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**The Evergreen State College**  
**Master of Environmental Studies**  
**Statement of Purpose**

Graduate work in Evergreen's Master of Environmental Studies program is a successive step in the environmental work I've been about. It will help me get to a next phase, where I'm able to effect even more change in the world.

In 1976 I was granted the exceptions needed to attend community college English courses while still in high school. Although I entered Saint Martin's University as a journalism student in 1978, I soon switched to engineering and environmental studies. But I kept on writing, for the school newspaper first, then submitting short stories and poetry over the course of what would be a lifetime.

My funds covered my engineering degree, but not the environmental studies, which I put off until entering TESC in 2019 to work on a second Bachelor of science and prepare myself for graduate work.

From my engineering schooling to today, I've spent most of my life working in civil engineering with a focus on environmental work, ending with the last twelve years even more so on drinking water, wastewater, reclaimed and storm water. I'd worked myself to the point of managing those programs with a project budget of \$15-20 Million a year and guiding long-term plans that would impact far into the future. A wastewater treatment plant, capable of nitrate removal (much needed in Puget Sound) and returning 100% of its flows as reclaimed water was a culmination of years' worth of work for the team that I felt lucky to be on. It would be a big part of the works of our lifetimes. But those years of work, starting with hazardous waste and materials, solid waste management, water systems operations, and storm water designs, also led me to another self-realization.

In 1997 an engineering friend of mine asked me if I wanted to take over teaching his Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) class. We'd both come up together, and without knowing what I was getting into, I said yes. What I learned over the next three years was that I loved to teach. I would have sometimes horrible days at my engineering desk, get to the school for my CAD class, and after five minutes of teaching, I would be in a good mood. I trust that I received just enough feedback that I had some skills too, so have always looked for opportunities to humbly pass on what I know. I believe it's important. That memory of teaching happily has stayed with me. It, along with my studies, makes up the things that have spurred me to, hopefully, return to those classrooms, and also to continue to hone and improve my writing skills.

In the past ten years, I began writing and speaking about the troubles with cultural appropriation in my community of faith. It's been this work that has brought to the fore, once more, my writing skills. I've been spurred by my tribal matriarchs in my head pushing me to do something. That work has also put me on the road, and this past fall, I traveled to Texas and was present at the reading of a statement called "The Principles of Accountability" that I'd worked on drafting over an entire year. It was the first public reading since we released it, and I was able to witness the ripples of change begin in that distant place. It's not a coincidence that my native

lineage was so much a part of these past years' writings. Witnessing lately, the convergence of traditional ecological knowledge with environmental work, and beginning to see others' work begin in that area is important to me. It is spurring me, even more, to continue my environmental work, to continue my writing.

What direction I've wanted to go has always been pretty clear, Whether or not there were obstacles, sometimes was just a matter of time. Where direction and time come together creates crossroads like this. Taking this step into graduate work is, like everything else, simply "the work". My intent is to go there.