



First Nations Development  
Institute's Board of Directors  
is proud to share:

# CREATING THE INDIAN “AND”



**FIRST NATIONS**  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

**2024 ANNUAL REPORT**





First Nations Development Institute’s mission is to uplift and sustain the lifeways and economies of Native communities through advocacy, financial support, and knowledge sharing.



## ABOUT THE COVER

This year’s Annual Report features “July” by Paige Pettibon. Paige is a mixed-race descendant of the Bitterroot Salish of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Black & White, raised on Coast Salish territories alongside one of the country’s largest urban Native populations. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes gather every July to celebrate the Arlee Powwow, a vibrant expression of culture, community, and tradition. This digital art piece captures the spirit of that celebration, radiating joy and energy through bold, vivid colors. Learn more about Paige’s work at [PaigePettibon.com](http://PaigePettibon.com).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Cover.....	2
Letter from the Chairman.....	4
Letter from the President.....	6
This Year at First Nations.....	8
Program Highlights.....	10
Native Arts, Language, and Knowledge.....	10
Investing in Native Youth.....	15
Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellowship.....	16
Native Fundraisers Community of Practice.....	18
California Tribal Fund.....	22
Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments.....	26
Research and Advocacy for Native Economic Justice.....	36
Stewarding Native Lands.....	40
Grants, Grantmaking and Philanthropic Services.....	50
Gratitude and Thanks.....	67
Staff.....	68



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

The Board of Directors of First Nations Development Institute is proud to present our 2024 Annual Report. Here we celebrate and uplift the ingenuity of our community partners and the strides being made across Indian Country, from cultivating Native land stewardship, to strengthening Native food systems, to perpetuating Native lifeways. We are honored to share these stories here.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### CHAIR

**Benny Shendo, Jr.** | Jemez Pueblo

### VICE CHAIR

**Marguerite Smith** | Shinnecock

### SECRETARY

**Shyla Sheppard** | Mandan/Hidatsa

### TREASURER

**Susan Jenkins** | Choctaw

### PRESIDENT & CEO

First Nations Development Institute  
**Michael E. Roberts** | Tlingit

### FORMER BOARD MEMBERS

#### CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

**B. Thomas Vigil** | Jicarilla Apache/  
Jemez Pueblo

#### IN MEMORIAM

#### BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS

**A. David Lester** | Muscogee Creek

#### BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS

**Siobhan  
Oppenheimer-Nicolau**

#### Chandra Hampson |

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska/  
White Earth Chippewa

#### Gelvin Stevenson | Cherokee

#### Jay Calhoun | Cherokee Nation

#### Valerie Segrest | Muckleshoot

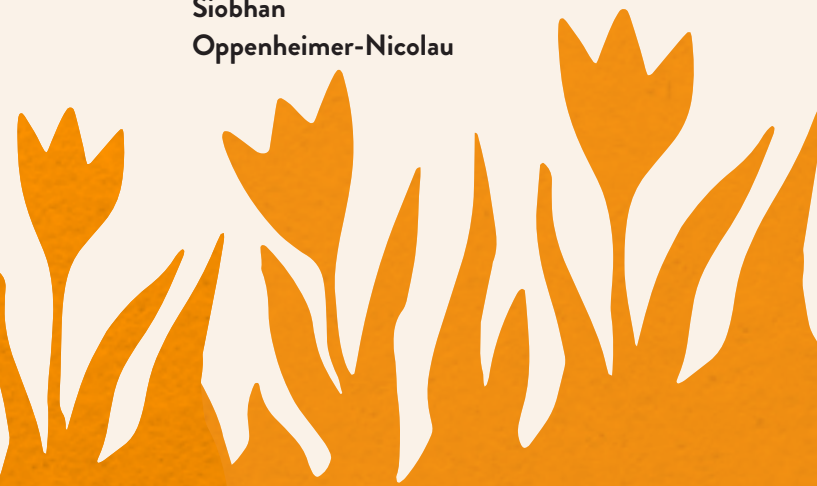
#### Elizabeth Reese | Tewa

#### BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS

**Monica Nuvamsa** | Hopi

#### Susan White

Oneida Nation  
of Wisconsin





# LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

## Indian and ... Powerful

It is again time to look back on the past year at First Nations and all of Indian Country. Take stock of where we are, and what lies ahead, and to share those reflections in our Annual Report.

This year, as always, we celebrate the progress and successes of our community partners, and the advances that are taking place in Native food systems, land stewardship, and Native leadership, as well as the increasing acknowledgement and application of traditional knowledge. We do this with the theme, “Indian *and*,” exploring how being Indian is not a solitary, confined identity. It is an evolving presence. We are Native American, and we are advocates, activists, teachers, environmentalists, entrepreneurs, scholars, and more. First Nations Development Institute is a national, Native-led and Native-serving nonprofit organization. *And*, we are a close, mission-focused team that brings our best to our partners and to each other every day with integrity, kindness, and always humor.

In considering this theme, I recognize that we indeed are Indian and so much more. But, I think a true takeaway is that we are so much more *because* we are Indian.

As Native Americans, we routinely face challenges and obstacles because of who we are. Every day we are reminded of the stereotypes and false narratives that have been created and perpetuated to define and limit us. We work both within and against the very systems, politics, and bureaucracies that have for centuries targeted our elimination. We continue to weather many storms, including the ones tied to the 2024 political election and resulting threats to Indian Country.

But we show up time and time again to keep alive our Native knowledge and lifeways.

For that, we are revered for our strength and steadfastness. We are forever saying, and hearing, that we are “resilient.” And this is very true. It is our culture and upbringing, our families and communities, and our traditions, dance, and song that make us powerful. We are Indian and we are here to stay.

## But let's stop talking about resilience.

On the pages that follow, we highlight the many ways Native communities are uplifting approaches to Native language immersion, Native research and scholarship, climate change, and food security. We celebrate and amplify these successes. But instead of focusing on the strength and resiliency of these Native communities in doing their important work, I encourage folks to get out of the way and stop creating the need to be resilient in the first place.

As always, this year and every year, we honor all those who recognize the inherent sovereignty of Tribal nations, and the centuries of innovation and ingenuity that live in Native communities. In 2024, we again highlight the organizations, foundations, and individual donors in an online supplement published on First Nations' website.



See the full list of 2024 supporters in this special online supplement available at [www.firstnations.org](http://www.firstnations.org).

Behind every Native approach are the cultures and lifeways of our relatives. The ingenuity, the respect and responsibility with which we interact with all living things, and the wisdom of our ancestors—these are all baked into everything we do. Instead of having to conform to Western ideals, or continue to have to educate and justify our every project and approach, consider what would happen if others just step back, step away, and step aside. Stop applauding us for being resilient, and instead, trust in our traditional ways. Stop extracting, encroaching, and exterminating. Uphold the Tribal Sovereignty that’s been part of who we are all along.

*Native peoples inherently possess the ingenuity to control our own assets and grow our own local economies based on knowledge systems and practices that have existed since time immemorial.*

As just a few examples: We see the fruits of this ingenuity in the sixth round of our Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellows announced in 2024. There are now 54 fellows, with more being named in 2025 and 2026. This growing network of Native experts in language, art, stewardship, education, and other fields is working individually and collectively to ensure Native lifeways continue.



This year, more than 200 Native leaders in conservation and environmentalism came together at our Shared Horizons: Navigating Tribal Co-Stewardship and Co-Management Opportunities Conference to collectively advance their work to best steward and cultivate lands in ways that will honor traditional knowledge and save our planet.

And, we reintroduced our Food Sovereignty Summit, where community partners across multiple First Nations’ programs convened for sharing and learning to build healthy food systems and strengthen Native food systems.

This year saw a growing scholarship of studies and policy recommendations to advance Native justice. First Nations’ researchers collaborated on the 2024 American Electorate Voter Poll, now having commissioned more polling research on Native American communities and issues over the past five years than any other entity.

The accomplishments are great, and we—as Native people, and as First Nations—will not cease to innovate, strategize, and act, with the insights and fortitude of our relatives and ancestors.

As my term as chair of the Board of Directors of First Nations comes to a close next year, I trust in the resolve of my fellow board members and staff at First Nations. We will continue to survive, evolve, and thrive, powered by our cultures and lifeways. We call on people to recognize this power. We are here, Indian, and so much more. And we are so much more, because we are Indian.

We thank you for your ongoing support,



**Benny Shendo, Jr.**

Jemez Pueblo

Chairman, Board of Directors

First Nations Development Institute

# LETTER FROM THE THE PRESIDENT

## We Are Indian *and* ... So Much More

Each year, August and September are a nostalgic time for me. Especially when my kids were younger, these months signified back-to-school time. And, as the parent of two Native children, the time of year meant an annual trek to their school to chat with their teachers and the principal about the textbooks my children would be learning from. I would specifically address the history books that almost always treated the subject of American Indians as relics of the past, as children of nature, or as an inconvenient footnote to manifest destiny. Never—and yes, in the entirety of my two daughters' K-8 education—did I encounter a narrative portraying Native peoples in the present. Instead, I would see Native peoples categorized as being in opposition to what it means to be American.

In *Authentic Indians*, Paige Raibmon describes much of this thinking as follows:

*“Whether they used definitions of Indianness in the context of policy, religion, amusement, or science, colonizers shared an understanding of authenticity. They were collaborators in a binary framework that defined Indian authenticity in relation to its antithesis; inauthenticity.”*

These beliefs and stereotypes left no room for Native peoples to be Indian and something else. In my mind this “and” continues to be very important.

Lost in my daughters' schoolbooks was any conversation about the wealth and largess of America coming from the land theft and genocide of America's original inhabitants. Also missing was any discussion of how the appropriation of American Indian assets created one of the world's wealthiest economies, while negatively impacting American Indians' economic and human rights. Native Americans were exempt from another important lesson in U.S. history: the guiding words of the Declaration of Independence, which grants Americans the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. As Native folks know full well, these are aspirations only to be enjoyed by non-Native Americans.

Throughout the years, my annual sojourns to educate the educators about Indians allowed me to begin an important conversation. It created an opportunity to dispel myths and the stereotypes that come from those myths. For my daughters, this helped foster pride in their heritage.

In many years, I was able to chat directly with students in my daughters' classrooms. I would bring interactive pieces like word-search puzzles with American Indian tribe names, or seeds so the kids could take home the makings of their own three sisters gardens. My presentations would often include slides with photographs of folks like Maria Tallchief, John Herrington, and Ben Nighthorse Campbell. The message I was hoping to convey to my daughters' classmates—and probably more importantly, to my daughters themselves—is that, as a Native American, you can be Indian *and* something more. This was very important personally because, for my family and me, this was not always the message we received.



Donald Roberts, the handsome gentleman on the left in this picture, is my grandfather. He was born in 1910 in the Alaska Territory, where his every life's breath would be dictated by laws and government officials. He and his people would not gain the right to vote until 1924—almost 75 years after the 15th Amendment gave Black men the right to vote.

At age 11, he was sent off to boarding school in Oregon. There, as an Indian, he was taught a menial trade because there was no such concept that one could be an Indian *and* something else.

Standing next to my grandfather in this picture is my father, Peter Roberts. One week before he was to graduate from high school, his English grade was arbitrarily changed from an A to a B. Again, in the minds of the school administrators, he could not be an Indian *and* a valedictorian.

My life and the majority of my life's work has been to change the perception of Indians. This "and"—this ability to be Indian *and* something else—is even more important because of these two young ladies.



These two young Tlingit ladies have middle names derived from my great aunt Elizabeth Peratrovich. I would challenge anyone who was not taught Indian and Alaska Native history to discover who she was. She was an Indian *and* a civil rights activist. It is my hope that by giving my daughters her name they might realize their dreams of being Indian *and*...

- An athlete or
- A famous prima ballerina or
- A United States senator or
- An astronaut

## First Nations *and*...

Beyond August and September, every day, and for the last almost 45 years, the work of First Nations Development Institute has also centered on the "and."

A great part of my work is the day-to-day business of raising money, running an organization, and promoting economic development throughout Indian Country. We invest in the hopes and dreams of Indian communities and we invest in these communities' own solutions.

We stand by the belief that control of one's economic destiny applies to all people equally, and that sharp vigilance and timely intervention can prevent the centuries of American Indian people's disenfranchisement from controlling their own economies from continuing.

Through our Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments program, we're bolstering local food systems and economies in a country where two times more funding is spent on healthcare for federal prisoners than for Indian people. And, through our Native Youth and Culture Fund, we're supporting programs and projects that invest in youth and give them a sense of place and tradition in the community, staving off the worst effects of acculturation and assimilation.

We do this work *and* we continue to tear down more than 500 years of mythology. We have the opportunity and the privilege to help make the invisible visible. We, along with all of Indian Country, fight to change the narrative of how Indians are perceived. We are not cultural objects, dehumanized relics, or mascots. We are not just Indians. We are here for our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We are here to ensure there is always an "and."



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Roberts'.

**Michael Roberts** | Tlingit  
President & CEO  
First Nations Development Institute

## THIS YEAR AT FIRST NATIONS

We are honored to commemorate some key milestones of 2024

### WELCOMING BACK OUR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY SUMMIT

For the first time since 2019, First Nations' Food Sovereignty Summit resumed, welcoming over 200 tribal leaders, food practitioners, and colleagues to the Coast Salish homelands and to the lands of the Suquamish Tribe. The theme of the summit was "Swimming Upstream: Native Foodways in a Modern World" acknowledging a return to our homes, Native food systems and lifeways, and our collective journey to restore our food systems. Read more about the Food Sovereignty Summit on page 33.



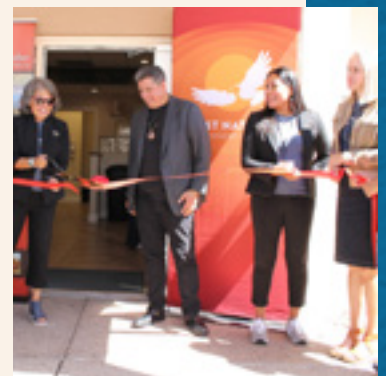
### SHARING HORIZONS FOR TRIBAL CO-STEWARDSHIP AND CO-MANAGEMENT

In November, First Nations hosted the Shared Horizons: Navigating Tribal Co-Stewardship and Co-Management Opportunities Conference at Gila River Resort in Chandler, Arizona. Co-hosted with longtime partner organization, Native American Rights Fund, this national co-learning event supported stronger partnerships and enhanced tribal leadership in the co-stewardship and co-management of public lands. This conference was hosted at a critical time, providing the space to bring together tribal and federal representatives and other thought leaders to discuss and develop new strategies, inspire innovation, and sustain opportunities for collaborative land and resource management.



### INCREASING CAPACITY FOR GREATER INVESTMENT IN NATIVE COMMUNITIES

First Nations celebrated an exciting new chapter with the opening of our new office in Albuquerque on March 27, 2024. The new property at 8421 Osuna Road NE creates a larger hub for First Nations' work in the Southwest, allowing us to recruit local staff and enhance our ability to invest in the success and sustainability of the Native communities we serve, many of which are located in New Mexico and Arizona. This major achievement reflects our strategic planning, intentional growth, and the trust of our supporters. We commemorated the milestone with local community partners, staff, and members of the Albuquerque community with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house on August 16, 2024.



## URGING PHILANTHROPY AND FOUNDATIONS TO DO BETTER BY NATIVE AMERICANS



This year, First Nations published two new reports revealing the lack of investment and representation of Native Americans in the nation's philanthropic sector. ***Native Americans and Board Representation on America's Largest Foundations*** analyzes 158 large U.S. foundations and finds that only 7% of America's largest foundations have Native American board representation. Through this report, First Nations calls for foundations across the U.S. to actively take steps to increase Native American representation.

***On the Matter of Foundation Giving: Examining the Inequity of Private Philanthropy's Investment in Native Communities*** raises questions about how publicly available data is measured and how to more accurately capture philanthropic giving to Indian Country. It underscores how overall foundation giving has increased to Native organizations and causes; yet, the overall share of philanthropic resources supporting Native organizations and causes, including Native-led organizations, is still less than 1%. The report asserts that Native organizations as a whole need more foundations to support them, and for existing supporters to continue to give to Native-led organizations.



