

Fire and Grazing:How Native Americans Manage the Prairie Landscape



Indian Fire Use

A Tribal Perspective on Fire, Fire History
and its Implications for
Cultural Resource Preservation





Cultural Resource Protection

**Focuses on the relationship
between people
and place**



Cultural resources have spiritual, cultural, and physical qualities.

They can include:

- campsites • food and medicine gathering sites • rock structures
- ceremonial use sites • burials
- trails • buffalo jump sites
- game drive lines • landforms

Cultural Ecology

Encompasses everything
that has to do
with our
history with
the land.



The cultural ecology of the Salish was based on a life of hunting, fishing, and gathering fruits and vegetables in a subsistence lifestyle.



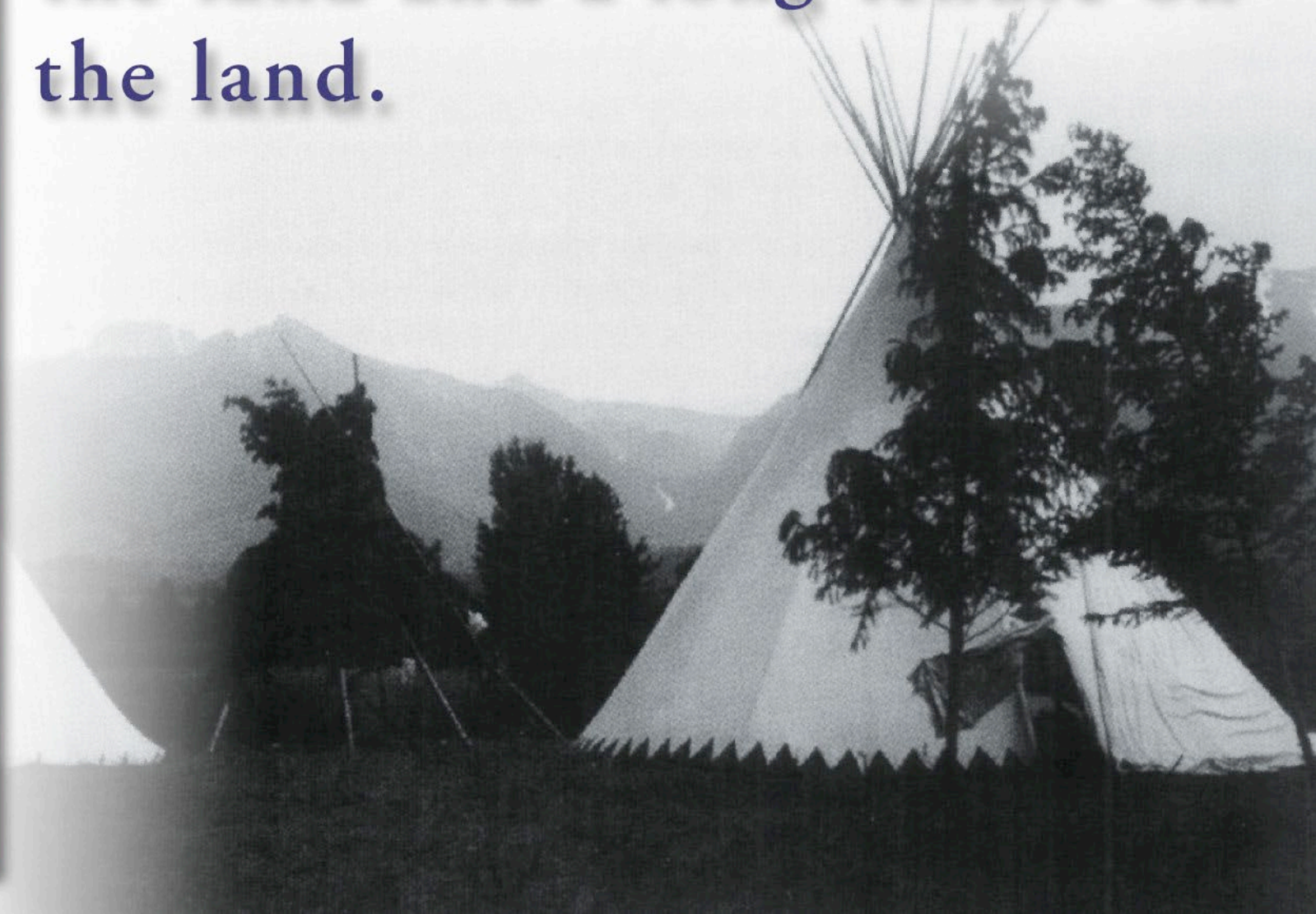
No aspect of our relationship
with the land affected the
ecosystem as much as the
tribal use of fire.



