

The 6 Streams of Medicine River Ranch

1. Equine Assisted Services:
Mental Health, Substance Use Counseling & Peer Support

2. Stable Ground:
Holistic & Specialized
Work Training

3. Equine Facilitated Learning:
Prevention Education, Groups,
Events & Camps

4. Horse Medicine Teachings:
Training & Consulting for Clinicians &
Tribes

5. Sacred Stock & Soil: Leschi Line Horse Breeding,
Food Sovereignty, Caring for the land, and Ranching in a
good way

6. Salish Horse Pavillion: A community-centered venue for
cultural events, equine gatherings, competition, and intertribal
connection located on Medicine River Ranch

Rooted in Land, Carried by Horse:

Medicine River Ranch

Medicine River Ranch is a tribally owned healing space dedicated to restoring balance, connection, and cultural strength through relationship with land, horses, and community. Located on ancestral lands, the ranch offers a wide range of services that center Indigenous values and support the wellness and sovereignty of the Nisqually people. Medicine River Ranch is more than a program—it's a living ecosystem of healing, empowerment, and cultural continuity.

The 6 Programmatic Streams of Medicine River Ranch:

1. **Equine Assisted Services**

We provide culturally informed mental health and substance use counseling, peer support, and recovery-based services. Through equine-assisted sessions, clients reconnect with themselves and others, developing insight, emotional regulation, and resilience.

2. **Stable Ground: Holistic & Specialized Work Training**

Stable Ground is a holistic, strength-based work training site rooted in healing, cultural identity, and community connection. Designed for individuals facing barriers to employment, it offers more than job skills—participants engage in personalized goal-setting, process support circles, and nonviolent communication training. Each person customizes a specialized career track based on their strengths and aspirations. What sets Stable Ground apart is its integration of wellness and workforce. Participants are supported not only by mentors, but by colleagues in the mental health field who walk alongside them as pillars of support. In partnership with other Nisqually programs, Stable Ground creates a workplace where growth is personal, cultural, and collective.

3. **Equine Facilitated Learning**

Our youth prevention groups, seasonal camps, and educational events use the rhythm of the ranch and the wisdom of the horse to teach emotional intelligence, communication, responsibility, and cultural belonging.

4. **Horse Medicine Teachings**

We provide training and consulting to clinicians and tribes interested in integrating horse medicine into their therapeutic or cultural programs. Rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing, these teachings honor the sacredness of the horse-human relationship.

5. **Sacred Stock & Soil**

This initiative includes the restoration of the Leschi Line Horse—a historic breed tied to Nisqually history—as well as efforts in food sovereignty, land stewardship, and sustainable ranching practices rooted in Indigenous values.

6. **Salish Horse Pavilion**

A gathering place for ceremony, sport, and celebration, the Salish Horse Pavilion is a venue for cultural events, community rodeos, intertribal competitions, and equine gatherings that uplift tradition and strengthen Native-to-Native connections.

Medicine River Ranch

Programmatic Overview

2025



1. **Equine Assisted Services at Medicine River Ranch**

EAS Overview

The Mental Health and Substance Use Counseling Services at Medicine River Ranch provide a comprehensive range of trauma-informed, evidence-based treatment options for individuals, couples, families, and groups. Our offerings include Equine-Assisted Counseling, Eco-Therapy, Expressive Arts Therapy, Telehealth Counseling, and Substance Use Disorder Services, including Intensive Outpatient Programming (IOP) and peer-led recovery support. Each modality is rooted in established clinical practices and enhanced by cultural teachings, land-based healing, and the therapeutic presence of horses. Our services are designed to promote emotional wellness, relational growth, and community connection—meeting participants where they are in their journey and supporting them with care that is both professional and culturally meaningful. Whether participants seek healing from trauma, anxiety, depression, addiction, grief, or relational challenges, we offer a safe and non-judgmental environment, fostering personal empowerment and sustainable wellness.

