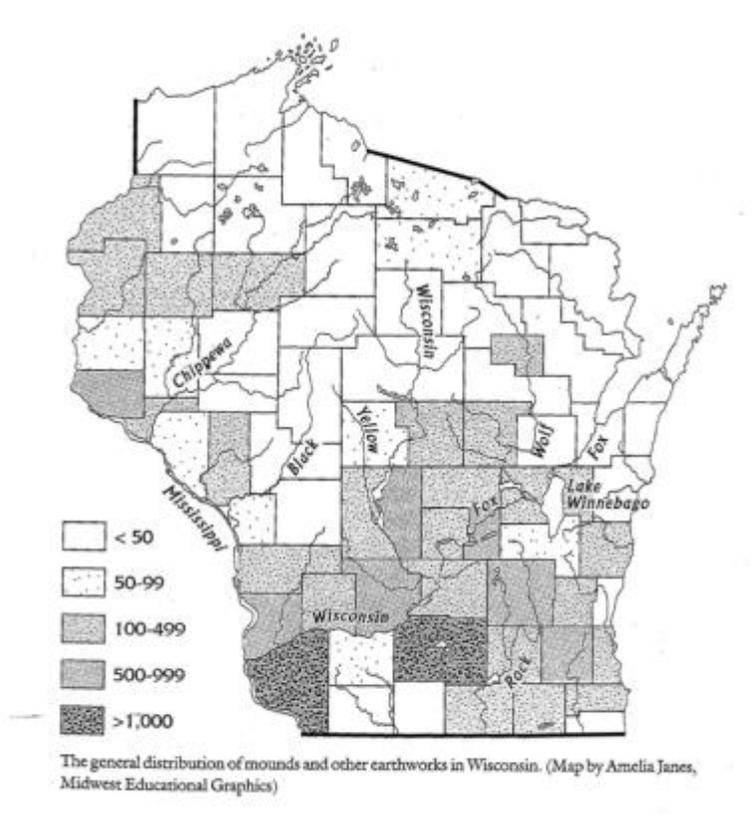
New Tab on Website

“Burial Mounds Management/Etiquette”

Headings on New Tab:

Cultural Significance and Mound Background

Many citizens are unaware of the presence of Ho-Chunk *Moš'ok* (Mounds) in the Monona area. Much of Dane County sits on higher ground near bodies of *nij* (water), which is the desired placement of *Moš'ok* due to reliable food and *nij* resources in the area when the *Moš'ok* were built. Therefore, there are many *Moš'ok* that need preserving in the Monona area. The maps below reveals the concentration of *Moš'ok* in the *Teejob* (“Four Lakes”) Dane County area compared to the rest of Wisconsin. An integral part of their culture, Ho-Chunk ancestors ensured the development of effigy, conical, linear, and *waxee* (burial) *Moš'ok* in the Monona area as spiritual and physical expressions of the Ho-Chunk Nation between 650 and 1200 CE. They are used for ceremonial purposes connecting current Ho-Chunk members to their ancestors or places of spiritual connections with the Creator. *Moš'ok* also have served as relations to constellations. These *Moš'ok* were also used for marking areas to help Tribes navigate through the land while marking the territory of those who built it. Some are in the shape of animals or spirits, such as panthers, geese, bears, deer, or water spirits (Native American Mounds in Madison and Dane County). Several *Moš'ok* in the shape of animals represent different clans of the Ho-Chunk people. The *Moš'ok* depict Ho-Chunk’s spiritual connection and reliance on their natural environment, as well as life renewal. Ho-Chunk ceremonies and activities surrounding the *Moš'ok* integrate Tribal members and Clans, strengthening their identity and beliefs.



Source: *Indian Mounds of Wisconsin* by Robert Birmingham, created by Amelia Janes

In Monona, *Paac* (Woodland Park) and Indian Mounds Park hold *Moš'ok* that continue to be sacred to the Ho-Chunk Nation. Indian Mounds Park consist of the Outlet *Moš'ok*, pictured below. This *Moš'ok* is a Large Burial *Moš'ok* on the south shore of Lake Monona.



<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=N:4294963828-4294955414&dsRecordDetails=R:IM38947>

Unfortunately, almost 80% of *Moš'ok* have been destroyed. Many of these *Moš'ok* have been violated due to non-Tribal members being unaware of the cultural significance of the *Moš'ok*. Some *Moš'ok* have been excavated for archaeological research. Others have been removed due to residential development in the area or the spread of agricultural practices. In the past, there was a lack of public understanding about Native histories and cultural preservation which led to the loss of these impressive structures. Continued public education concerning the importance of these sites is crucial. The map below shows the known number of *Moš'ok* in the *Teejob* area.

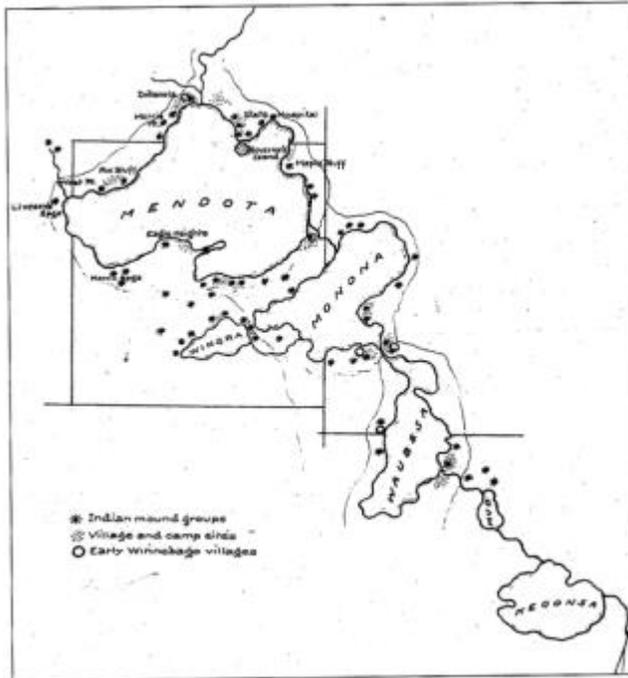


Figure 3.6. Map made by Brown of Four Lakes mound groups and other sites at the beginning of his research.