To protect and restore our forest and prairie ecosystems, we need to understand the tribal use of fire and its cultural context.



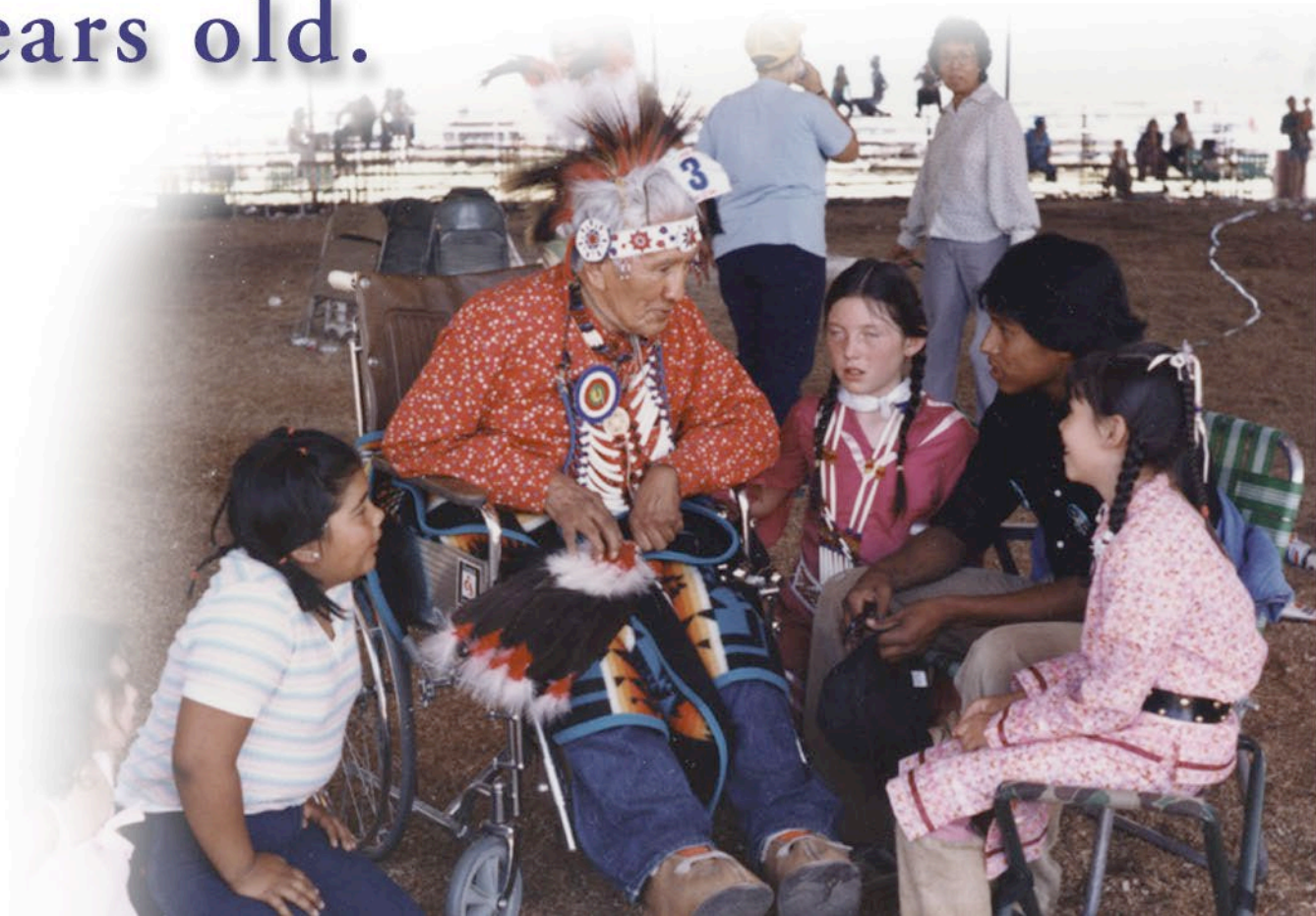
Tribes share a deep respect for the land and a long tenure on the land.



Forests were viewed as life-sustaining lands that needed to be cleaned and cared for properly.