## COUNTERING MISLEADING DATA ABOUT NATIVE AMERICAN VOTING

Conducted in partnership with the African American Research Collaborative and BSP Research, First Nations' 2024 American Electorate Voter Poll provided for a critical oversample of Native American voters nationally that painted a more complete picture of how Native Americans voted in the 2024 presidential election. Unlike other election polls, the 2024 American Electorate Voter Poll commissioned by First Nations screened voters about tribal membership and whether their parents or grandparents identified as Native American and whether voters live on or near a reservation. Researchers contended that Native American voters remained largely absent in the pre-election discussions by election experts and pundits due to nearly no credible data available for the Native American electorate. Instead, First Nations found that Native American voters continued to be consequential across the presidential election and several other races this cycle.



## NATIVE ARTS, LANGUAGE, AND KNOWLEDGE

Evolving from our longtime focus on strengthening tribal and community institutions, First Nations' Native Arts, Language, and Knowledge program is designed to ensure that communities have the tools to revitalize and preserve their languages, that culture and connections are visible and exchanged, that cultural practitioners are honored, and that future generations of cultural practitioners are cultivated and celebrated. The mission of the Native Arts, Language, and Knowledge program is to invest in the sustainability of Native communities and knowledge-holders who perpetuate intergenerational connections through arts, language, and lifeways.

### NATIVE ARTS

#### FIRST AMERICANS' CULTURAL TREASURES INITIATIVE

The First Americans' Cultural Treasures Initiative recognizes the intrinsic role Native-led arts and cultural institutions play in fostering the arts and cultural assets of Native communities and connecting the past to the present and the future for the preservation of Native knowledge systems, identities, and lifeways. The initiative is made possible through the **Ford Foundation America's Cultural Treasures Regional Challenge Initiative**, in a funding partnership with **Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies**.

In 2024, nine community partners, who were awarded funding in late 2023, successfully completed the first year of their two-year grant period. Now, in this second year, community partners continue to strengthen and innovate their arts and culture programming, preserving and strengthening their arts work, as well as rebuilding from losses they may have experienced through the pandemic.

#### NATIVE ARTS INITIATIVE

With the support of **Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies**, First Nations established the Native Arts Initiative in 2014 to provide direct grantmaking, networking opportunities and training and technical assistance to Native-led arts and cultural hubs that are working to preserve and advance Native arts through programming focused on supporting artists and intergenerational sharing of artistic skills and knowledge.

In late 2023 we awarded eight community partners with 24-month grants from \$30,000 to \$200,000, for a total of \$1,330,000. In 2024, seven of these partners continued with their second year of the funding, further strengthening their programming.

Meanwhile, in 2024, we released the first competitive arts request for proposals since the pandemic. In all, First Nations awarded \$1.5 million in grants to 12 community partners and expanded the funding geographic region to include Montana and Idaho. Three additional community partners, located outside the geographic funding region, were also able to receive grant funding with support received through First Nations' 2022-2023 Native Arts Donor Campaign.





## 2024 FIRST AMERICANS' CULTURE TREASURES INITIATIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

(Grants awarded in 2023 for 2024 projects)

- American Indian Community Housing Organization, Duluth, Minnesota
- Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Little Eagle Arts Foundation, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin
- Lower Sioux Indian Community, Morton, Minnesota
- Makah Cultural and Research Center, Neah Bay, Washington
- Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Keshena, Wisconsin
- Pueblo of Pojoaque, Poeh Cultural Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Tulalip Foundation, Tulalip, Washington
- Zuni Youth Enrichment Project, Zuni, New Mexico

## 2023-2025 NATIVE ARTS INITIATIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

(Grants awarded in 2023 for multiple years)

- Hopi School (Hopitutuqaiki), Inc., Kykotsmovi, Arizona
- Malki Museum, Inc., Banning, California
- Pala Band of Mission Indians, Pala, California
- Pueblo of Zuni, A:shivi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center, Zuni, New Mexico
- Tananáwit: A Community of Warm Springs Artists, Warm Springs, Oregon
- Upper Sioux Community, Granite Falls, Minnesota
- Woodland Indian Art, Inc., Oneida, Wisconsin

## 2024 NATIVE ARTS INITIATIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Akwesasne Cultural Center, Akwesasne, New York\*
- California Indian Museum & Cultural Center, Santa Rosa, California\*
- Laguna Community Foundation, Laguna, New Mexico
- Minneapolis American Indian Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota\*
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Choctaw, Mississippi
- Northwest Indian College, Bellingham, Washington
- Peoples Food Sovereignty Project, Ronan, Montana
- Portland All Nations Canoe Family, Portland, Oregon
- Sacred Pipe Resource Center, Bismarck, South Dakota
- Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Santa Rosa, California
- Sinkietqu Okanogan Basketweavers Association, Omak, Washington
- Sitting Bull Visitors Center, Fort Yates, South Dakota
- The Museum at Warm Springs, Warm Springs, Oregon
- Ukwakwa Inc., Oneida, Wisconsin
- Warm Springs Community Action Team, Warm Springs, Oregon

\* Funded with support from 2022-2023 Native Arts Donor Campaign.

## SHOWCASING NATIVE ART, PASSING DOWN NATIVE ARTISTIC KNOWLEDGE

Coming out of the pandemic, many First Nations Native arts community partners were able to return to Native arts programming, illustrating again how Native art is not only a finished product, but a source of vitality and strength for Native communities.

### WOODLAND INDIAN ART, INC.

With support from First Nations, Woodland Indian Art, Inc., in Oneida, Wisconsin, is expanding the awareness and appreciation of Woodland Indian arts and culture through education, events, and markets. The organization brings together Woodland Indian artists to highlight the distinct artistic styles and cultures of tribes from the Eastern United States and southern parts of Canada, while creating economic opportunities for artists.



### HOPITUTUQAIKI (HOPI SCHOOL INC.)

Year-round arts school Hopitutuqaiki (Hopi School Inc.) uses Hopi's strengths in the arts as the center of the curriculum. The school was founded on the belief that Hopi culture, language, and values offer a natural learning environment where students have a unique opportunity to mature and thrive. The school believes that "every child is like a seed, and if each seed is nurtured, it will grow best in its own plot of earth."

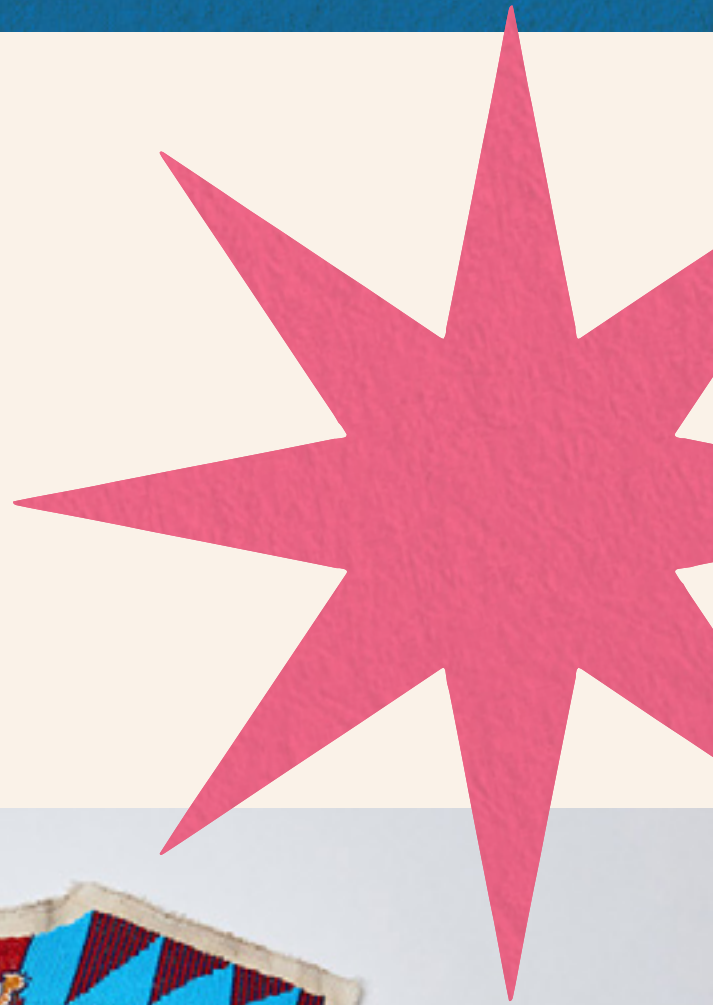
**“Cultural treasures are language, ceremony, environment, and daily life for many of our Hopi people. The word ‘treasure’ is something that expresses value in all of that, especially for our newer generation. Cultural treasures are also a way of life and valuing Hopi life that has always been here. Finally, there are Hopi people who have lived full, meaningful lives who we also consider ‘treasures.’”**

– Donna Humetewa Kaye,  
Hopitutuqaiki (Hopi School Inc.)



## TANANÁWIT: A COMMUNITY OF WARM SPRINGS ARTISTS

Tananáwit: A Community of Warm Springs Artists, a nonprofit, community-based arts organization, supports Native artists from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs through educational and economic development opportunities. Artists are given a workspace, tools, supplies, and transportation to create their art and sell it locally. Tananáwit hosts many art shows throughout the year featuring traditional and contemporary artists. The organization also offers cultural classes for adults and youth taught by master artists with a deep commitment to share intergenerational knowledge and diverse Native art styles. The organization has grown from working with 20 artists to 55.



## NATIVE LANGUAGE

### NATIVE LANGUAGE IMMERSION INITIATIVE

The Native Language Immersion Initiative builds the capacity of Native language immersion programs in tribal communities. With support from the **Bezos Foundation**, the **Sunderland Foundation**, **Pendleton Woolen Mills, Inc.**, and **CSAA Insurance Group**, a AAA insurer, and multiple donors and supporters, First Nations continued in 2024 to provide direct financial resources and build a dialogue and community of practice among Native language immersion programs and momentum for supporting this work.

In a strategic goal to strengthen the sustainability of Native language immersion work, First Nations for the first time awarded two-year grants, awarding more than \$1.92 million to multiple community partners, including Euchee (Yuchi) Language Project, Inc.; Xine:wh-ding Inc.; ‘Aha Pūnana Leo; Keres Children’s Learning Center; Saad K’idilyé; Kwiyagat Community Academy; Salish School of Spokane; Native American Advancement Foundation; American Indian Resource Center, Inc.; Ho-Chunk Nation; Nk’wusm; Oceti Sakowin Community Academy; Chief Hurao Academy, Inc.; and Menomini yoU, Inc.

This year, Native language leaders met in person for the first time since before the pandemic for a three-day convening in Green Bay, Wisconsin. During the event, over 30 participants learned about successful models and partnerships from other practitioners, shared best practices and strategies for language teaching and engagement, and built a network of Native language teachers and practitioners from Native communities across the United States and U.S. territories.



**PICTURED:** Native language speakers and professionals exchange knowledge and expertise on the value of investing in Native language revitalization and perpetuation.



### ENDOWING OUR COMMITMENT TO NATIVE LANGUAGES

In 2024, First Nations created our first-ever Language Preservation Endowment, providing an ongoing source of funding and ensuring that support for Native language programs and initiatives in Native communities can go on. The endowment was made possible through the generosity of **Susan S. Martin**. Susan’s gift was facilitated by Melissa Landon, Ellen Heath, and Diane Blaser, who wanted to honor Sue’s life and her commitment to preserving Native languages, knowledge, and lifeways.



**ABOVE:** First Nations is grateful for the shared vision of these supporters and the value of this transformative gift.

## INVESTING IN NATIVE YOUTH

First Nations believes that Native youth represent the future of Native communities and that investing in youth and giving them a sense of place and tradition in the community ensures a future of bright and capable leaders. We seek partnerships with programs that meet youth where they are, support them in accomplishing their goals and dreams as future leaders, and shape pathways that prepare them for an empowered adulthood guided by their cultures and families.

In 2024, First Nations moved ahead with a strategic approach to incorporate a focus on Native youth and intergenerational learning and knowledge transfer into all First Nations' programs. Meanwhile, we continue to deploy assistance through our Native Youth and Culture Fund, one of the longest-running efforts at First Nations.

This year, we awarded \$1.965 million in technical assistance and grant support to 33 Native-led nonprofits and tribes to develop and enhance projects that empower and inspire Native youth. The two-year grants were made possible with support from the **Bezos Family Foundation, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, Weingart Foundation, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the California Endowment, Patterson, Marjorie Findlay, and the Schmidt Family Foundation 11th Hour Project.** These grants focus on leadership development, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and cultural preservation, including teaching Native languages, connecting youth with elders, and fostering traditional arts. Funding was provided across three key areas: leadership and cultural identity, structured day and overnight cultural camps, and California Tribal Fund youth initiatives.



“

“Through the 33 community partners, First Nations expects to reach hundreds of Native youth, giving them a sense of place and connection that cultivates a future of bright and capable leaders. These projects are crucial to boosting confidence in Native youth, revealing potential, and creating leadership opportunities that have a direct benefit for Native communities and for all society.”

– Abi Whiteing (Blackfeet), Director, Native Arts, Language, and Knowledge



## INDIAN AND.... YOUTH DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURS

A group of young members from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians created and led a Christmas market selling t-shirts, hoodies, tumblers, earrings, ornaments, and door hangers that they fabricated using digital technology. This pop-up business enterprise was the result of a new tribal initiative focused on youth entrepreneurship.

“Entrepreneurship can lead to economic growth within the community, which can then lead to an improved quality of life,” says John Hendrix, director of the tribe’s Office of Economic Development (OED). Under his leadership, the tribe has supported adult entrepreneurs for more than 20 years. Now, it sees real value in inspiring its youth, as well. “If we can get our kids in high school to start thinking about charting their own path, they are more likely to have entrepreneurial thinking.”



**ABOVE:** Choctaw youth who participated in the entrepreneur program pose for a photo in their makeshift makerspace.

With a \$25,000 **Comcast NBCUniversal** grant awarded by First Nations, the Choctaw OED purchased a “starter kit” to be used in a proposed makerspace, including three 3D laser printers, a laser etcher, computerized CNC router, sublimation printer, vinyl cutter, and two heat presses. The students took this state-of-the-art digital equipment for a test drive to fabricate the goods they sold at the Christmas market.

One of the participants, 16-year-old Kaydence Bell, who lives on the Choctaw reservation, was most excited about the sublimation printer. She enjoyed adding designs and images to the hoodies and t-shirts. “Before this project, I never really worked with technology. I was kind of intimidated at first. But the more I worked with the machines, the more I caught on to it. It was really fun!”

## NATIVE KNOWLEDGE

### LUCE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FELLOWSHIP

First Nations’ Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellowship continues to support Native knowledge holders and knowledge makers who embody exceptional creativity, progressive and critical thinking, and the potential to significantly move forward their fields in ways that will ultimately lead to broad, transformative impact for Indigenous communities.

Again, with support from the **Henry Luce Foundation**, in 2024, a fifth cohort of fellows began their two-year fellowship. The 2024 fellows represent an extraordinary cross-section of Indigenous leaders who are culture bearers in their communities, and a welcome addition to the growing pool of Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellows past and present. To bring the 2024 cohort together for knowledge sharing and inspiration, First Nations hosted two in-person Luce Fellowship convenings and one virtual convening.

In April 2024, First Nations released the application for the sixth cohort. Applications were received from 235 Native knowledge makers, and 25 applicants were invited to First Nations’ headquarters in Colorado. The sixth cohort was selected at the end of 2024 and will begin their two-year fellowship year in 2025.