EAS Structure

Equine-Assisted Counseling

Participants engage with horses in co-facilitated sessions that support emotional regulation, connection, and insight. Horses' intuitive responses help reveal patterns, reduce anxiety, and strengthen interpersonal awareness. Sessions are facilitated by licensed clinicians and equine specialists trained in the Nisqually Horse Medicine treatment modality.

Eco-Therapy

Using the natural landscape of Medicine River Ranch, Eco-Therapy sessions incorporate nature walks, land-based activities, and grounding practices to foster resilience, reduce stress, and support reflective emotional work. This modality helps clients reconnect with the earth and their inner wisdom.

Expressive Arts Therapy

Creative processes such as music, movement, visual art, and writing are used to explore and express emotions that may be difficult to articulate. This approach supports trauma processing, identity development, and emotional release through non-verbal expression.

Telehealth Counseling

Remote video or phone-based sessions are available for clients who cannot attend in person due to health, transportation, or geographic barriers. Telehealth increases accessibility while maintaining high standards of care.

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Services

We offer compassionate, culturally grounded support for individuals navigating substance use challenges, with an emphasis on dignity, connection, and purpose. Services include individual counseling, therapeutic horsemanship facilitated by certified recovery coaches, and access to recovery groups such as AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen. Our approach honors the impact of generational trauma and systemic barriers while integrating land-based healing, cultural practices, and peer support. Through group sessions, one-on-one care, and relationship with horses, participants are supported

EAS Goals & Outcomes

- **Provide Evidence-Based, Culturally Competent Care:** Deliver services that address mental health and substance use issues through both clinical and Indigenous frameworks.
- **Foster Personal Growth:** Empower clients to build emotional resilience, self-awareness, and practical coping strategies.
- **Support Recovery and Accountability:** Offer SUD-specific services that emphasize dignity, community, and re-connection to identity.
- **Strengthen Family and Group Dynamics:** Improve communication, trust, and relational skills within families, support systems, and peer communities.
- **Enhance Accessibility:** Offer flexible in-person and Telehealth options to meet a wide range of needs.
- **Create a Safe Healing Environment:** Uphold a trauma-informed, respectful, and confidential setting for all participants to process, grow, and heal.

2. Stable Ground: Holistic & Specialized Work Training



Stable Ground is a healing-centered job site located at Medicine River Ranch and operated in collaboration with Nisqually Tribal departments. It's more than a place to work—it's a place to grow, reconnect, and build a life rooted in purpose. We recognize that Native people often face unique barriers in the workforce—including discrimination, lack of access to training, generational trauma, addiction, and cycles of incarceration. Stable Ground was created as a culturally grounded response to these realities. It offers not just a job, but a supportive work family rooted in healing, belonging, and transformation. Each participant is part of a team that helps keep the ranch running. Everyone contributes to the daily care of the land, animals, and facilities—no matter their track. Through this, participants build work ethic, teamwork, and pride in meaningful contributions. But Stable Ground is also built around support: for each other, for the clinicians we walk alongside, and for ourselves.

What Makes Stable Ground Different:

- ♦ **Hands-On Ranch Work** – Feed, clean, ride, repair, and care for the herd and the land
- ♦ **Healing Circles** – Intentional space for emotional check-ins, processing, and connection
- ♦ **On-the-Job Learning** – Learn through doing, shadowing, and mentorship from ranch and behavioral health staff
- ♦ **Professional & Personal Development** – Create a growth plan, build skills, and explore future career pathways
- ♦ **Team-Based Culture** – Support and be supported by peers, clinicians, and coworkers in a strengths-based, respectful workplace

Work Tracks (Choose or Create Your Own Path):

- **Sacred Stock & Soil Track** – Land and livestock care, food sovereignty, horse breeding
- **Horse Medicine Track** – Become an Equine Specialist, Horse Trainer, Therapeutic Horsemanship Facilitator, or Trail Ride Guide
- **Community Behavioral Health Track** – Train to become a Recovery Coach, Peer Support Specialist, Outreach Aide, or learn to facilitate suicide prevention, grief support, and expressive arts
- **Self-Created Work Track** – Build your own role—event planning, youth programs, cultural leadership, and more!