For tribal people, oral history is a fundamental part of our culture that is many thousands of years old.



Coyote stories record thousands of years of knowledge and understanding of the land.

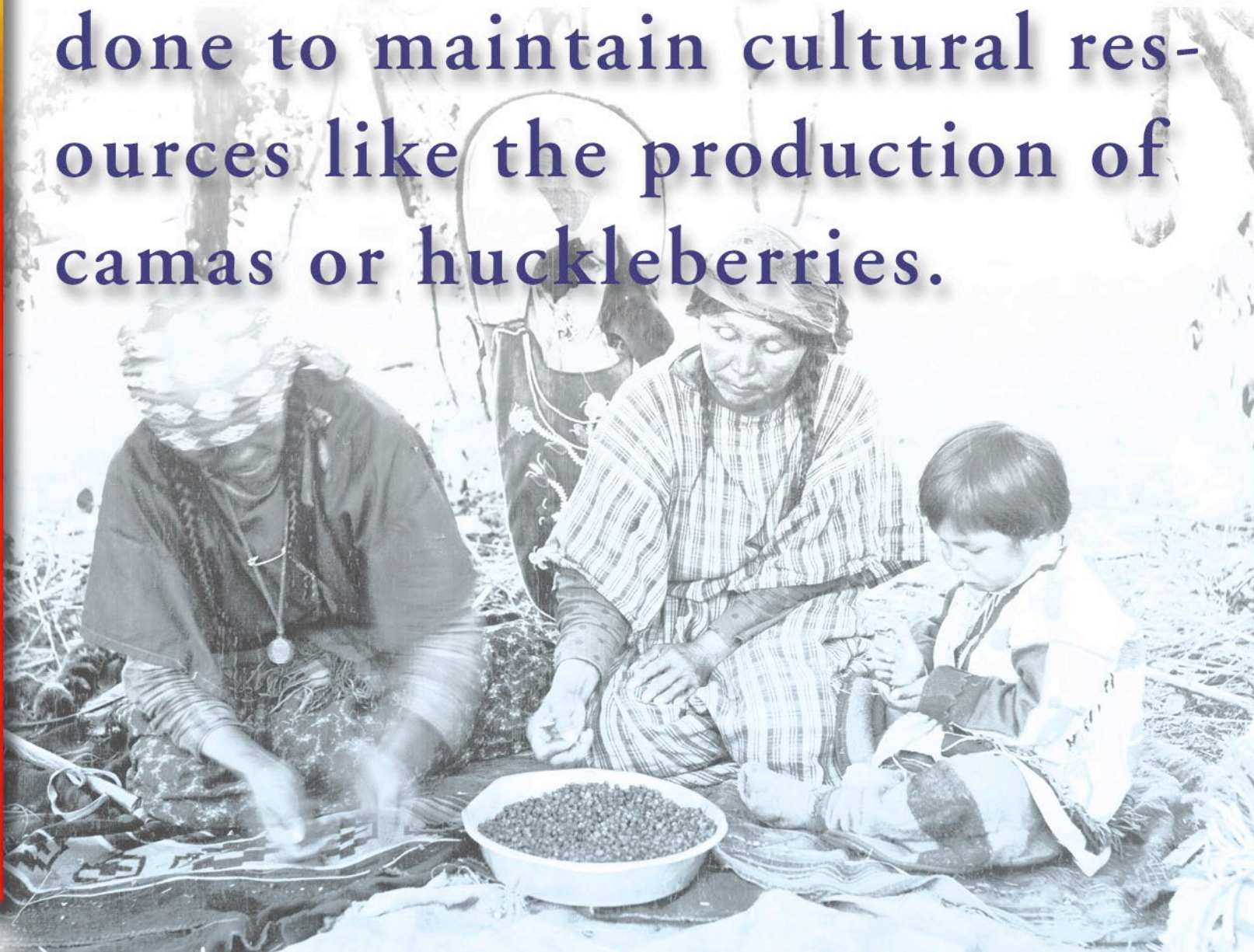


Our Coyote stories include descriptions of the geologic events of the last ice age.

The earliest Salish and Pend
d'Oreille record of fire is
the coyote story titled
Beaver Steals Fire.



Landscape burning was often done to maintain cultural resources like the production of camas or huckleberries.



Many plants and animals depended on fire for their abundance.



The traditional view can
enrich the technical view.



**It can provide a strong
basis for fire in ecosystem
management in the West.**



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