# LUCE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FELLOWSHIP 2024 COHORT



**ROSE BEAR  
DON'T WALK**

Bitterroot Salish/Crow/  
LonePine Shoshone Paiute

*Knowledge Field: Salish  
Ethnobotany*



**WARLANCE  
CHEE**

Diné

*Knowledge Field: Language  
and Culture Advocate*



**AUDRÉ  
ETSITTY**

Diné

*Knowledge Field:  
Diné Horsewoman*



**CARA  
FLORES-MAYS**

Chamoru and Micronesian

*Knowledge Field: Filmmaker,  
Community Organizer*



**ERNESTINE  
HAYES**

Tlingit

*Knowledge Field:  
Writer, Teacher*



**JAMIE JACOBS**

Tonawanda Seneca Nation

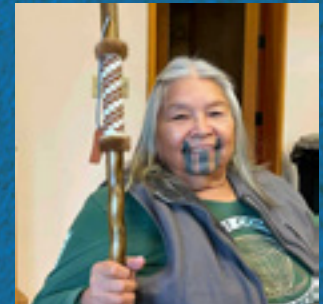
*Knowledge Field: Seneca  
Language Teacher, Traditional  
Quill Worker, Ceremonial  
Custodian, Museum Curator*



**IVAN  
MACDONALD**

Blackfeet

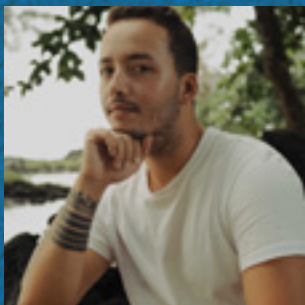
*Knowledge Field:  
Filmmaker*



**BERTHA  
PETERS**

Yurok

*Knowledge Field: Traditional  
Food and Basket Maker*



**KEKAIOKALANI  
(KEKAI) NAONE**

Native Hawaiian

*Knowledge Field: Kumu Hula*



**TJ  
SGWAAYAANSYOUNG**

Haida

*Knowledge Field: Carver*



**MATTHEW  
VESTUTO**

Barbareño/Ventureño Band  
of Mission Indians

*Knowledge Field: Language  
Educator*





## NATIVE FUNDRAISERS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Native Fundraisers Community of Practice (NFCoP), launched by First Nations in 2019, is designed to strengthen and amplify the fundraising skills and leadership of Native-led nonprofits and tribal programs. Grounded in the core values of creativity, innovation, knowledge sharing, relationships, and storytelling, the program supports participants in enhancing their capacity for grant writing, donor engagement, and strengths-based communications, while advancing Native-led solutions and promoting positive narrative change in philanthropy.

In 2024, First Nations convened Cohort 6 of the NFCoP, bringing together another group of Native leaders. Over the course of two virtual sessions and two in-person gatherings, participants engaged in peer learning and collaborative strategy-sharing, building lasting relationships and sharpening their skills to generate sustained funding and advance the economic, cultural, and spiritual well-being of their communities.

**ABOVE:** In 2024, Cohort 6 marked a significant milestone for the Native Fundraisers Community of Practice, becoming the first cohort to feature two in-person gatherings—one at the start and one at the conclusion of the program. This intentional shift was designed to strengthen relationships from the start and foster deeper collaboration throughout the six-month experience. Through this model, participants and facilitators created a space for meaningful engagement, strategy-sharing, and a stronger foundation for advancing Native-led fundraising and philanthropy.

### NFCoP FUNDERS

- American Express Foundation
- Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program
- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- MacArthur Foundation
- Target Foundation
- AMB Foundation
- Fidelity Charitable Catalyst Fund

## 2024 NATIVE FUNDRAISERS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PARTICIPANTS



**BONNIE SECAKUKU** Hopi  
*Director, Hopi Three Mesas, Inc.*

Bonnie Secakuku is an entrepreneur and founder of Hopi Three Mesas, Inc. She is a certified Master Gardener and a student of foraging wild native plants and their uses. Secakuku's extensive experience is in working with her people and Hopi youth in sharing, educating, and balancing the two worlds on the Hopi values, philosophies, and language.



**ERIN THOMAS** Navajo Nation  
*Board Chair, The People's Land Collaborative*

Thomas is from White Cone, Navajo Nation (Arizona), and is the daughter of countless generations of conservationists and ranchers. Erin owns White Shell Resource Consultants, and is a managing member of 4 Canyons Land & Cattle Co. Thomas has a bachelor's degree in Rangeland Ecology and Management from the University of Arizona and has worked for over a decade for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Rangeland Management Specialist.



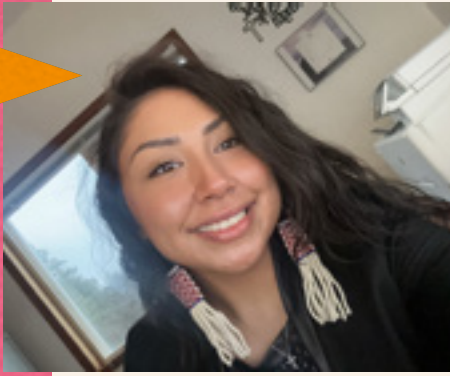
**HELENA SCHMITZ** Saskinax^  
*President, CEO, Ilaaḡunaax^, Atux^ Forever Restoring Attuans' Freedom*

Throughout her career, Schmitz has become a leader of her people. She started a nonprofit in 2019 that represents unrecognized Indigenous people, referred to as Saskinax^. She took chieftainship in 2022, hoping to continue to care for and to help past, present, and future generations leave a lasting legacy of their people.



**IRIS SHARP** Blackfeet  
*Assistant Director, FAST Blackfeet*

Iris Sharp graduated from the University of Montana with a bachelor's degree in social work, and she is passionate about decolonizing and improving Indigenous lives. Prior to working for FAST Blackfeet, Sharp worked as a social worker both on and off the Blackfeet Reservation, which has shaped her desire to help vulnerable groups achieve self-sufficiency.



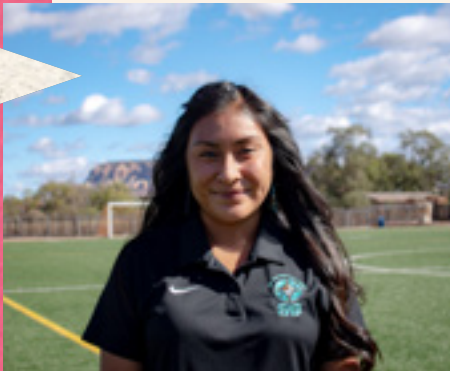
**KELLI JACKSON** Organized Village of Kake  
*Secretary/ Treasurer, Kake Tribal Heritage Foundation*

Within her tribe, Kelli Jackson fulfills the role of Tribal Court Administrator, while also spearheading Shareholder Relations at Kake Tribal Corporation. Committed to nurturing the next generation, she actively engages as a Junior Class Advisor and Girls on the Run Coach, demonstrating a profound dedication to youth empowerment.



**KENABA HATATHLIE** Navajo  
*Program Associate, First Nations Development Institute*

Kenaba Hatathlie (she/her) is from Kirtland, New Mexico, and is a citizen of the Navajo Nation, born for the Hónágháahnii clan. She joined First Nations in January 2024 with the Stewarding Native Lands team. Prior to this, Hatathlie worked within various areas of the nonprofit sector. She has experience in Indigenous education efforts and advocating and advancing the Native Vote in local and state elections, and she has supported Native youth leadership programs. Hatathlie continues to focus her efforts on transforming and further strengthening Native communities.



**KIARA ZUNIE** Zuni Pueblo  
*Youth Development Coordinator, Zuni Youth Enrichment Project*

After earning a degree in social work at New Mexico Highlands University, Kiara Zunie, better known as “Kiki,” returned home eager to give back to her community by leading youth toward positive and optimistic futures. She had first served as a ZYEP camp counselor in 2019 and officially joined the team in 2021. Kiki dedicates her time to planning and implementing high-quality, strengths-based programs for local schools, the community, and partnerships that impact over 800 individuals per year.



**MATTHEW WILSON** Sicangu Lakota Nation  
*Food Sovereignty Director, Sicangu Co*

Matthew “Matte” Wilson is a citizen of the Sicangu Lakota Nation, also known as the Rosebud Sioux Tribe of South Dakota. Wilson and his team work toward building a regenerative food system on Rosebud that supports holistic wellness and Tribal Sovereignty.



**SAYO COSTANTINO** An ally of Mālama Loko ea Foundation  
*Operations Director, Mālama Loko ea Foundation*

Sayo Costantino brings over 20 years of experience in environmental education, rooted in a deep passion for nature, culture, and preserving culture and ‘āina spaces. She joined Mālama Loko Ea in 2012, stepping into roles that ranged from on-call educator/weedwacker to Operations Director by 2020. Costantino splits her time with Mālama Learning Center, where she focuses on programs that inspire and educate communities.



**TREY ADCOCK** Cherokee Nation  
*Executive Director, The Center for Native Health*

Dr. Trey Adcock is the executive director of the Center for Native Health, a small Native-led nonprofit primarily serving the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians community. Adcock was named one of seven national Public Engagement Fellows by the Whiting Foundation for his work documenting a Bureau of Indian Affairs-run day school in the TutiYi “Snowbird” Cherokee Community. He obtained his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he was a Sequoyah Dissertation Fellow, focusing on technology integration at an American Indian boarding school in Oklahoma.

## Participating but not pictured.

**THERESA CLARK** Louden Tribe of Galena, Alaska  
*Executive Director, Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council*

Theresa Clark is the executive director for the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, a nonprofit organization composed of 57 Alaska member tribes and 17 Canada First Nations. The organization focuses on clean water and lands along the Yukon River and its tributaries. Clark also serves on the Norton Bay Watershed Council board, another watershed council for the Norton Bay on the west coast of Alaska, a nonprofit organization for nine villages.

**WHITNEY KELLIE** Village of Wainwright  
*Executive Director, Alaska Nannut Co-Management Council*

Whitney Kellie (Pituk) oversees Alaska Nannut Co-Management Council’s (ANCC) daily operations, programs, activities, and staff. Kellie has spent the last 13 years working with Alaska Native people, entities, and organizations in various capacities. She is passionate about the important role Alaska Native people and organizations play in the advocacy for and stewardship of traditional lands, resources, and cultural and subsistence practices.

**JOSHUA TODDY** Navajo  
*Operations Project Manager, Hozho Voices of Healing Center*

With over 30 years of gardening experience, Joshua Toddy is leading the Hozho Center’s drive to combat food insecurity through the development of vast sustainable gardens based on Indigenous agricultural practices. He assists with management of the many farm animals at the Hozho Center and is working on a permaculture design for the Center’s 148-acre lower pasture.

# CALIFORNIA TRIBAL FUND

The mission of California Tribal Fund is to invest in the viability and visibility of California Tribal Nations and communities. The Fund prioritizes programs that focus on tribal control and protection of ancestral lands, water, food systems, and culture.

Since the inception of the fund in March 2020, over \$5.4 million in funding and over \$750,000 in technical assistance have been mobilized to over 100 unique grantees in 39 California counties. California Tribal Fund focuses support in four strategic areas:



## STEWARDSHIP OF ANCESTRAL LANDS AND WATERS:

Each community differs in its approach; examples include mapping land bases, managing land donations, fighting for water rights, and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge on land formerly under tribal control.

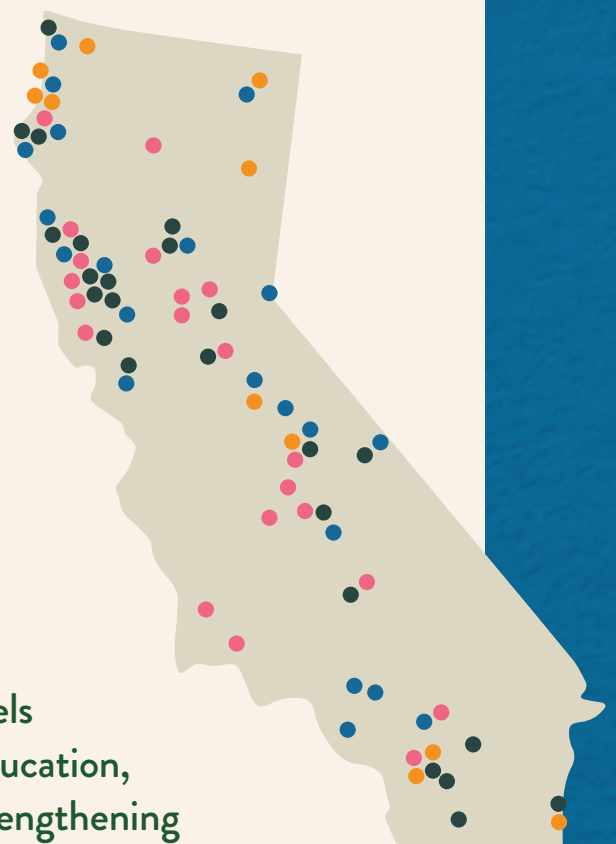
## TRIBAL COMMUNITY FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

Tribes and Native communities build sustainable food systems that increase access to healthy, culturally based, and traditional foods, alleviate hunger, improve the environment, and increase control over agriculture.

**CULTURE:** Enduring cultural traditions and knowledge systems are celebrated and maintained through language revitalization, basketweaving, storytelling, medicine making, ceremonies, and more.

**FIRE AND DROUGHT:** Tribal communities are responding to fire and drought through fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning and education, and emergency response and relief, and by strengthening their cultural fire practices to support healthy ecosystems.

CALIFORNIA TRIBAL FUND GRANTEES



In 2024, the Fund awarded 11 California-based tribes and tribally controlled nonprofits grants of \$60,000 each to support work that centers Native youth and supports programs that provide leadership building and intergenerational transfer of knowledge.

An additional 26 grants were awarded supporting ancestral land access and stewardship; wildfire and drought mitigation, response, and recovery; food sovereignty; and youth and cultural programs.

Together, these grants and associated technical assistance provided more than \$1.6 million in support to California tribes and tribally controlled nonprofits. In addition to grantmaking, the Fund increased organizational capacity and expansion of its statewide reach, opening a larger office in Pasadena, California.

California Tribal Fund staff members were part of over 30 presentations, webinars, seminars, and podcasts for federal, state, and philanthropic partners and other interested parties. These presentations increased awareness of the complex relationship between water and land, California Native communities, the socio-ecological environment, and the benefits of Indigenous natural resources management.

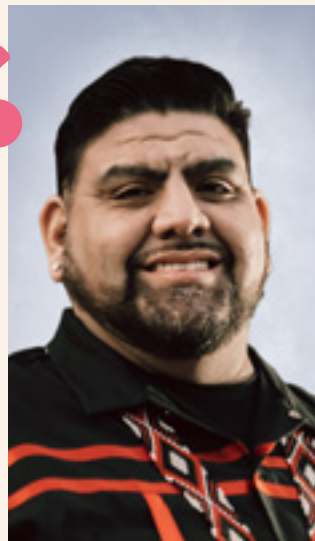


## INDIAN AND... WATER RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

Tightly regulated water supplies from the Colorado River support over 40 million people across the Western United States. Based on a 1963 U.S. Supreme Court decision, the Quechan Reservation, along with four other reservations in the Southwest, have federally decreed water rights to the Colorado River for farming and other uses.

To best access and conserve this water supply for drought mitigation, California Tribal Fund Community Partner Quechan Tribe has replaced aging infrastructure with modern technology and purchased and installed three new Rubicon water gates. These gates and software support real-time flow and water level monitoring and the ability to adjust controls remotely.

Quechan Tribe Water Technician Frank Venegas shared, “These gates save thousands of acre-feet of water annually. And every acre-foot of water saved can support three single-family homes for a year, along with habitat restoration projects.”



**“The California Tribal Fund staff is a special family within First Nations. We have a close, caring working relationship that extends to our community partners. We meet them where they are with respect and humility, knowing that our job is not to implement our own solutions or extra hoops for support. We’re here to uplift their work and ensure Tribal Sovereignty is recognized, upheld, and celebrated. I’m honored to play a role in this work.”**

– Donald “Squiggie” Salcedo (Quechan Nation/Pueblo of Laguna) Lead Program Officer, California Tribal Fund

## DIGGING DEEP TO PROTECT THE ROOTS OF NATIVE LANDS

In January, First Nations' California Tribal Fund hosted a Stewarding Ancestral Lands Gathering to strengthen connections and build capacity for California-based Native stewardship and protection of ancestral lands. This event was well attended by staunch advocates for safeguarding Native lands—14 participants from nine tribes and tribal organizations—at Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, and facilitated by Melvin Consulting, a Hopi-owned and -led firm.

Mary Adelzadeh, Director of First Nations' Stewarding Native Lands program, talked about opportunities and resources to advance tribal land rights and interests; staff from the California Wildlife Conservation Board discussed grant opportunities; and Kate Trujillo (Laguna Pueblo), a First Nations consultant and evaluator, covered program evaluation, providing a summary of preliminary findings from California Tribal Fund's first Accessing Ancestral Lands grant program.

