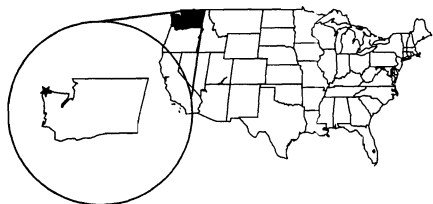


MAKAH



The westernmost tribal lands in the continental United States belong to a people speaking a dialect of the Wakashan language, the Makah (ENAT, 121-122). Although different from their Coastal Salish or Haida neighbors, the Makah share many elements of culture, art, and living conditions

with them, and include some in the Makah flag.

The flag is white with a red and white thunderbird with black accents in the center. The depiction of the thunderbird recalls the artistic style of Pacific Northwest Coast Indians. The Makah, like many of their neighbors in western Washington, carved totem poles [see Upper Skagit, Lummi].

The thunderbird, one of the most powerful of creatures in Native lore, holds a black whale in its talons. The whale recalls the Makah heritage as expert whalers, unlike many northwestern tribes who used only beached whales, the Makah actively hunted them. In October 1997, they were granted the right to resume an annual gray whale hunt.



To either side of the thunderbird is a black and white serpent with red tongue. Arching over the central device in red is “MAKAH INDIAN NATION”; beneath it in black are the names of the five villages of the Makah Nation: “DIA’HT, WA’ATCH, OSETT, TSOO-YESS, BA’ADAH” (Letter, Leonard “Bud” Denney, 24 March 1997). The flag dates to the 1960s. 🐉

[Thanks to the Makah Tribal Secretary, based in the Makah capital of Neah Bay, Washington.]