Stable Ground is structured but flexible. Participants may shift tracks, blend interests, or create something entirely new. What stays constant is the shared purpose: to care for the ranch, support one another, connect to culture, and expand healing to the Nisqually people.



3. Equine Facilitated Learning

At Medicine River Ranch, Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL) is a culturally grounded, relationship-based program that supports the social, emotional, and cultural development of Native youth. Guided by our original BARN Seasonal Learning Themes—Belonging, Awareness, Relationships, and Nature. Each season of the BARN cycle brings focus to a key area of growth:

Fall: Belonging – Connection, empathy, balance, and identity

Winter: Awareness – Reflection, presence, mindfulness, and regulation

Spring: Relationships – Communication, leadership, and healthy boundaries

Summer: Nature – Cultural generosity, emotional strength, and land-based healing

In EFL, horses serve as mirrors and mentors. By learning to work with a 1,000-pound animal through nonverbal communication, youth gain deep insight into their own emotions, behaviors, and strengths. The barn becomes a classroom for learning trust, managing emotions, practicing patience, and building self-confidence. We offer a wide range of services to meet the needs of youth, families, schools, and community partners:

EFL Core Services at Medicine River Ranch

- **Therapeutic Horsemanship Groups:**
Pony Pathways (ages 0–5), *Brave Herd* (ages 6–11), *Sqʷaliʔabš River Riders* (ages 12–18)
- **Equine Facilitated Learning Sessions:**
Offered in individual and group formats to support life skills, academic support emotional regulation, and communication
- **Seasonal Youth Camps:**
Land-based, culturally themed camps integrating wellness, leadership, and horsemanship
- **Pony Pals Peer Mentorship Program:**
Youth-led mentoring that supports leadership and community responsibility
- **Summer Youth Work Training Program:**
Job readiness experience integrated with emotional wellness and prevention
- **Youth WRAP Facilitation & Support Circles:**
Wraparound care coordination, nonviolent communication, and restorative circle work
- **School & Community Outreach:**
Ranch field trips, cultural education events, classroom partnerships, and learning days for schools and youth programs
- **Tribal Event Representation:**
Youth participate in and represent the ranch at various tribal events, cultural gatherings, and community celebrations

4. Horse Medicine Training for Clinicians and Tribes

Clinical Training • Cultural Consulting • Program Development

Horse Medicine Training at Medicine River Ranch offers culturally rooted clinical training and consulting for mental health professionals, tribal partners, and behavioral health teams. Grounded in our Nisqually-developed curriculum, this program blends trauma-informed care, land-based healing, and therapeutic horsemanship to support clients in reconnecting with regulation, identity, and community.

Participants learn to work with horses as co-facilitators in the therapeutic process—not tools—by integrating clinical frameworks like CBT, DBT, IFS, and Polyvagal Theory with Indigenous values and relational healing. This work emphasizes presence, safety, cultural humility, and emotional resonance, supporting both personal and professional transformation.

Clinical Training Includes:

- ◆ Hands-on instruction in equine behavior, communication, and safety
- ◆ Clinical integration of equine work with CBT, DBT, IFS, and Polyvagal approaches
- ◆ Therapeutic use of metaphor, pressure/release, and nervous system regulation
- ◆ Session planning, documentation, ethics, and trauma-informed facilitation
- ◆ Cultural awareness, humility, and ethical considerations in Native-serving settings
- ◆ Therapist role development, reflection, and supervision support

Consulting Services Include:

- ◆ *Program Design* – Custom therapeutic models aligned with cultural and clinical goals
- ◆ *Budget Planning* – Cost analysis, financial strategy, and long-term sustainability
- ◆ *Programmatic Structure* – Development of policies, procedures, and best practices
- ◆ *Staffing & Training* – Support with hiring, onboarding, and clinician/equine staff development
- ◆ *Herd Development* – Horse selection, care, and integration planning
- ◆ *Marketing & Outreach* – Strategic communication, partnership building, and engagement

Horse Medicine is a living practice—restoring connection between people, horses, land, and spirit. Whether you're an individual clinician or a tribal program building a full-scale service, our training and consulting services meet you where you are, with integrity, skill, and respect for community.