During a visioning activity, participants revealed their hopes for bringing back healing to the land and creating a space for tribal members to come home and thrive.

Ron Montez Sr. from Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians said they are working toward returning to ceremonies, honoring elders, and passing on the language and values of the people to the youth. "Creator gives us a reason and a season," he said. "We are one with nature. We represent the birds. We honor fire and water. We have responsibilities for our people."



**ABOVE:** The California Tribal Fund team poses with the participants and facilitators of the Stewarding Ancestral Lands Gathering.

Elizabeth Paige from the Native American Land Conservancy spoke about their work engaging the community with the future in mind. “Native folks are the strongest allies we have against climate change. The next generation will be the decision-makers.”

Grantees highlighted the importance of positive and meaningful working relationships with local, state, and federal agencies so that someone who understands the tribal perspective is at the decision-making table. Relationships are key to this work. Kimberley Johnson from the Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy stressed that it is necessary for tribal people to continue the arduous work of indigenizing the world of conservation so that non-Native people can become better allies to Native people caring for Native lands.

At the gathering, there was a consensus that when tribes and tribal organizations can work together, they have more power to make a difference—whether fighting for water rights or opportunities for tribes to be centered in decision-making about funding or resource management.

Tubatulabal Tribal Chairman Robert Gomez Jr. spoke to the patience required for this work. “Everything takes a long time. Fortunately, tribes are in it for the long haul.”



**RIGHT:** Kyndell Noah and Teri Red Owl from Owens Valley Indian Water Commission draw up their vision for the community they serve in Payahuunadü.

## NATIVE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS INVESTMENTS

Since 2001, First Nations' Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments (NAFSI) program has supported Native food systems and cultural foodways through grants, gatherings, and advocacy, with a core goal of honoring the deep connection between Native people, their foods, and the land. In 2024, NAFSI continued to strengthen Native food sovereignty, food security, and tribal food economies across Indian Country.



**LEFT:** The Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments staff are continually inspired by the communities we serve, reminded that growing and harvesting together, taking time to cook, and sharing meals with friends and relatives are everyday expressions of abundance and resilience.

This year, NAFSI provided funding for Native-led projects that expanded access to traditional and local foods, supported sustainable food businesses, and created economic opportunities, ensuring Native communities have greater access to their foods and teachings.

**NATIVE FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:**  
Empowering tribal communities to govern systems, preserving the right to produce food on their lands. These projects establish and safeguard Native food traditions while carrying forward the stories, identities, relationships, and responsibilities that Native cultures live by.

## NATIVE FARM TO SCHOOL

With grant funding from the **USDA Food and Nutrition Service Farm to School** program, along with support from the **Newman's Own Foundation**, NAFSI continued to support educators working to integrate traditional foods, language, and land stewardship into school programs. Through the Native Food Sovereignty for Native Youth project, NAFSI provided \$25,000 grants and technical assistance to 13 Native-led organizations focusing on incorporating Indigenous values into their programs through cultural activities, traditional foods, educational knowledge holders, Native-sourced and -produced foods, and community organizing. NAFSI also brought together community partners for peer-to-peer networking at First Nations' national Food Sovereignty Summit. These efforts continue to strengthen food sovereignty for Native youth, creating a food system that embraces—rather than removes—culture.

## FIRST FOODS AND MATERNAL HEALTH

Through the Breastfeeding and First Foods project, NAFSI reinforces the value of traditional foods in tribal food systems, promotes maternal health, and expands access to First Foods, while uplifting culturally appropriate lactation practices for Native parents, caretakers, and young children. With funding from the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**, **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**, and **First Nations' Keepseagle Endowment**, NAFSI awarded \$484,000 in grants to 10 Native-led projects focused on the health and well-being of Native families.

## NATIVE FOOD JUSTICE

Through this two-year project, NAFSI Native Food Justice grants are uplifting projects addressing historical injustices that have disrupted Native foodways. Through the support of the **Waverley Street Foundation**, 40 grants totaling \$1.3 million were awarded to communities, advancing emerging food justice projects that empower Native communities to revitalize their food systems and sustain Indigenous food traditions. These projects prioritize new or emerging organizations, grassroots initiatives, and Native-led pilot projects in their early stages.



## NURTURING TRADITIONAL FOODS FROM OUR BEGINNINGS

First Nations published *Unveiling the Rich Tapestry: Indigenous Breastfeeding, Birth Traditions, and First Foods*, a report examining the historical disruption of Indigenous birthing and nutritional practices due to colonization. It explores the limitations of federal programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), lower breastfeeding rates among American Indian/Alaska Native mothers, and the significance of traditional first foods and culturally relevant maternal and infant health initiatives. The report was developed in collaboration with consultants Claudia Serrato, Ph.D., and Ryan Sealy, MPH.



**ABOVE:** The Better Food Policy Fund awarded a two-year \$60,000 grant to the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) to support their continued work in tribal food policy and food sovereignty initiatives. At the Columbia Gorge Tribal Food Sovereignty Group Summer Session, Faron Scissors of CRITFC (left) and Sarah Sullivan of Gorge Grown (center) met to collaborate and celebrate next steps with Ethan Gallegos, First Nations Senior Program Officer and Better Food Policy Fund Independent Advisory Committee member.

## FOOD POLICY SOLUTIONS FOR NATIVE COMMUNITIES

NAFSI policy projects focus on strengthening and adapting tribal, local, regional, and national policies to advance Native food sovereignty. In partnership with the Organic Farmers Association, First Nations works with community partners to explore the role of organic practices within the movement.

To advance Native food policies, this year NAFSI staff actively contributed to the Better Food Policy Fund’s Independent Advisory Committee, ensuring that this values-based fund continues to support food policy through civic collaboration. The fund awarded its first round of 10 grants totaling \$600,000 over two years to support food policy councils working to effect better food policy through civic collaboration.

**NATIVE FOOD SECURITY:** Ensuring consistent access and availability of an abundance of culturally relevant foods that meet the needs and preferences of Native communities. Native Food Security is more than sustenance—it nurtures the physical and spiritual well-being of families, communities, lands, and traditional foods.

## FOOD DISTRIBUTION SUPPORT FOR NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Food distribution projects increase access to healthy, culturally relevant foods within Native communities by supporting food distribution efforts. With the generous support of the **American Express Foundation**, this five-year project delivered 50 grants totaling \$500,000 to community partners who are prioritizing traditional and locally sourced foods while expanding organizational and program capacity to serve Native families better.



**ABOVE:** A social dance at Oneida Nation Emergency Food Pantry connects Native community members and First Nations’ supporters in fellowship and knowledge sharing, as part of the “Into the Woodlands” Wisconsin Donor Tour in June 2024.

## NATIVE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN IS CRITICAL

Food Supply Chain projects focus on identifying and addressing inefficiencies, disparities, and logistical challenges within Native food systems. In September, a buffalo harvest was held in Oneida, Wisconsin, bringing together tribal employees and community members to learn and share in the experience.

**NATIVE FOOD ECONOMIES:**  
Fostering the cultivation, relationship, and management of Native food economies. These projects prioritize the collective well-being over individual interest, and integrate traditional, modern, and entrepreneurial elements while maintaining Indigenous values.

## CHANGING FOOD ECONOMIES IN THE NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST

In year two of this 2022-2024 project, the learning cohort consisting of Bois Forte Food Sovereignty & Sustainable Agriculture Group (Minnesota), Chippewa Creek of Rocky Boy (Montana), Fort Peck Community College (Montana), People's Sovereignty Program (Montana), Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (North Dakota), and Wisdom of the Elders, Inc. (Oregon) continued food sovereignty initiatives to create sustainable economic growth within their communities. These partners convened at First Nations 2024 Food Sovereignty Summit, where they met with other First Nations' community partners through the USDA-Agriculture Marketing Service-Local Food Promotion Program/Native Producers project, Native Farm to School project, and Indigenous Food Systems Community of Practice.

With continued support from the **Northwest Area Foundation** and the **Agua Fund**, two additional grants of \$30,000 each were awarded to community partners in 2024 to support their Native food efforts.



**ABOVE:** Lisa Mni and Arlo Iron Cloud guide the harvest, creating a welcoming space to pass on knowledge and traditions.



**ABOVE:** With support through the Changing Food Economies project, the People's Food Sovereignty Program is collecting their harvested deer and elk hides on a larger scale from the local processor. This ability provides the organization with the capacity needed to process hides for other organizations on the reservation, as well as offer hide-tanning classes for their community members.

At First Nations' Food Sovereignty Summit, Patrick Yawakie shares how the People's Food Sovereignty Program is extending the shelf life of meat.

## NATIVE FOOD PRODUCERS SERVING INDIAN COUNTRY

With support from the **USDA-Agriculture Marketing Services-Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)**, First Nations is helping 13 Native food producers expand their operations and increase access to traditional foods in their communities. These producers, located across eight states, are growing and harvesting a variety of foods, from fresh produce to meats, to sustain food economies in Native communities. In 2024, the second year of this three-year project, community partners gathered at First Nations’ Food Sovereignty Summit to discuss their projects, share challenges, and exchange ideas, growing their knowledge and collective network.

## INVESTING IN FUTURE FOOD LEADERS

With support from the **Newman’s Own Foundation** and other private funders, First Nations awarded Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments Scholarships to 26 Native students pursuing degrees in agri-business, animal science, environmental and resource management, public health, and Indigenous food systems. In total, \$37,500 in scholarships supported both undergraduate and graduate students across Indian Country.



**ABOVE:** The 30 members of the Native Farmer and Rancher Network Apprenticeship Network convene at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, building connections and friendships that will build on their three years of learning and collaborating.

**NATIVE FOOD NETWORKS:**  
 Creating communities of learning knowledge exchange. These projects support Native communities in sharing knowledge, navigating challenges, and build tribal intertribal networks of community leaders to grow, protect, and advocate for their Native food systems.

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE NATIVE FARMER AND RANCHER APPRENTICESHIP NETWORK PROGRAM

The Native Farmer and Rancher Apprenticeship Network, funded with support from the **USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture**, concluded in 2024 after three years of supporting Native farmers and ranchers. Launched in 2021, the program provided training, technical assistance, and networking for 30 Native producers to strengthen business capacity and support long-term land stewardship strategies. Participants deepened their relationships with land, animals, plants, and people and grounded their growth in traditional knowledge and community connection. For many the Apprenticeship Network reaffirmed their responsibilities as producers and stewards, rooted in care for their homelands.



**RIGHT:** Toward First Nations’ mission of knowledge-sharing, throughout the year, project teams compiled Native Farmer and Rancher apprentices’ stories, lessons learned, and successes in preserving Native food systems, advancing food sovereignty, and strengthening land stewardship.

## INDIAN AND.... INNOVATIVE FOOD PRODUCERS

A member of the Native Farmer and Rancher Apprenticeship Network, Alexandra Houchin, of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians in Minnesota, was among the section of apprentices exploring the feasibility of their agricultural enterprises. Alexandra and her partner grow food on a small plot on the Fond du Lac Reservation, harvesting traditional foods. With support through the network, their team was able to develop a business plan to solidify their approach to using the hulls from manoomin (wild rice) to improve irrigation, as well as field-test dried meal products for sale and distribution.

“

Getting real about our business plan has been a big deal for us. We've been thinking and talking a lot about really going full-time into our food business next year, which is so scary! Instead of holding other jobs, we want to focus the growing season on value-added products and learning even more.”

- Alexandra Houchin (Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians)



**RIGHT:** Alexandra Houchin harvests wild rice on the lakes of the Fond du Lac Reservation with her mother, Christine Houchin, who taught her the sacred cultural tradition. She pairs the rice with the organic food that grows in her garden.

### INDIGENOUS FOOD SYSTEMS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

In spring 2024, the second cohort of food funders gathered to advance food systems solutions in Native communities. Hosted in partnership with Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems Funders (SAFSF) and facilitated by the Hopi-led firm Melvin Consulting, the group met at the Poeh Cultural Center & Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with additional virtual meetings. Funders were introduced to Native-led food systems projects from across the country, offering key context on the depth and impact of this work. These engagements also supported relationship-building and discussions on how funders can commit to investing in Indigenous communities.



**ABOVE:** Roxanne Swentzell hosts the Indigenous Food Systems Community of Practice at the Flowering Tree Permaculture Institute.

### TRIBAL FOOD SYSTEMS RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

2024 marked the final year of this three-year project, the Tribal Food Systems Research Fellowship. This fellowship, created with the support of the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**, amplifies the voices of tribal food sovereignty scholars by supporting their research and publication efforts.

As part of the fellowship, First Nations partnered with the Journal of Food, Agriculture, and Community Development to feature many of the fellows in the column, “Revitalizing Indigenous Food Systems Through Research and Knowledge Sharing.”



# SPOTLIGHT ON FIRST NATIONS' FOOD SOVEREIGNTY SUMMIT


A highlight of 2024 was the return of a First Nations' tradition, the biannual Food Sovereignty Summit. First held in 2013 through a partnership with the Oneida Nation, the summit was envisioned to convene a national forum for sharing, learning, and collaborating to build healthy food systems throughout Native communities, discuss and respond to the external threats on Tribal Sovereignty, and create systems change that strengthens tribal food sovereignty. Since then, the Food Sovereignty Summit has brought together hundreds of attendees.

This year, the event welcomed over 200 tribal leaders, food practitioners, and colleagues to the Coast Salish homelands and the lands of the Suquamish Tribe. The summit began with a dedicated pre-session of workshops engaging community partners across First Nations' programs for Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments, Stewarding Native Lands, and California Tribal Fund, followed by presentations and breakout sessions across three program tracks. Another highlight was a series of experiential sessions designed to enhance learning and celebrate the culture and lifeways of the Suquamish area.

The Summit generated excitement and opportunities, building further momentum for projects under the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments, Stewarding Native Lands, and California Tribal Fund programs.

Community partners came away energized with best practices and relationships that will bolster their work and foster future collaborations. It was a successful three days and First Nations thanks all who supported and attended the event.

*First Nations thanks Tahoma Peak Solutions for their partnership, the Suquamish Nation for their hospitality, and the Yocha Dehe Community Fund for their sponsorship of this important event.*



**ABOVE:** Hosting the Food Summit in the Pacific Northwest created a geographic and timely opportunity to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Boldt Decision, a critical ruling of Judge George Boldt on February 12, 1974, in the U.S. v. Washington case that reaffirmed the 1850s tribal treaty rights to fish on traditional lands.



**“When Native food leaders come together, it’s more than a gathering, it’s a movement. I see communities reclaiming ancestral knowledge, strengthening food sovereignty, and building powerful networks of support. This work isn’t just about food; it’s about identity, healing, and ensuring that future generations have access to the foods, traditions, and knowledge that have sustained our people for centuries. By investing in our traditional foodways today, we are cultivating a future where Native communities can thrive; rooted in sovereignty, health, and cultural strength.”**

– Kristina Stanley, (Ojibwe [Red Cliff]),  
Lead Program Officer, Native Agriculture and  
Food Systems Investments

## THE MODOC NATION CREATES SAFE PASSAGE FOR MIGRATORY DEER

More than 150 years of intensive grazing on a drought-stricken part of the Modoc Nation Homelands had left their new 2,300-acre property in disrepair. Most problematic were the miles and miles of derelict, fencing—much of it barbed wire—left in place long after its usefulness had ended. This sharp wire, long abandoned in the roads and scattered across the landscape, was a safety hazard to both public land users and wildlife, particularly pronghorn and Interstate Mule Deer that migrate through that corridor.

“The derelict field fencing, especially, is an extreme hazard on the land and a threat to the survival of wildlife populations,” says Ken Sandusky (Choctaw), the resource and development director of the Modoc Nations Homelands program, whose mission is to reacquire and restore the tribe’s ancestral lands.

With the help of a \$50,000 First Nations’ Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments (NAFSI) grant, supported by **Waverley Street Foundation**, the tribe removed a projected 33,333 feet (about 26 miles) of derelict fencing on and around Modoc Nation ranches.

Sandusky teamed up on this cleanup operation with Brian Herbert, homelands manager for the Modoc Nation. For Herbert, a member of the Klamath Tribes, cleaning up Modoc homelands is personal. He says he was drawn to this project because he is a direct descendant of people who inhabited the landscape they are working to restore, doing the work that should have been done long ago.

