



## **OCCANEECHI BAND OF THE SAPONI NATION, INC.**

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Physical Location: 4902 Dailey Store Road · Burlington, NC 27217

### Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation Official Land Acknowledgement

Léwa Eno, Tutelo, Saponi, Occaneechi, Shakori eyātile amā agíneókehléi yoñspéua wahiýébise.

(I would like to acknowledge that we are on the land of the Eno, Tutelo, Saponi, Occaneechi, and Shakori Native people.)

Mecoure'mechen Kihoe! (You are welcome here!)

We are gathered today on land that was traditionally part of the territory of the Saponi people, in the Piedmont of what is now the state of North Carolina. This area is not far from the “Great Trading Path”, used by both the native people of this area and non-native peoples during the early years of contact. The Saponi people, whose descendants include the Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation Indian Tribe still thrive and live in this region, officially recognized by the state government of North Carolina.

The Occaneechi are connected to this land, spiritually and physically. It provided all we needed to sustain our communities. We hunted in the forests, fished in the streams, and grew our crops in the woodland clearings. We picked the wild grapes, gathered the acorns, and harvested the poplar bark to build our homes. We raised our children and protected our families. We are bonded and one with this land, yesterday, today, and tomorrow, it flows within our veins. Despite how the landscape has changed, regardless of the concrete, asphalt, and steel that covers it today, it is still our home, and the bones of our ancestors sleep in this part of our mother earth.

As we come together here, do not forget that our people love this land, although most of you who live and work on it today, have little knowledge of our past and present existence. We did not sell or willingly vacate the land, so it remains in our hearts. As the great Chief Seattle said “Every part of the earth is sacred to my people, every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow, every humming insect. All are holy in the memory and experience of my people”. This land does not belong to man; we belong to the land.

The Occaneechi People (The Ye'sah), ask that you will keep these thoughts in mind, while here in place, and treat it with the respect, love, and care that our Ancestors did, and as we do so today.

Our hope is, that we all exist and acknowledge this sacred land together in a good way!

**NATIVE PEOPLE OF ALAMANCE, CASWELL & ORANGE COUNTIES**