5. Sacred Stock & Soil

Leschi Line Horse Breeding • Food Sovereignty • Land Stewardship • Ranching in a Good Way

Sacred Stock & Soil at Medicine River Ranch is our commitment to caring for the land, our animals, and our people in ways that are rooted in respect, sustainability, and cultural responsibility. This program supports food sovereignty, traditional land-based knowledge, and the revival of Native ranching practices—including the re-establishment of the historic Leschi horse line.

We currently steward a small herd of **cattle**, including *Longhorns* and *Corriente*, and tend our **own hay fields**, harvesting feed directly from the land to sustain our animals and programs. In past seasons, we have raised and gifted **community pigs**, reflecting our belief that ranching can—and should—nourish both the body and the spirit of our people.

This work is about more than agriculture. It's about healing relationships with land, reclaiming food systems, and modeling self-sufficiency for future generations. We honor animal life through ethical care, rotational grazing, and balanced stewardship practices. Every act—whether feeding, fencing, baling hay, or tending soil—is approached with intention and integrity.

At the heart of Sacred Stock & Soil is the **Leschi Line Horse Breeding Project**, a long-term effort to reclaim and restore the tribal horse lineage that once thrived in the Nisqually Valley. These horses are not just animals—they are living relatives, carrying memory, medicine, and movement into future generations.

Sacred Stock & Soil Includes:

- ◆ *Horse Breeding & Preservation* – Rebuilding the Leschi Line through careful, culturally guided breeding
- ◆ *Sustainable Cattle Care* – Daily stewardship of Longhorn and Corriente herds
- ◆ *Hay Production* – Harvesting and storing ranch-grown hay for year-round feed
- ◆ *Food Sovereignty Projects* – Past community pig shares and future land-based food systems
- ◆ *Land Management* – Grazing plans, fencing, soil care, and seasonal stewardship
- ◆ *Teaching & Mentorship* – Involving youth and program participants in hands-on ranch work

Sacred Stock & Soil is about restoring right relationship—with land, animals, food, and future generations. It is ranching in a good way: slow, respectful, rooted, and Native-led.



Leschi Line Stallion Prospect "Rez Made" son of AQHA Machine Made

6. Salish Horse Pavilion

Ceremony • Sport • Celebration • Connection

The *Salish Horse Pavilion* at Medicine River Ranch is a powerful gathering space where culture, community, and horsemanship come together. More than just a venue, it is a living expression of intertribal connection, Native celebration, and the revival of horse-centered traditions. Designed to host events that reflect the strength and spirit of Indigenous people, the Pavilion offers space for rodeos, cultural ceremonies, equine competitions, and healing-centered gatherings—on Native land, in Native hands.

The Pavilion is **home to two large outdoor arenas, three outdoor round pens, and a covered round pen**, with an indoor arena currently under development. This expansion will allow *Medicine River Ranch* to support year-round programming, events, and therapeutic services—no matter the weather. Built with respect for both traditional values and modern needs, these facilities are designed to serve youth, elders, families, and horse people alike.

This space uplifts our youth, celebrates our elders, and strengthens Native-to-Native connection across generations and nations. It's a place where stories are shared, horses are honored, and legacy is lived—through ceremony, sweat, competition, and kinship.

What Happens at the Pavilion:

- ◆ *Intertribal Rodeos & Horsemanship Competitions* – Honoring skill, tradition, and sport
- ◆ *Cultural Gatherings* – Drumming, dancing, storytelling, and seasonal ceremonies
- ◆ *Youth Events* – Peer mentorship, leadership showcases, and program celebrations
- ◆ *Healing & Honor Rides* – Rides for remembrance, grief, healing, and awareness
- ◆ *Clinics, Trainings & Guest Events* – Native-led workshops, exchanges, and partnerships
- ◆ *Open Community Days* – Welcoming schools, families, and visitors to witness Native excellence

At the heart of the Pavilion is the horse—a symbol of freedom, strength, and sacred relationship. Every hoofbeat here echoes generations of tradition and a future shaped by resilience, pride, and connection.