“We are walking in the steps of our ancestors, who stewarded these lands since time immemorial, honoring them and doing what’s right by them,” says Herbert.

In the end, a total of 31,400 feet of fence cleanup and/or repair was completed. More than 32 miles of barbed wire fencing was removed and recycled. Three gates were replaced to better secure Modoc Nation properties and allow better access to habitat restoration projects. And electric fence components were also purchased to begin training the goat herd for regenerative grazing treatments, along with corral panels to safely handle the regenerative grazing herd.





The mission to clean up this first round of derelict fencing has been accomplished. But according to Sandusky, there are “limitless opportunities” to clean up “an immense amount” of loose barbed wire across Modoc Traditional Homelands and the homelands of neighboring tribes.

“This first effort has created the momentum needed to address this issue on a landscape scale in partnership with responsible land management agencies. The recently signed Master Stewardship Agreement between the Modoc Nation and Modoc National Forest will allow for this concept to be applied on a much larger scale.”

Currently, the Modoc Homelands team is working on a regenerative grazing project, building a herd of goats and the capacity needed to help restore the rangelands with fire fuel reduction, decreased juniper encroachment, and other invasive plant management.

“We are starting small, one grant at a time, and letting the momentum carry us into bigger projects,” Sandusky says of their game plan to restore other areas of the Modoc Homelands. “We always say just put one foot in front of the other and walk the path laid out for us. Everything in our strategy is scalable and nested. So, no matter what we can accomplish from here on out, we’re already a success, thanks to grants like this.”

Herbert, the Homelands manager, says he feels such a sense of purpose to be part of the team working to restore Modoc lands. “I am proud to represent the Modoc people in the Modoc Homeland. Healing this land is first and foremost to us. Once you start healing the land, other good things will start to fall in place.”

**ABOVE:** Brian Herbert (Klamath Tribes), Homelands manager for the Modoc Nation, rolls up some derelict fencing.



## RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY FOR NATIVE ECONOMIC JUSTICE

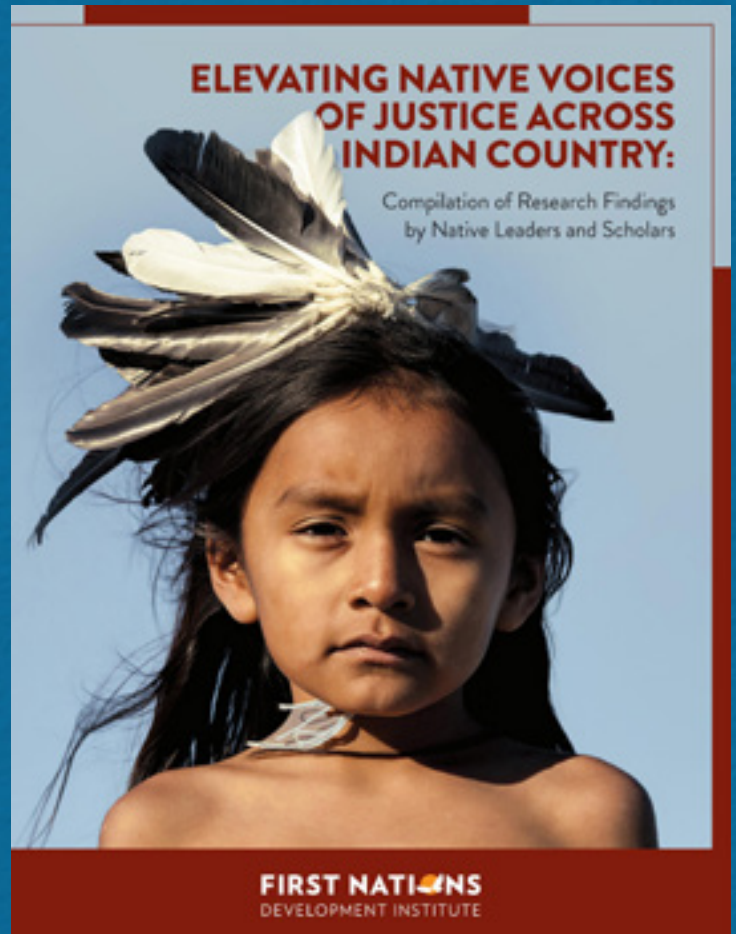
Through this evolving program, First Nations continues to provide Native communities, policymakers, and funders the research, tools, resources, and opportunities needed to invest in and advance Native economic justice.

### BUILDING A MOVEMENT FOR NATIVE JUSTICE

With support from the **Allstate Foundation**, First Nations brought together leaders for the Exploring Native Justice Convening in August 2024. Participants shared a range of perspectives and wisdom, and created an intentional space marked by trust, collaboration, and connection. They discussed what it means to achieve Native justice through the knowledge and traditions that have guided Indigenous people since time immemorial and explored our collective responsibility and opportunity to create a more just and humane world. Many participants noted that this type of gathering, one that is “resourced and carefully created,” is vital for ongoing Native justice work.



Input gained at the Exploring Native Justice Convening adds to the body of research First Nations is compiling to elevate Native strengths, counter invisibility and misinformation, and advance Native justice. This includes the “Elevating Native Voices of Justice Across Indian Country” report to be shared in 2025.



**ABOVE:** First Nations’ Building a Movement for Native Justice project features the photography of Cara Romero, a Native American photographer. More information about Cara can be found at [cararomero.com](http://cararomero.com).

## COLORADO HEALTH EQUITY – NATIVE AMERICAN MOVEMENT FOR HEALTH

With the support of the **Colorado Health Foundation**, which provided a grant of \$1.5 million for multi-year funding support to Native Americans in Colorado, First Nations is continuing advocacy in support of health equity. In 2024, First Nations continued supporting our 2023 community partners in strengthening community-based efforts to bolster the physical, mental, social, and cultural well-being of Native people and Native communities in Colorado.

## INDIAN AND... SOCIAL JUSTICE VISIONARIES

In 2024, we continued to promote the groundbreaking collection of essays published in 2023 that articulates Native action, visions, and aspirations taking place in Native communities, all aimed at challenging the romanticized and false views of Columbus and his colonial legacy. “Invisible No More: Voices from Native America” highlights the resilience of Native Peoples and their fight to maintain their distinct identities, protect land and the environment, and advance their sovereign rights. Luncheons, panel discussions, and book events were held in 2024, with more being scheduled for 2025.



## ACHIEVING NATIVE FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

First Nations provides training and resources to tribes and Native communities to help individuals and families understand the basics of financial management. Through funding from the **Financial Industry Regulatory Authority**, First Nations this year provided 29 financial education presentations, workshops, and interviews, reaching over 480 adults and students. We also provided 31 technical assistance sessions for partners seeking extra support on using training materials and resources, as well as published 14 Dr. Per Cap articles. Also this year, 10 new Invest Native online curriculum accounts were created, along with 22 new accounts for our \$pending frenzy app, an interactive financial education program that encourages informed budgeting, saving, and spending behavior in young people.



## ADVANCING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Native communities must be able to enact Tribal Sovereignty in all aspects of their lives, including in economic decisions when building their workforces. This level of self-determination enables communities to address their unique circumstances and create tailored solutions that align with their cultural values.

Workforce development allows communities to address systemic challenges and make strategic decisions on how to uplift their communities, while carrying forward cultural values and knowledge. Through workforce development, communities can address their unique challenges, and build workforce development sectors led by passionate, community-minded individuals who are able to serve their communities beyond economic gains and truly uplift community well-being.

Additionally with support from the **Allstate Foundation**, First Nations provided funding to 10 organizations at the forefront of Native-led workforce development. One community partner shared, “We are creating a new sector of work and workforce that is designed to benefit our community, our organization, and our staff. This approach emphasizes not just skills, but also passion and resilience to address community-specific traumas and challenges. The work we do is not just a job—it requires deep engagement and commitment to serving the community.”



**“What all these Native-led organizations have in common in their approach to workforce development is their commitment to cultural values and their vision to empower their community members by expanding workforce opportunities.**

– Cetan Christensen (Oglala Lakota),  
Lead Program Officer, Native Agriculture and Food  
Systems Investments



## MOBILIZING SUPPORT THROUGH THE TRIBAL LANDS CONSERVATION FUND

Through the Tribal Lands Conservation (TLC) Fund, First Nations directly engages individual donors in supporting Native-led stewardship. In 2024, we deployed funding raised in 2023 through the TLC Fund, to support Native Public Media, Bishop Paiute Tribe, Osage Nation, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, Navajo Nation, Local Environmental Action Demanded, Chugach Regional Resources Commission, and Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. These tribes and Native-led non-profits are addressing disaster preparedness through the application of traditional knowledge, protecting cultural resources on public lands, creating coastal resilience plans to protect the community, and advancing salmon co-management and monitoring efforts.

In 2024, we continued raising support through the TLC Fund with the campaign, “Bring Back the Native,” to protect ecocultural species. Ecocultural species are important to ecosystem health and also significant to the traditions, stories, and identities of Native people. Native-led stewardship is the foundation for maintaining relationships with ecocultural species and protecting biodiversity and community health.

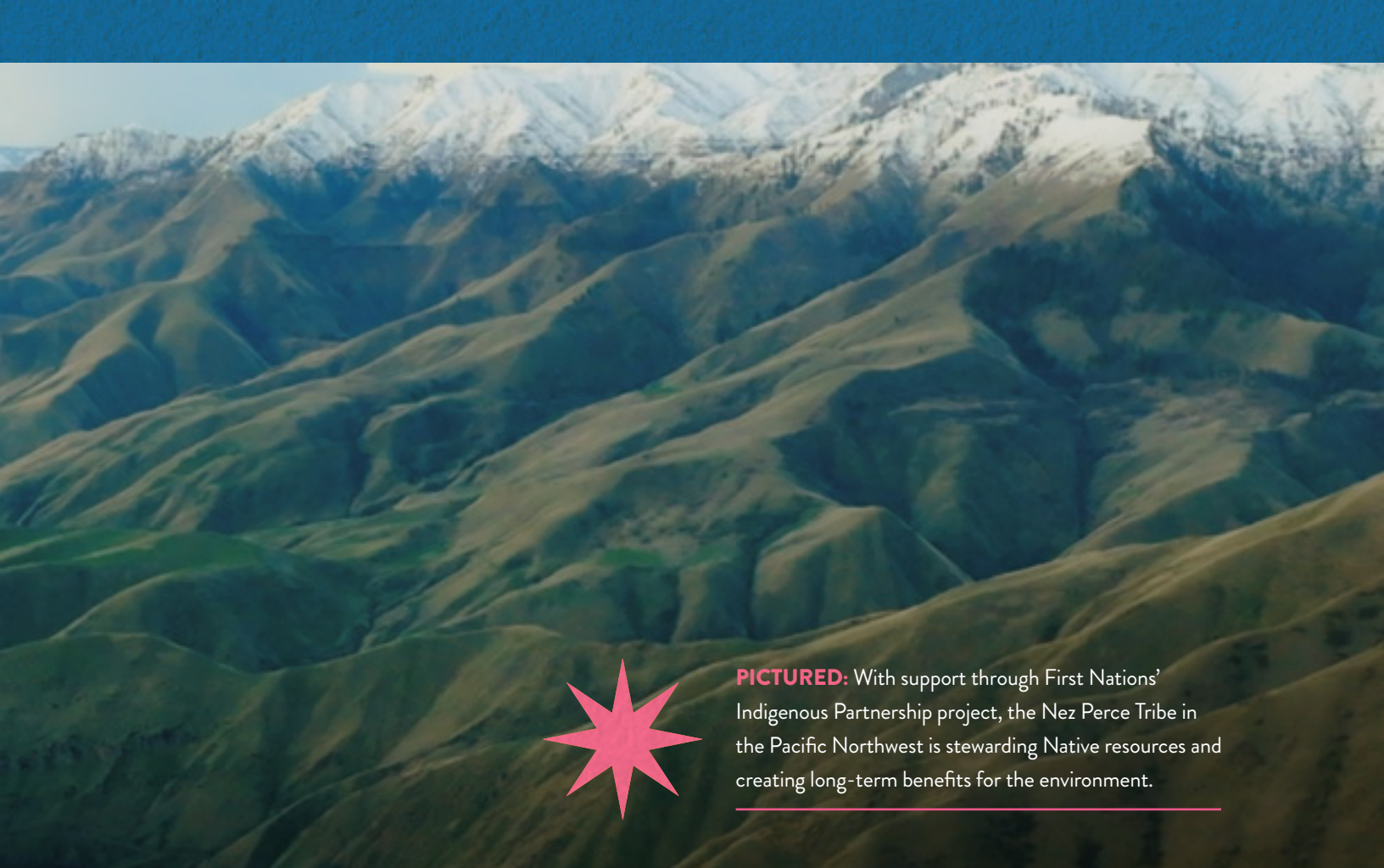


## STEWARDED NATIVE LANDS

Through the Stewarding Native Lands program, First Nations envisions a future in which Native stewardship is woven into all lands, nourishing vibrant ecosystems and communities. In 2024, the Stewarding Native Lands program continued to invest in Native knowledge that spurs innovation and creativity, shaping our landscapes and biodiversity. Throughout the year, the program amplified support to steward, protect, and restore access to tribal homelands through five strategic initiatives: Community Pathways, Stewardship, Climate, Environmental Sovereignty & Justice, and Woven Lands.

First Nations provides flexible funding for tribes and Native communities to pursue innovations in stewardship. With generous contributions from many foundations and individual donors, entities such as Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Fort Belknap Indian Community, International Indian Treaty Council, North Dakota Native Tourism Alliance, Sovereign Energy, and Tolani Lake Enterprises are ensuring they can build local capacity and create long-term change for their communities and the environment.

**Our work is guided by five values: Knowledge, Rematriation, Resurgence, Sustainability, and Justice.**



**PICTURED:** With support through First Nations' Indigenous Partnership project, the Nez Perce Tribe in the Pacific Northwest is stewarding Native resources and creating long-term benefits for the environment.

---

## COMMUNITY PATHWAYS: Creating avenues for intergenerational knowledge transfer.

### NURTURING FUTURE ANCESTORS

With support from a generous anonymous donor, the Nurturing Future Ancestors project supports intergenerational knowledge exchanges and engages youth in the stewardship of their ancestral lands. Through this project, nine entities are ensuring Native youth are provided opportunities to steward and access their land and culture. This pilot project is creating a foundation for uplifting organizations committed to growing and sustaining programming for Native youth to learn about traditional knowledge and stewardship practices for generations.

## STEWARDSHIP: Restoring healthy relationships between people and land.

### ADVANCING ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP IN THE SOUTHWEST

This project, made possible with support from the **USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE)**, supports Native producers in developing conservation plans that can be used to identify conservation objectives, assess key issues, and propose conservation objectives that are aligned with cultural and traditional management practices. This project also assists Native producers in accessing credit and financial programs through business planning, which can guide and position growth of an agricultural operation through market access and strengthen local food supply chains. Through this project, two community partners, Pueblo of Jemez and the Tolani Lake Livestock & Water Users Association, are assisting Native American farmers and ranchers to increase their eligibility for and participation in USDA programs.



### ADVANCING NATIVE-LED CONSERVATION

This project, made possible from **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Outreach and Advocacy Division**, is focused on developing the leadership of 15 young Native American natural resource professionals in the Northern Great Plains. By centering support on professional development for tribal employees, tribal capacity and leadership will be cultivated. In addition, the project will support 12 Native farmers to improve soil health and water quality and quantity.

### ADVANCING NATIVE ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP

This project, made possible with support from the **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Outreach and Partnership Division**, advances the stewardship efforts of tribes and Native communities through funding, training, and technical assistance. Community trainings and technical assistance address community needs in a variety of areas, including wildlife and habitat protection, natural resource management, conservation planning, climate adaptation, and capacity building.

### AMERICAN BUFFALO RESTORATION ON TRIBAL LANDS

This project, made possible by **The Freeman Foundation**, provided support to Blackfeet Nation, Chippewa Cree Tribe, Fort Belknap Indian Community, and Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative to ensure traditional knowledge and practices and the health of Native communities are restored alongside the buffalo. The buffalo is an ecocultural species critical to cultural traditions and healthy grasslands.

### COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR

This project, made possible with support from the **U.S. Forest Service**, provides outreach and technical assistance to tribes to engage with the U.S. Forest Service programs and funding opportunities.

### FORTIFYING OUR FORESTS

With funding from the **U.S. Forest Service**, First Nations provides technical assistance and capacity support to tribes interested in applying for the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program or the Landscape Scale Restoration Program. Both programs are competitive federal funding opportunities that can provide resources for forest land acquisition or forest restoration.



**ABOVE:** With support from the Indigenous Partnership to Advance Native American Communities and Producers project, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is restoring culturally relevant white oak tree stands through the reintroduction of cultural fire. These trees are essential to the tribe's traditional art and lifeways of basketweaving. Photo credit: Loren Waters of Waters Media, in partnership with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

### INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIP TO ADVANCE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND PRODUCERS

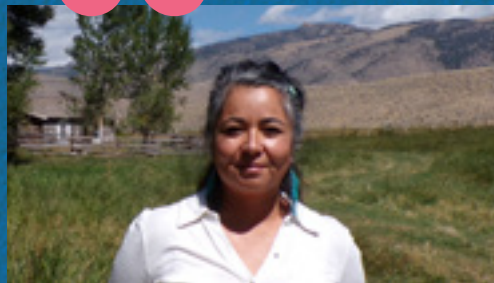
This project, made possible with support from USDA NRCS, advances the efforts of Native American farmers and ranchers, bringing together complementing services and resources to advance conservation, policy, advocacy, outreach, and education. Through this project, 12 entities are continuing long-standing traditions of land stewardship.

As part of our commitment to uplifting Native communities, First Nations produced four videos highlighting models of tribal stewardship and traditional knowledges rooted across diverse landscapes. Learn more about the featured stories and videos on page 43

# INDIAN AND... STORYTELLERS



As part of the Indigenous Partnership to Advance Native American Communities and Producers project, First Nations produced four films highlighting models of successful tribal stewardship practices. Throughout 2024, the films were featured at film festivals and conferences and through First Nations' website and social media channels.



**“The purpose of these incredible films is to raise awareness about the importance of the Native-led stewardship, with visual and dynamic stories that will increase interest, acknowledgement, and support. These stories need to be shared, and however we can amplify them for the good of our partners and the sustainability of their knowledge and practices is key to our mission at First Nations.”**

– Mary Adelzadeh (Navajo),  
Director of Stewarding Native Lands

## USUGILIX AWAKUN

This video shares the determination of the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska's to safeguard water, culture, and connection to the sea. For thousands of years, the Tribe has maintained strong connections to the ocean, but climate change is threatening their way of life. Warmer waters have led to frequent and dangerous algal blooms, causing paralytic shellfish poisoning and making it hazardous to eat traditional foods like shellfish. The video highlights tribal strength and adaptation to monitor and study harmful algae, documenting changes in shellfish safety through phytoplankton sampling and microscopy.

## HÉESU

This video shares the cultural connection between the Nez Perce Tribe and the Pacific lamprey, a species older than trees. The video weaves intergenerational memories, highlighting the work of passionate elders and tribal leaders who maintain strong connections with the lamprey. The Tribe is not only saving a species; but also preserving a sacred relationship and responsibility to the land, water, and future generations. This film is a reminder that protecting lamprey is also protecting Native history, culture, and identity.

## TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE WEAVING THE FUTURE

This video shares the story of the deep, ancestral connection between the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and their work to re-indigenize forest management practices that honor ecological balance and cultural traditions. With a focus on reviving cultural burning and traditional stewardship practices to restore white oak, traditional practices, language, and values will continue to thrive for generations to come.

## WHERE THE WATER REMEMBERS: THE SAYH2O LEGACY

This video shares the inspiring story of tribal youth development through their connections to water, culture, and language at Pueblo of Santa Ana. Through the SAYH2O initiative, youth are immersed in hands-on learning about the environment, water, and their stewardship responsibilities—all while revitalizing the Keres language. By teaching water concepts in the Keres language, the program helps youth build a deeper cultural connection to the land and water while instilling a sense of stewardship responsibility for future generations. This video is a heartfelt testament to how protecting the land and water is strongly tied to Native identity and tradition.

## INDIGENOUS STEWARDSHIP ON NATIONAL FORESTS

This project, made possible with support from the **U.S. Forest Service**, elevates tribal co-stewardship models on National Forest lands. This project amplifies these Indigenous partnership models through a curated report featuring case studies of culturally based stewardship and management, highlighting key opportunities and challenges.

## TRIBAL STEWARDSHIP IN THE NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS

With support from **Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies**, First Nations provides grants and technical assistance to build the skills and experiences of young natural resource professionals working for tribes in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana.

## CLIMATE: Addressing ongoing and anticipated impacts of climate change to preserve lands and cultural lifeways.

## ADVANCING TRIBAL NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

This project, made possible with support from **Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies** and First Nations' **Tribal Lands Conservation Fund**, supports tribally led climate action that addresses adaptation and disaster preparation centered on nature-based solutions and traditional knowledge. This project supports adaptive capacity and disaster preparation through the application of Native knowledge and stewardship.

## INCREASING RENEWABLE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRIBES AND NATIVE COMMUNITIES

This project, made possible with support from a generous anonymous donor, provides technical, educational, and financial resources to increase participation by tribes and Native communities in renewable energy opportunities. This project aims to create a comprehensive network of services offered by Native-led and tribal-serving renewable energy resource providers.

As part of this project, in September 2024, First Nations convened eight Native-led and Native-serving organizations and programs committed to advancing renewable energy across Indian Country. This gathering invited participants to collaboratively identify available resources for tribes and Native communities to expand renewable energy development, discuss how to build networks of support to improve tribal access to renewable energy resources, explore challenges and barriers that hinder tribal participation in renewable energy initiatives, and develop recommendations to ensure equitable access to resources.





**PICTURED:** The Renewable Energy Convening concluded with participants eager to continue their collaborative efforts, committed to improving tribal access to renewable energy resources.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SOVEREIGNTY & JUSTICE: Protecting communities and lands from harmful practices, projects, and policies.

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOR NATIVE COMMUNITIES

This project, made possible with support from **Patagonia, Inc.**, is uplifting the environmental leadership of tribal youth at the Rappahannock Tribe. Through financial support and technical assistance, the Rappahannock Tribe created a Youth Council Education Leadership Committee. The youth committee created messaging around the Tribe's environmental work to protect the lands and waters they call home.

### PROTECTING BERING SEA MARINE RESOURCES

This project, made possible with ongoing support from the **Broad Reach Foundation**, provides direct funding and technical assistance to tribes and Native-led organizations in the Bering Sea region as they address the depletion of marine resources that are needed to sustain their culture and livelihoods. This project brings justice to one of the most productive and diverse marine ecosystems in the world.

### SUPPORTING NATIVE-LED ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This project, made possible with ongoing support from the **Broad Reach Foundation**, provides resources to tribes and Native-led organizations to protect their lands and community health from extractive and harmful industries.

## WOVEN LANDS INITIATIVE: Growing investments that are aligned with tribal values and priorities.

With support from **Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies** and the **Doris Duke Foundation**, the Woven Lands Initiative was established in 2024 to create new frameworks and tools that bring together a combination of existing conservation statutes and public lands and federal Indian law, to uplift and respect Tribal Sovereignty and deeply held tribal values. The project promotes innovations and new frameworks for land return, conservation easements, tribal co-stewardship and co-management, and conservation finance.

### PROMOTING TRIBAL CO-STEWARDSHIP FOR GRASSLANDS HEALTH

This project, made possible with support from the **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation** (with funding from the U.S. Forest Service), strengthens and increases tribal co-stewardship on National Grasslands in the Great Plains region and meets other tribal priorities that promote greater grasslands health, biodiversity, and landscape connectivity. This project provides tribes with resources to build necessary capacity to negotiate, implement, and monitor co-stewardship agreements with the U.S. Forest Service.

### STRENGTHENING TRIBAL CO-MANAGEMENT AND CO-STEWARDSHIP

This project, made possible with support from the **Doris Duke Foundation**, provides technical and funding support to advance tribal co-stewardship and co-management, including the legal expertise needed to develop innovative agreements. The ultimate goal is to restore Native stewardship over tribal homelands, promoting greater ecological connectivity across the landscapes.

#### BELOW:

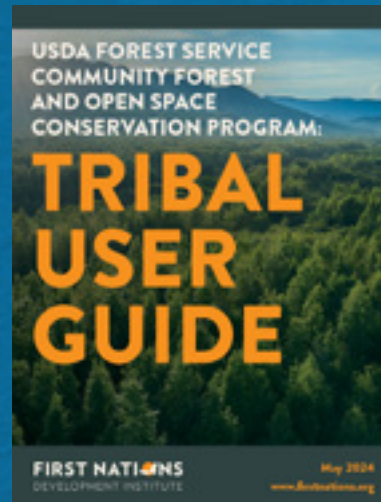
With support from the Advancing Native Ecological Stewardship project, youth at the Pueblo of Acoma learn about conservation planning practices.



# 2024 STEWARDING NATIVE LANDS PUBLICATIONS

## U.S. FOREST SERVICE COMMUNITY FOREST AND OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM: TRIBAL USER GUIDE

To strengthen tribal outreach and engagement in the U.S. Forest Service Community Forest Program, this resource offers accessible guidance on eligibility and key program requirements, helping tribes and Native-led organizations navigate the federal application process, promoting greater ecological connectivity across the landscapes.



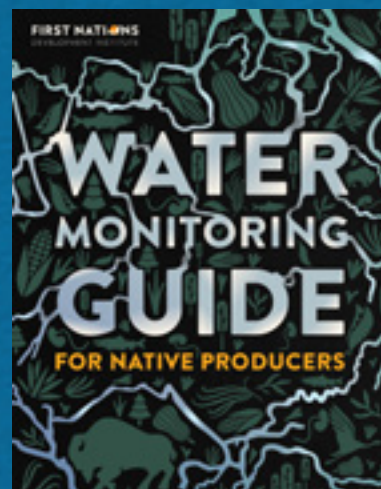
## CONSERVATION PLANNING CURRICULUM FOR NATIVE AMERICAN RANCHERS

This curriculum integrates Native land-based knowledge with Western science, guiding Native American ranchers through a conservation planning process that reflects both cultural values and sustainable land management practices. The accompanying workbook features tips and reflective questions, supporting thoughtful landowner-led planning rooted in both cultural knowledge and land stewardship.



## WATER MONITORING GUIDE FOR NATIVE PRODUCERS

Written and designed in 2023, the final 2024 First Nations' Water Monitoring Guide supports Native farmers, ranchers, and communities in continuing tribal water stewardship that has sustained Native communities for millennia.



## APACHE STRONGHOLD V. UNITED STATES: THE ONGOING BATTLE TO SAVE A SACRED APACHE SITE

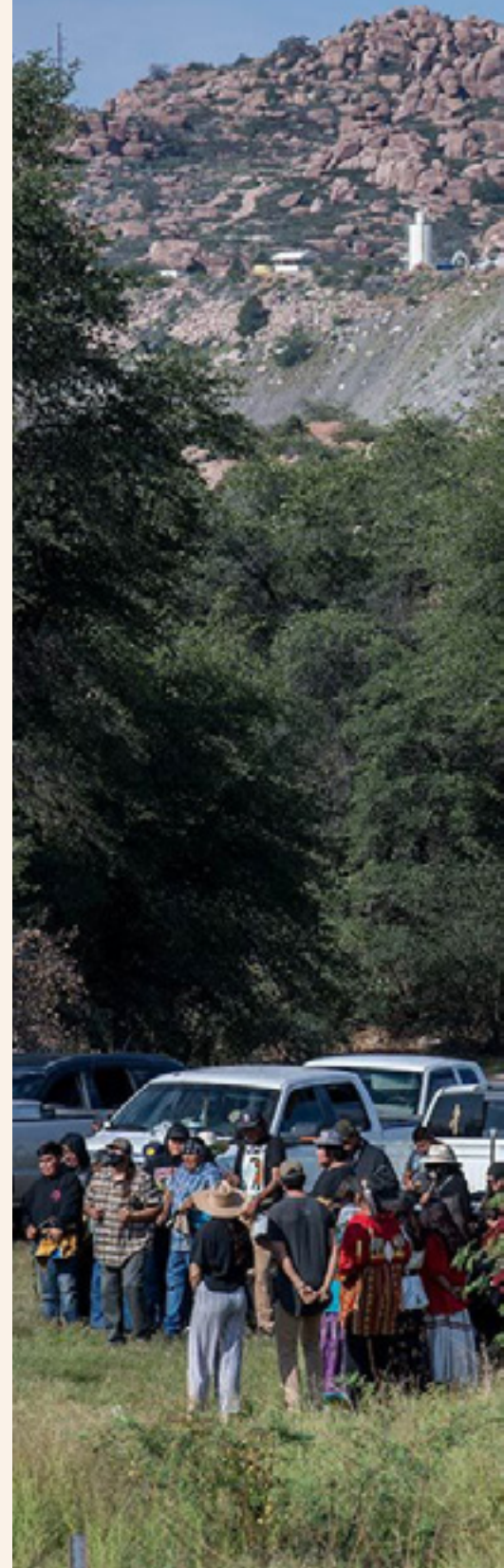
It has been a long journey for Apache Stronghold. A journey stretching out over two decades to save the sacred Chi'chil Bildagotel (Oak Flat)—close to the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation—from being swallowed up by destructive copper mining.

After many well-publicized legal battles, peaceful protests, rallies, prayer circles, public outcry, reverent ceremonies, community outreach, and a narrow 6-5 loss in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals earlier this year, the Stronghold's unwavering quest to protect Oak Flat in the Tonto National Forest—where the Apache have gathered to pray and worship since time immemorial—has led to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On September 11, 2024, after a 9,000-mile caravan winding through 12 states to Washington, D.C., Apache Stronghold—joined along the way by passionate Native and non-Native supporters, including many faith leaders—held a day of prayer on the steps of the Supreme Court. This event marked the filing of Apache Stronghold's request for the court to hear its appeal of the Ninth Circuit's opinion that the Apaches' right to worship at Oak Flat is not protected under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA).

“Chi'chil Bildagoteel (Oak Flat) is our Mt. Sinai—our most sacred place where generations of Apaches have come to connect with our Creator, our faith, and our land,” says Apache Stronghold leader and former San Carlos Tribal Chairman Dr. Wendsler Nosie Sr. “We pray the justices will protect Oak Flat and ensure that our place of worship is not treated differently simply because it lacks four walls and a steeple.”

As for the religious freedom implications, Oak Flat has long been a spiritual place where the Apache gather for many sacred ceremonies, including a time-honored, coming-of-age ceremony for Apache girls performed at sunrise.





**LEFT:** The copper mine looms over the Apache people at ceremony on Oak Flat with the circle of protective trucks.

---

The Apache are people of place, and without Oak Flat, many sacred Apache ceremonies, like the girls' coming-of-age ceremony, could no longer be practiced because the Ga'an, the sacred beings living at Oak Flat who guide the ceremonies, will leave when their home is destroyed.

Since 2018, First Nations has helped Native-led groups fight extractive efforts that negatively impact Native communities. To date, 42 grants have been awarded, including to Apache Stronghold.

Under the Stewarding Native Lands program, First Nations has supported Apache Stronghold with many of its objectives—and will continue to do so—specifically with community education events, public awareness campaigns, and travel support—like the 9,000-mile journey to Washington, D.C.

“First Nations’ support allows Apache Stronghold to continue to protect Oak Flat, including bringing the issue to the attention of a national and world audience,” explains Della Warrior, president and CEO of the Multi-Indigenous Community Action Group.