Source: created by State Archeologist Charles Brown

_____The resilient Ho-Chunk Nation, who have preserved and advocated for these sacred sites, continue to take action towards safeguarding the *Moš'ok*. *Moš'ok* that have survived and *do* remain have been well maintained and must be fought for continued existence. Relations have improved in recent years due to joint efforts by the Ho-Chunk and non-Tribal members who strive to increase public understanding of Ho-Chunk culture, Native presence, and respect for the *Moš'ok*. Due to the relevance of these *Moš'ok* to the Ho-Chunk culture, proper etiquette and management must be facilitated in collaboration with the Monona Parks and Recreation Department, the Ho-Chunk Nation, and citizens of the city of Monona. Public education is key in raising awareness to protect the sanctity of these cultural resources.

Proper etiquette concerning the *Moš'ok* includes a five foot buffer between a *Moš'ok* and any other trail or disturbance for ensured preservation of the *Moš'ok*. Aside from maintenance, pedestrians also should not walk over the *Moš'ok*. Lastly, awareness of the cultural importance of the *Moš'ok* to the Ho-Chunk Nation should be encouraged in order to encourage respect and preservation of the remaining *Moš'ok*. To find out more details about proper behavior and respect concerning *Moš'ok*, click [here](#) for the “Ho-Chunk Nation Cultural Management and Preservation in Monona Parks” pamphlet from the Nelson Institute at UW-Madison.

→ **“[here](#)” is the Placeholder for Mound Etiquette Tri Fold Brochure from Cultural Management Team**

(link for your reference:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzn2kFEHONpTVUtXZVVITHFodU0/view>)

In order to respect the Ho-Chunk Nation, their presence in Monona, and the cultural significance of the Moš'ok, we must aid in enforcing culturally appropriate etiquette for the continued preservation of the Ho-Chunk culture.

Burial Mounds Management

Installation of proper management of today's Moš'ok can ensure their continued existence. Moš'ok today have often been threatened and should be protected as a cultural resource. Due to their importance, the Ho-Chunk Department of Heritage Preservation composed a plan for proper tree and ground management around the Moš'ok. You can see their plan highlighted below. Preventing erosion and the control of invasive species is also key in managing the Moš'ok. Signs in the appropriate area should reveal to pedestrians the State law and appropriate behavior concerning the Moš'ok, such as remaining on the current trail. Signs should also include the cultural significance that the Moš'ok represent to the Ho-Chunk Nation (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources). Furthermore, prescribed burns have been revealed to be a valuable asset to the preservation of the Moš'ok. The sacred soil residing in these areas such as Kingsley Bend have been prescribed burns in order to control invasives encroaching on the Moš'ok and also to restore an oak savanna to the area (Jerede, 2013). Enacting these management plans are vital for the continued preservation of the Ho-Chunk culture as well as the health of the parks in Monona.

→ QR Code *Peec* (Fire) Ecology linked to here from the “Fire Ecology: Rising from the Heat” Woodland sign



(link for your reference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWCQdNfVX8w>)

Burial Mound Preservation and Maintenance

Naa (Tree) Maintenance

Tree removal: benefit: (1) promote light for growth of protective grass; (2) prevent tree falls and loss of integrity of mound.

- Phase I. Remove all hazard dead leaning trees, decayed trees, trees with excessive branch loss.
- Phase II. Remove all trees on mounds. Contact the HCN Cultural Resources Division regarding the management of any oaks within your proposed project.
- Phase III. Remove all trees within five feet of mounds. Contact the HCN Cultural Resources Division regarding the management of any Oaks within your proposed project.

- Phase IV. Create an Oak savannah/White Pine grove or native grassland area.
Considerations: remove all low land trees that have surface roots and no taproots.

Note:

- All tree cutting in and around the mound site(s) is only done when the ground is completely frozen to eliminate ground disturbance.
- No vehicles should ever be driven across or on the mound specific.
- No removal of stumps from the mounds or buffer area.
- All new growth/suckers from stumps should be hand cut for removal, to limit growth of woody vegetation. Limited amounts of scoring into the trunk area can be conducted, in order to expedite the decaying process.

Ground Maintenance

Natural means: Prescribe burn – setting the area to fire.

Benefit:

- Reduces the woody plants
- Lowers the ph
- Promotes growth of protective grasses
- Low costs

Negative

- Not always possible due to fire hazards or low fuel load.

Mechanical: Mowing alternatives:

- Hand mow at a high setting to minimize ground disturbance
- Mow around the mounds regularly and push mow mounds only in early spring to promote grasses and to remove emergent seedlings.

Benefits: higher grass on mounds – discourages pedestrian traffic and provides a protective cover.

Additional Considerations

- No signage or large construction within the sound and viewscapes
- Use natural predators for rodent issues

(Ho-Chunk Department of Heritage Preservation: Cultural Resources Division. “Burial Mound Preservation and Maintenance.” 2007)

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