



Module 3 Video Talking Points

- The "Indian Council House" was near the Baraboo River and present-day Water Street. To the east is the "Indian Cornfield."
- The Ho-Chunk people had several villages in the Baraboo area in the 1830s. The council house was where elders of the Ho-Chunk tribe met to discuss matters that concerned the tribe.
- The villages of the Ho-Chunk people were nearby and their houses were also made of bent tree poles covered with bark, hides and later canvas.
- The Baraboo River is shallow near where the Council House was. This made it easier to catch fish.
- The shallow water along this stretch of the river also made it easier to cross the river.
- Besides fishing, the Ho-Chunk also hunted animals such as deer, bear and even elk in this area.
- The pelts or hides of the animals were used for clothing, blankets and coverings.
- The Ho-Chunk also were farmers and harvested berries.
- The place for the council house in Baraboo was chosen by the head chief of the Winnebago, who at the time was named Naąga, which means "wood" or "tree."
- Sometimes he was called Keramanįga, which means Walking Turtle.
- Chief Naąga was an important leader of the Ho-Chunk people.
- Chief Naąga was a member of the Ho-Chunk Thunder clan.
- The Ho-Chunk people were divided into 12 clans.
- The clans were separated into two main groups, "those who are above" and "those who are on earth."
- The clans that are part of the Sky Division, or "those who are above," include the Thunder, Warrior, Eagle and Pigeon clans.
- The Thunder clan was the most important of the Sky clans and the Ho-Chunk peace chief was often chosen from this clan.
- The clans that are part of the Earth Division, or "those who are on earth," include the Bear, Water Spirit, Buffalo, Deer, Elk, Fish, Snake and Wolf clans.



- Important members of each of the 12 clans made up the council that helped govern the people.
- The council house was built among the ancient mounds near the river.
- In 1634 French explorer Jean Nicolet is believed to have been the first European person to come ashore at what we now call Wisconsin.
- When he came ashore, he was met by the Ho-Chunk people possibly at Red Banks.
- At this time, the country of France claimed all of what we now call Wisconsin as its own territory. No one asked any of the Indigenous Peoples what they thought about this.
- Later the country of Britain laid claim to this area after it won a war against France.
- In 1783 after the American Revolutionary War this area was claimed by the United States.
- By the 1820s settlers from the eastern United States were pushing westward and looking for new places to live.
- In 1825 the Ho-Chunk Nation began entering into agreements with the United States about the boundaries of its territory and the boundaries of other Native American tribes in Wisconsin.
- The area designated for the Ho-Chunk people, once called the Winnebago, included much of southern Wisconsin.
- The agreements with the Ho-Chunk were called treaties and in exchange for land they were given promises of supplies and money from the U.S. government.
- Sometimes the promises were not kept.
- In 1828 Chief Naąaga traveled to Washington D.C. with other Ho-Chunk chiefs to meet President John Quincy Adams at the White House and discuss the relationship between the Ho-Chunk nation and the American government.
- The tribe was recognized as a separate nation but was often forced to sign treaties with the U.S. government that were not in the best interest of the Ho-Chunk.
- The following year the Ho-Chunk signed another treaty giving up their land in southwestern Wisconsin where settlers were illegally mining lead.
- In 1832, the Ho-Chunk ceded or gave up all of their lands south and east of the Wisconsin River and they were given reservation land in Iowa. During this period some of the Ho-Chunk people lived here along the Baraboo River.



- The Ho-Chunk were asked to sign a treaty that would give up all of their land in Wisconsin in exchange for land in Iowa.
- In order to get the chiefs to sign the treaty they were misinformed that they would be able to stay in Wisconsin for eight years when in fact the treaty said 8 months.
- After the Treaty of 1837 was enacted, land that is now Baraboo and Sauk County was opened to settlers.
- The Treaty of 1837 opened the land on the west side of the Wisconsin River for settlement.
- The Ho-Chunk however did not willingly move out of Wisconsin.
- Beginning in 1840 military troops were brought in to round up and move the Ho-Chunk to lands west of the Mississippi.
- Another prominent Ho-Chunk chief in our area was Chief Yellow Thunder.
- After being forcibly removed to land west of Wisconsin in 1840, Chief Yellow Thunder along with many other Ho-Chunk people walked back hundreds of miles to their native homeland here in Wisconsin.
- They did not believe the Treaty of 1837 with the United States was valid.
- Many of the Ho-Chunk people who stayed in Wisconsin were rounded up and removed several times between 1840 and 1874.
- In 1849 Yellow Thunder purchased 40 acres of land north of Baraboo near the Wisconsin River and became a landowner under the U.S. system of land ownership.
- As a landowner he was less likely to be removed from his homeland. His property was also a haven for hundreds of other Ho-Chunk people.
- Because so many Ho-Chunk people resisted being moved or walked back to their homeland, the Wisconsin Ho-Chunk were eventually recognized as a separate tribe from their relatives who now live in Nebraska.
- The Ho-Chunk Nation does not have a reservation in Wisconsin but has purchased its own land and uses land that is held for the nation by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Today the Ho-Chunk Nation is the largest employer in Sauk County with its various businesses.
- Approximately 8,000 members of the Ho-Chunk Nation live in Wisconsin or elsewhere.