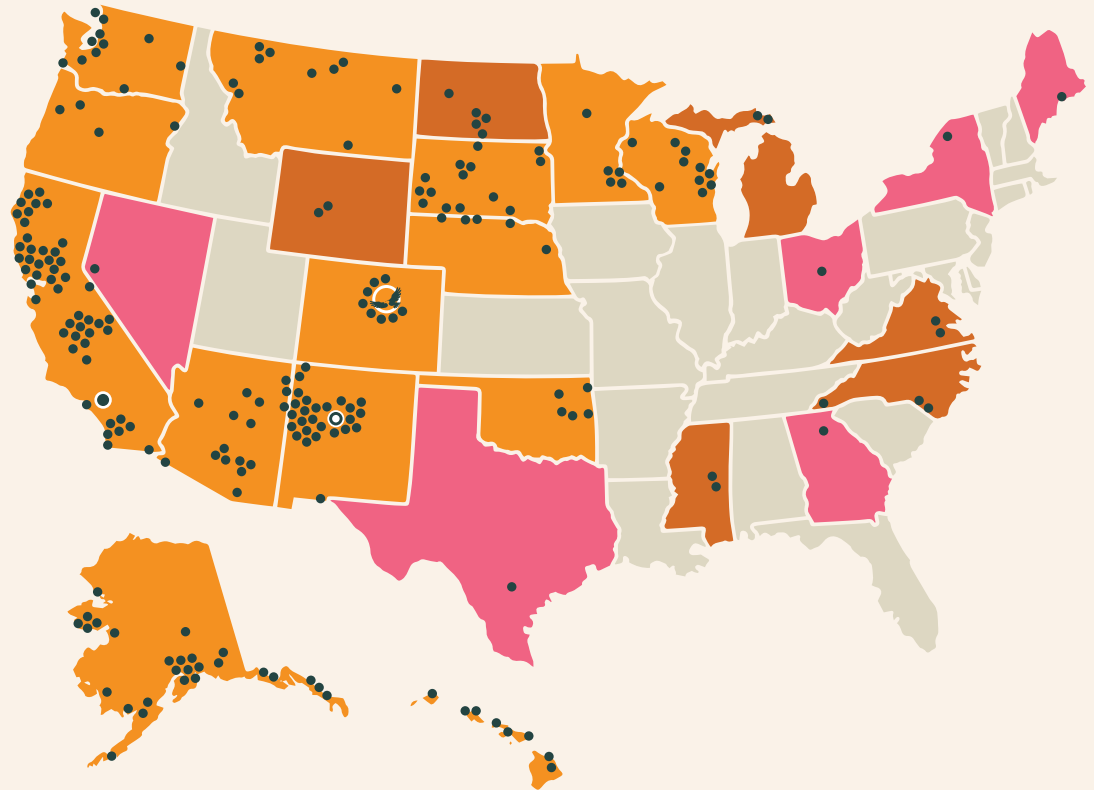
It is now a waiting game for Apache Stronghold, as the group stands by to hear if the Supreme Court will take up its case. The court should decide by year’s end or early January whether to hear the case, and if so, a decision is expected in June 2025.




“The Oak Flat religious freedom lawsuit has the potential to change U.S. law, which is currently unjust to Indigenous people because it does not protect land-based religions,” Nosie says. “The stakes are high. U.S. law must protect Indigenous sacred lands, not just for Apaches, but for all tribes.”

In the meantime, Apache Stronghold considers every day without mining at Oak Flat a win, as it fights a difficult battle against the U.S. government and two of the largest mining companies in the world.

# GRANTS, GRANTMAKING AND PHILANTHROPIC SERVICES

In 2024, First Nations provided **255 grants** totaling more than **\$14.4 million** to Native tribes and organizations across the U.S. Since our founding in 1980, we have successfully deployed over **\$93.4 million** in financial support and technical assistance to Native American projects and organization in 45 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territory American Samoa.



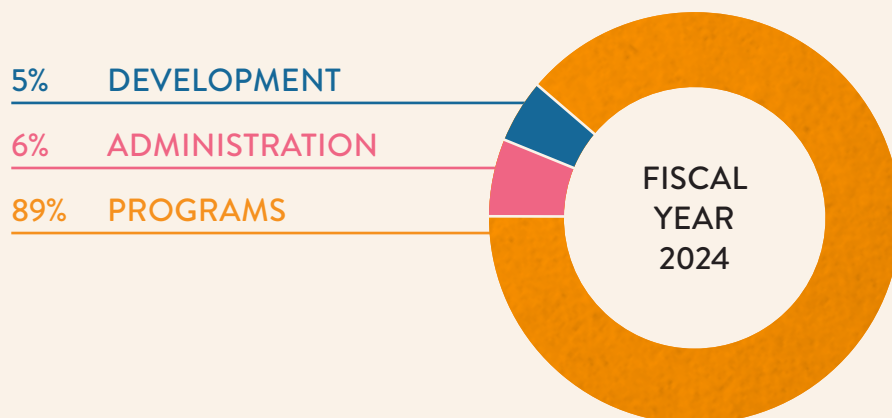
- First Nations Headquarters  
LONGMONT, CO 
- California Office 
- Albuquerque Office 

First Nations' 2024 audited financial statement is included in our report as a printed supplement.

In addition, read more about First Nations' financial information at [firstnations.org/our-values/financial-information](https://firstnations.org/our-values/financial-information) or scan code:



## ALWAYS TRANSPARENT, ALWAYS RESPONSIBLE.



# FIRST NATIONS' COMMUNITY PARTNERS 2024 GRANTEES

## **Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival**

*Fresno, CA*

Funding will support AICLS's programming.

## **Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival**

*Fresno, CA*

This project will create a language revitalization camp for youth and language mentors, building upon a 2021 event—an online Young Leadership Development Conference—later developed into an expanded, year-long mentorship program.

## **Aha Kukui O Molokai**

*Hoolehua, HI*

This project creates a year-round paddling program to increase the number of youth trained in traditional Hawaiian paddling practices, and provides peer mentorship by youth.

## **'Aha Pūnana Leo**

*Hilo, HI*

Funding will help create a comprehensive Hawaiian medium training program to prepare and support new language nest employees by increasing their skills and knowledge to better deliver the Hawaiian language medium Pūnana Leo program.

## **Ahtna Intertribal Resources Commission**

*Glennallen, AK*

Funding helps preserve and enhance Native cultural heritage by developing youth skills in traditional birdwatching and trapping, fostering environmental stewardship, and strengthening community bonds through immersive, educational camps.

## **Ahtna Intertribal Resources Commission**

*Glennallen, AK*

Grant funding supports tribal co-management and co-stewardship of eight federally recognized tribes of the Ahtna Region.

## **Akwesasne Cultural Center, Inc.**

*Akwesasne, NY*

Funding supports the center's mission, organizational sustainability, and efforts to support Native artists, as well as preserve and promote traditional Native arts, cultural assets, knowledge systems, and lifeways to benefit future generations.

## **Aleut Community of St. Paul Island**

*Anchorage, AK*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

## **Alaska Nannut**

### **Co-Management Council**

*Nome, AK*

Funding makes it possible for subsistence users to participate in tribally driven management of polar bears and ensure that tribal voices are heard at the federal level.

## **Alaska Venture Fund**

*Anchorage, AK*

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

## **Alaska Village Initiatives**

*Anchorage, AK*

Funds will increase job opportunities and improve food security in two isolated villages in Southeast Alaska, complementing existing efforts to supply fresh, locally grown produce, and eliminating expensive transportation in communities without road access.

## **American Indian Council of Mariposa County**

*Mariposa, CA*

Funds cover pre-grant costs associated with the Tribal Nature Based Solutions project, and other land stewardship activities.

## **American Indian Family Center**

*St. Paul, MN*

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

## **American Indian Resource Center, Inc.**

*Tahlequah, OK*

The grant funds the creation of a training handbook to help program participants graduate to teachers' aides.

**A'nowa:ra Owira Doulas**

*Akwesasne, NY*

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

**Apache Stronghold**

*San Carlos, AZ*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Tribal Consortium**

*Anchorage, AK*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Atux^ Forever:**

**Restoring Attuans' Freedom**

*Anchorage, AK*

Funding helps leverage social media tools and strategies to increase engagement, build relationships, and raise awareness about the reawakening of Attuans' sleeping language, contributing to the preservation and promotion of their Indigenous identity.

**Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians**

*Coachella, CA*

General support grant supports their Temalpakh Farm Education Center.

**Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition**

*Albuquerque, NM*

This project will increase tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Bering Sea Elders Group**

*Anchorage, AK*

This project will enhance the organization's capacity to implement strategic goals by supporting BSEG's elder representatives' participation in the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area (NBSCRA) work.

**Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians**

*Lakeport, CA*

Funding helps the tribe build food sovereignty by improving access and monitoring contaminants in traditional foods; supporting elders' mentoring of tribal members in cultural activities; and using data to protect local water quality.

**Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians**

*Lakeport, CA*

Funding helps mitigate barriers to food sovereignty by improving access and monitoring contaminants in traditional foods; supporting elders' mentoring of tribal members in cultural activities; and using data to protect local water quality.

**Bishop Paiute Tribe**

*Bishop, CA*

Funds will be used to gather ethnobotanical knowledge and create an internal database and GIS map. This information will be used to train and build specialized capacity for cultural plant monitoring, utilization, and homeland stewardship.

**Blackfeet Community College**

*Browning, MT*

Funding supports a meat processing plant and certification. The meat is processed, wrapped, and distributed to food banks and elders in the community.

**Blackfeet Community College**

*Browning, MT*

This project allows Blackfeet Community College to host community-based gatherings to envision goals around management and stewardship of buffalo.

**Blackfeet Tribe**

*Browning, MT*

Funding supports buffalo restoration through the tribe's Buffalo Program, which aims to offer quality buffalo meat to tribal members, and promote culture, spiritual revitalization, and ecological restoration. The program uses education and outreach to recruit younger generations to carry on buffalo restoration.

**Bridgeport Indian Colony**

*Bridgeport, CA*

This project will create a unified council of four tribes surrounding Bodie Hills and increase their power to protect the Bodie Hills' high volcanic tableland (Tuvogatudu), a sacred landscape, from ground-disturbing activities.

**Bois Forte Band of Chippewa**

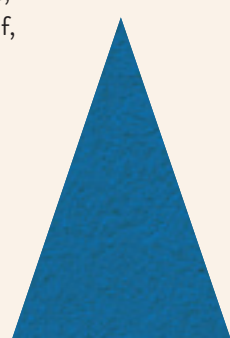
*Nett Lake, MN*

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

**Boys and Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne Nation**

*Lame Deer, MT*

Funds help Cheyenne youth discover their creativity and sense of purpose, and develop leadership skills that provide an understanding of their culture, traditional values, and sense of responsibility for self, others, and their homeland.



**Brave Heart Society**

Lake Andes, SD

The grant funds the Brave Heart stewardship coordinator position to leverage existing ethnobotanical data and restorative agricultural practices to bolster food sovereignty on the Yankton Reservation and surrounding Native communities.

**Bridgeport Indian Colony**

Bridgeport, CA

Funding supports tribal co-management efforts.

**California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project**

Nevada City, CA

This grant funding supports the HOMELAND RETURN project that is acquiring 232 acres of ancestral homeland.

**California Indian Basketweavers Association**

Woodland, CA

Funding supports the Annual Basketweavers Gathering.

**California Indian Basketweavers Association**

Woodland, CA

This grant supports honorariums for the 2024 Annual Basketweavers Gathering.

**California Indian Museum & Cultural Center**

Santa Rosa, CA

Funding provides general operating support for organizational sustainability, mission, and efforts to preserve and promote traditional Native arts and cultural assets, knowledge systems, and lifeways to benefit of future generations.

**California Indian Museum & Cultural Center**

Santa Rosa, CA

Funding supports the Tribal Youth Ambassadors Program to help youth continue to lead improvements in representations of California Indians in school curricula and the media.

**Camp Laugh A Lot**

Custer, SD

This grant supports a structured camp for reconnecting Native youth to nature and their ancestral land, allowing it to become more sustainable and to serve more youth in need.

**Camp Laugh A Lot**

Custer, SD

This grant funds day and overnight camp for 110 Lakota youth, ages 7 to 12, living on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Camp provides active, healthy, outdoors learning opportunities that inspire good physical and mental health, closer connection with nature, and strengthened cultural connections and ties to ancestral lands.

**Carrizo Comecrudo Tribe of Texas**

Floresville, TX

Funding increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska**

Juneau, AK

The grant supports the Flood Emergency Fund.

**Center for Indigenous Midwifery**

Olympia, WA

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

**(The) Center for Native Health**

Whittier, NC

The center will use funding to contract with a facilitator to build a cohort of Cherokee artists to engage in participatory, culturally responsive planning and evaluation that will help build capacity within the broader Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians community.

**(The) Center for Native Health**

Whittier, NC

Funding provides Hurricane Helene relief.

**(The) Center for Native Health**

Whittier, NC

This project supports a Junior North American Women's Association Club focused on conservation and working in collaboration with Elohi Dinigatiyi "Earth Keepers," elders' advisory group.

**(The) Center for Native Health**

Whittier, NC

This capacity grant helps develop materials to educate and discuss with executive board members, key constituents, and community partners on the potential for CNH to establish a community forest.

**Change Labs**

Tuba City, AZ

This project helps inform what the workforce development needs are with Navajo nonprofits and communities, and how these needs differ from U.S. states.

**Changing Woman Initiative**

Albuquerque, NM

Funds provides general operating support.

**Chickahominy Indian Tribe of Virginia**

*Providence Forge, VA*

Funds support the tribe's Cultural Enrichment Through After School Support program to provide intergenerational mentorship for tribal youth through programming that increases cultural awareness and knowledge.

**Chief Hurao Academy, Inc.**

*Hagåtña, Guam*

Funds support a language vitality assessment and comprehensive report to increase awareness of the endangered CHamoru language and create language immersion programs.

**Chief Seattle Club**

*Seattle, WA*

This grant provides sponsorship for Chief Seattle Club's Annual Luncheon taking place October 23, 2024.

**Children of the Setting Sun Productions**

*Bellingham, WA*

This project provides tribes, tribal members, and Native-led organizations with information about how the Northwest Forest Plan amendment impacts their interests and ways to influence the outcome in positive ways.

**Chilkat Indian Village**

*Haines, AK*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Chippewa Cree Tribe**

*Box Elder, MT*

This grant allows the Buffalo Child Ranch/Rocky Boy Buffalo Project to construct a visitor information center and outbuildings to help educate the public on Chippewa Cree Tribe's efforts toward buffalo restoration and food sovereignty.

**Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe**

*Eagle Butte, SD*

This project increases the tribe's natural resource management capacity and helps develop a trained workforce to better manage treaty territory in the Black Hills, now encompassed by federal lands, by creating co-management agreements with federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service.

**Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe**

*Eagle Butte, SD*

Funds help the tribe's Land Office build knowledge and resources to assist with management of tribal grasslands, looking to restore a healthy ecosystem.

**Chugach Regional Resources Commission**

*Anchorage, AK*

This grant allows CRRC to hire a climate coordinator to do community outreach, education, and training.

**Chugach Regional Resources Commission**

*Anchorage, AK*

Funds support the CRRC purchase of the Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute and the creation of a coastal resiliency plan to protect the region from flooding and coastal erosion caused by climate change.

**Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California**

*Cloverdale, CA*

Funding provides continued support for regalia-making classes.

**Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians of California**

*Tollhouse, CA*

This project increases tribal capacity to restore ecosystem health by supporting planning and development of a co-stewardship plan for the Teakettle Experimental Forest area of Sierra National Forest that upholds tribal values, honors Tribal Sovereignty, draws on traditional ecological knowledge, and incorporates cultural burning.

**Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission**

*Portland, OR*

This project helps enhance workforce development within tribal communities by equipping tribal members with essential job skills, using existing resources and programs, and empowering communities to retain their tribal workforce.

**Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation**

*Toppenish, WA*

Funding supports Yakama Nation Museum classes that highlight and focus on the tradition and art of its people.

**Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde**

*Grand Ronde, OR*

This project creates a new Tribal Climate Adaptation Plan (TCAP) to increase the community's use of green infrastructure, retain culturally significant natural resources, and leverage nature-based solutions in a changing climate.

**Cornhusk Collective, Inc.**

*De Pere, WI*

Funding is used to rent a small space to store supplies and equipment, bring in local professionals for artist professional development workshops, and organize a series of arts workshops collaborating with collective members or local partners.

**Diné College**

*Tsaile, AZ*

Funding helps create a course in archery to allow students to engage with traditional ways of knowing, where the bow and arrow serve as teachers and lessons will be built from stories of ancestors.

