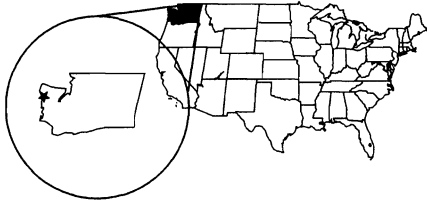


## QUILEUTE



The Quileute belong to the Northwest Coast peoples whose advanced and diverse cultural groups predate by several millennia the European exploration of North America. Their tribal lands on the Olympic Peninsula near La Push, Washington, overlook the Pacific Ocean about 40

miles south of Cape Flattery, the state's northwestern tip. A principal aspect of their culture was the killer whale (orca) hunt—a many-day ordeal using mussel-shell-tipped harpoons, spruce-root ropes, and an ocean-going canoe of red cedar.

The Quileute Tribal Council adopted the flag after a contest in the late 1980s, nearly a century after federal recognition in 1889. Its background is light gold or beige. "Quileute Tribe" in heavy black cursive script stretches on a black-bordered red banner across the top of the central design, which is contained in an irregular semi-circle with the light gold (or beige) sky above and the blue ocean below.



A large black canoe dominates the lower part of the ocean. Two angled red stripes mark each end, between them appears "Since 1889" in thin white cursive script. At either end of the canoe a stylized white killer whale is outlined and highlighted in with heavy black borders. In the background are two islands in light brown, with dark brown highlights and green fir trees and grassy moss. Between and above the islands float three black eagles under billowing white clouds. Below the central image is "La Push, Washington" in heavy black cursive script.

Each design element is important to the identity of Quileute people. The ocean provided not only food, but clothing, tools, and spiritual cleansing as well. Of the five men's societies, the strongest was dedicated to the whale. The canoe—the essential means of transportation for all Northwest coast peoples—represents the Quileute's past way of life brings them together as a people in the present. The islands, *A-KA-Lat* or James Island and Little James Island, lie just offshore of the mouth of the Quileute River. A-KA-Lat, site of the oldest Quileute villages, was also used as a fortress and as a burial site for chiefs. Eagles often fly over A-KA-Lat and nest there. 🦅

[Thanks to Ms. Barbara Bocek from the Quileute Historic Preservation Office for the picture and description of the flag and Mr. Allen Black for important details.]