**Dooda (No) Helium  
Extraction Organization**

*Newcomb, NM*

Funding increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Dooda (No) Helium  
Extraction Organization**

*Newcomb, NM*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**(The) Eastern Band  
of Cherokee Indians**

*Cherokee, NC*

Funding supports event sponsorship for hosting the National Tribal Forum on Air Quality held on May 6 to 9, 2024.

**(The) Eastern Band  
of Cherokee Indians**

*Cherokee, NC*

This project creates learning spaces for the EBCI Natural Resources Department to utilize expertise from Cherokee knowledge holders (Earth Keepers-Elohi Dinigatiyi) and other tribal and public land management partners.

**(The) Eastern Band  
of Cherokee Indians**

*Cherokee, NC*

This grant supports Hurricane Helene relief efforts.

**(The) Eastern Band  
of Cherokee Indians**

*Cherokee, NC*

Funds support participation in the TLC Fund Campaign.

**‘Ekalu Mea Nui**

*Hauula, HI*

This project aims to leverage community resources and support systems to empower youth affected by parental incarceration, increasing their resilience and breaking the cycle of intergenerational incarceration through targeted interventions and advocacy efforts.

**Euchee (Yuchi) Language  
Project, Inc.**

*Sapulpa, OK*

This project creates Yuchi youth culture bearers through immersive experiences, reconnecting them with Yuchi worldview, spiritual practices, and traditions. It also increases the number of well-prepared Yuchi leaders, ensuring cultural continuity and revitalizing cherished traditions.

**Euchee (Yuchi) Language  
Project, Inc.**

*Sapulpa, OK*

This project increases Yuchi language proficiency in students, parents/caregivers, and language instructors by creating an intentional focus on the Yuchi worldview and deep cultural knowledge.

**FAST Blackfeet**

*Browning, MT*

This grant supports wellness initiatives and provides professional development to maintain a stable and effective workforce that can help ensure a healthier, food-secure future for the tribal community.

**Federated Indians  
of Graton Rancheria**

*Rohnert Park, CA*

Funding will support food sovereignty technical assistance.

**Fort Belknap Indian Community**

*Harlem, MT*

Funds helps build tribal workforce capacity to steward Northern Plains grasslands.

**Fort Belknap Indian Community**

*Harlem, MT*

This project advances buffalo restoration on tribal lands by building the Fort Belknap Buffalo program capacity and creating opportunities for youth to participate in summer reseeding and fencing projects.

**Fort Peck Assiniboine and  
Sioux Tribes**

*Poplar, MT*

Funding supports tribal bison herd restoration.

**Four Bands Community Fund, Inc.**

*Eagle Butte, SD*

This project supports retention of Native Youth Entrepreneurship Programming.

**Full Circle Community  
Institute, Inc.**

*Webster, WI*

This project builds the capacity of 14 St Croix Cultural Center Task Force members to increase leadership skills and governance ability as they transition to inaugural roles on the governing board.

**Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council Inc**  
*Lac Du Flambeau, WI*  
 Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

**Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake**  
*Upper Lake, CA*  
 The project creates opportunities for Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake youth at both Generations Early Childhood Education Center and the Education Center to connect with the Pomo culture and customs.

**Hesapa Birth Circle**  
*Rapid City, SD*  
 Funding provides general operating support for the Original Kinship Obligations for Womb Sovereignty Gathering.

**Hesapa Birth Circle**  
*Rapid City, SD*  
 Funding provides general operating support.

**Ho-Chunk Nation**  
*Black River Falls, WI*  
 Funding helps create a train-the-trainer language program for participating Youth Services employees participating in events in 10 Ho-Chunk communities to increase Hoocąk language proficiency for K-12 students and families.

**Ho-Chunk Community Development Corporation**  
*Winnebago, NE*  
 Funds support the Winnebago Food Sovereignty Internship Program, a youth outreach and workforce initiative that increases locally grown produce, encourages 26 interns to consider agriculture careers, and teaches tribal language and traditional farming practices.

**Holani Hana Inc.**  
*Hana, HI*  
 The project creates 'āina-centered, community-led workforce development opportunities in East Maui to reclaim Native Hawaiian economies, perpetuate cultural practices, and safeguard place-based natural, cultural, and spiritual resources for future generations.

**Hopi Three Mesas, Inc**  
*Second Mesa, AZ*  
 Funding helps with future planning, programming, fundraising, resources, and all that is needed to keep H3M alive, vibrant, and making a difference.

**Hozho Voices of Healing Center**  
*Crownpoint, NM*  
 Funding helps with general operating expenses and frees up time and resources to help the center achieve objectives, complete projects, and serve the community better.

**Hualapai Department of Cultural Resources**  
*Peach Springs, AZ*  
 The project creates and retains culturally specific events for youth to learn the Hualapai language and culture, and provides them with skills to incorporate and continue to practice in their daily lives.

**Huliaupa'a**  
*Hakalau, HI*  
 Funds support the Wahi Kupuna Internship Program that bridges Indigenous worldviews and Western science to integrate Hawaiian knowledge systems with CRM work, teaching interns to conduct ethically sound research and ultimately increasing the number of Native Hawaiians working in the CRM field.

**Hui Maka'ainana o Makana Hanalei, HI**  
 This project bolsters the youth biocultural internship program with a new curriculum and travel opportunity for 12 interns to connect with other Native Hawaiian-led organizations doing community-led stewardship.

**Igiugig Village**  
*Igiugig, AK*  
 Funding creates a draft caribou monitoring program, retaining local expertise to enhance co-management capacity of the village with the National Park Service. By leveraging traditional ecological knowledge with scientific data, this effort increases tribal control over crucial decision-making processes.

**Igiugig Village**  
*Igiugig, AK*  
 Funds help revitalize Lake Iliamna Yup'ik by growing new, young speakers, learning from elders, and creating language materials that capture unwritten history, cultural values, and traditional stories.

**Indian Nations Conservation Alliance (INCA)**  
*Taos, NM*  
 Funds support this Indigenous-led organization that seeks to create a mission, vision, and goals that retain natural resources valued by Native producers and land users, utilizing traditional knowledge to increase wise use.

**Indigenous Communities Initiative**  
*Willits, CA*  
 This project creates opportunities for multi-generational engagement to empower youth through teaching traditional knowledge, cultural arts, and language revitalization skills.

**Indigenous Wellbriety Program**

*Cortez, CO*

The grant funds stalking circles, community events, aid for the homeless, art supplies, and promotional materials. A portion of the funds honor Native American traditional healers to preserve cultural and spiritual health.

**International Indian Treaty Council**

*Tucson, AZ*

This grant provides sponsorship for the organization's Impacts of Extractives on the Rights of Indigenous People from the Broad Reach Environmental Justice Project.

**Kake Tribal Heritage Foundation**

*Kake, AK*

Funding helps create sustainable job opportunities for Indigenous youth, while fostering climate resilience in the community.

**Kake Tribal Heritage Foundation**

*Kake, AK*

Funds support strategic marketing and fundraising to raise awareness about the foundation's mission, attract broader community support, and secure financial stability to continue cultural programs to benefit the Tlingit people.

**Ka Ipu Makani Cultural Heritage Center**

*Kaunakakai, HI*

This project aims to leverage traditional agroecological practices to restore coastal wetlands and create an ecosystem that is more resilient to natural disasters and improves overall community well-being.

**Kalispel Tribe of Indians**

*Usk, WA*

Funds create a durable, long-term co-management/co-stewardship agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, allowing for tribally based objectives and outcomes to be implemented on Forest Service system lands.

**Kawerak, Incorporated**

*Nome, AK*

Funding supports data collection and data sovereignty protocol creation.

**Kawerak, Incorporated**

*Nome, AK*

This project addresses and prepares for the impacts of climate change by increasing operational capacity, retaining and continuing sustainable energy initiatives, and supporting food security education in the Bering Strait Region.

**Kawerak, Incorporated**

*Nome, AK*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Keres Children's Learning Center**

*Cochiti Pueblo, NM*

Funding provides general operating support for Giving Tuesday Day.

**Keres Children's Learning Center**

*Cochiti Pueblo, NM*

Funding supports the "Serving the Whole Child" project to provide a strong language immersion environment, in which Cochiti children can honor their heritage by using a comprehensive cultural and academic curriculum.

**Kiowa Gourd Clan**

*Carnegie, OK*

This grant provides funding for the annual Sundance Gathering.

**Knife Chief Buffalo Nation Society**

*Porcupine, SD*

This grant supports a Lakota Young Women's camp where cultural protocols around hunting, gathering, cooking, feeding, and socializing with one another and the land are taught and discussed.

**Knik Tribe**

*Wasilla, AK*

Funds help create an immersive and culturally enriching learning experience for elementary students by integrating elements of language, art, and food from various Alaskan cultures into the classroom curriculum.

**Koy'o Land Conservancy**

*Auburn, CA*

Funding helps support the Flicker fire crew.

**Kul Wicasa Wopasi**

*Lower Brule, SD*

Funding helps enhance existing youth leadership and cultural programs by integrating elders' teachings and applying scientific methodologies, preserving and validating traditional practices for the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe community.

**Kumeyaay Diegueno****Land Conservancy**

*El Cajon, CA*

Funding helps preserve and protect environmentally and culturally sensitive lands within the Kumeyaay aboriginal territory.

**Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal****Fish Commission**

*Bethel, AK*

Funds support the conservation and restoration of wild stock fisheries on the Kuskokwim River by elevating Tribal Sovereignty co-management to help preserve food security.



**Laguna Community Foundation**

*Laguna, NM*

Funding supports the Pueblo of Laguna Cultural Enrichment Program, which supports local artists and provides opportunities for community members to engage in traditional arts, crafts, cooking, and language-learning.

**Laguna Community Foundation**

*Laguna, NM*

Funding helps implement a set of practical workforce development recommendations that retain the community's needs, values, and tribal priorities, as well as strengthen families, workers, employers, and economic infrastructure.

**Learning Center at the Euchee Butterfly Farm**

*Leonard, OK*

This grant provides sponsorship for Learning Center at Euchee Butterfly Farm at the Restoring Our Lands Conference on September 25 to 26, 2024.

**Learning Center at the Euchee Butterfly Farm**

*Leonard, OK*

Funds increase local capacity and restore grassland ecosystem health by leveraging and expanding the Tribal Alliance for Pollinators (TAP) native plant restoration program and the TAP-prescribed burn association, which will prevent erosion, improve soil health, reduce wildfire risk, and provide youth conservation training.

**(The) Lizzie Enos Nisenan Family Foundation Inc.**

*Auburn, CA*

Funds provide general operating support.

**Local Environmental Action Demanded**

*Miami, OK*

Funding supports event sponsorship for "Meet Me at the Creek" Screenings.

**Lower Brule Sioux Tribe**

*Lower Brule, SD*

This project will support the Lower Brule Digital Archive, which gathers documents associated with Lower Brule lands, people, history to help fill in the gaps in knowledge during years of forced removal.

**Lower Brule Sioux Tribe**

*Lower Brule, SD*

Funding helps acquire information about land lost before 1906 from archival research to increase tribal knowledge and capacity, and provide significant leverage in future negotiations.

**Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina**

*Pembroke, NC*

With these funds, the tribe will hire a grant writer to help the tribe design a detailed plan to reforest areas of the Lumbee Cultural Center.

**(The) Lyndon Foundation Corp.**

*Gallup, NM*

Funding supports the summer symposium, which aims to preserve and strengthen the Navajo silversmithing heritage among youth ages 16 to 24.

**Maggie Buffalo Organizing**

*Rapid City, SD*

This project will increase tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Maidu Summit Consortium**

*Chester, CA*

Funding provides general operating support.

**Maidu Summit Consortium**

*Chester, CA*

Funds support the Benner Creek Restoration Project to create and implement a Maidu-led post-wildfire land rehabilitation plan.

**Makoce Agriculture Development**

*Porcupine, SD*

Funding helps the Oglala Lakota develop skills, knowledge, and infrastructure for a local, connective food system. It empowers members to take leading roles in decolonizing the food system by leveraging education, resource sharing, cultural connections, and economic opportunities rooted in Indigenous ecology.

**Malama Loko Ea Foundation**

*Haleiwa, HI*

Grant support provides the resources to plan and implement Phase 2 of the 'Ai Pono Community Food Hub, which involves creating a community kitchen and eating space.

**Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation**

*New Town, ND*

Funds will help restore grassland ecosystem health by supporting planning and development of a co-stewardship plan for the Little Missouri National Grasslands that upholds tribal culture/language, honors Tribal Sovereignty, and encompasses restoration of cultural landscapes of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation.

**Mechoopda Indian Tribe**

*Chico, CA*

Funds help serve Native American youth in Butte County disproportionately impacted by juvenile delinquency and at risk for involvement in the juvenile justice system resulting from delinquent and pre-delinquent behaviors.

**Medicine Fish Corporation**

*Gresham, WI*

This grant supports the release of 10 buffalo relatives to Menominee tribal lands.

**Medicine Fish Corporation**

*Gresham, WI*

This project reconnects buffalo within tribal communities, incorporating Native knowledge, embracing nature-based solutions, engaging community members, and addressing climate adaptation and disaster preparedness.

**Menomini yoU, Inc.**

*Keshena, WI*

Funds support a one-year language immersion program to increase the number of functional Menomini speakers and create opportunities to expand community language capacity.

**Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians**

*Ramona, CA*

This project will create and implement a flooding, erosion, and drought resiliency plan, leveraging FEMA resources and traditional tribal practices to identify climate-related hazards, develop mitigation strategies, and implement nature-based solutions.

**Minneapolis American Indian Center**

*Minneapolis, MN*

Funding supports the Two Rivers-Many Generations Project, which provides opportunities for 45 Native youth and young adults to work directly with Native elders and artists to learn traditional arts skills, and retain these lessons through digital documentation and sharing.

**Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**

*Choctaw, MS*

Funding provides general operating support for the tribe's Chahta Immi Cultural Center's organizational sustainability and efforts to preserve and promote traditional Native arts and cultural assets, knowledge systems, and lifeways to benefit of future generations.

**Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**

*Choctaw, MS*

Funding helps tribal youth acquire essential digital skills and entrepreneurial capabilities to create opportunities for growth, drive economic development, and foster a culture of innovation and engagement.

**Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians of California**

*Oroville, CA*

This grant supports planning and permitting for restoration projects on the Feather Falls Cultural Landscape.

**Museum at Warm Springs**

*Warm Springs, OR*

Funding helps teach traditional arts and cultural knowledge, skills, and practices, as well as entrepreneurial skills; create and exhibit original Native artworks; and increase awareness of Warm Springs cultures within all communities.

**Na Aikane O Maui**

*Lahaina, HI*

Funds provide general operating support.

**Native American Advancement Foundation**

*Tucson, AZ*

Funding helps NAAF increase the number of Native speakers under the age of 20 to preserve the O'odham language, a 6b threatened language on the international "Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale."

**Native American Community Board**

*Lake Andes, SD*

This grant provides general operating support for the Women's Lodge Emergency Shelter on the Yankton Sioux Reservation in Eastern South Dakota.

**Native American Fish and Wildlife Society**

*Northglenn, CO*

This grant provides event sponsorship for Native American Fish and Wildlife Society's 2024 Great Plains Regional Conference.

**Native American Fish and Wildlife Society**

*Northglenn, CO*

This grant provides sponsorship for NAFWS Pacific Regional Convening on October 22 to 24, 2024.

**Native American Fish and Wildlife Society**

*Northglenn, CO*

Funds pays for sponsorship of the 2024 Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast Joint Regional Conferences.

**Native American Fish and Wildlife Society**

*Northglenn, CO*

The project strengthens, builds, and sustains education/outreach programs through obtaining needed equipment/supplies, increasing student participation and applications, developing operations plans, increasing organizational visibility, piloting a mentorship program, assisting Tribal Hunter Ed programs, and completing evaluations.

**Native American Land Conservancy**

*Banning, CA*

Funding provides general operating support for the Atsapaq Project.

**Native American Rights Fund**

*Boulder, CO*

NARF will explore Indigenous Conservation Council of Chesapeake Bay member tribes' sovereign rights under a series of Crown treaties and arrangements whereby ICCCB and/or its member tribes may hold conservation easements under Virginia state law.

**Native American Rights Fund**

*Boulder, CO*

This grant provides up to seven technical assistance interventions for tribes working on co-stewardship and co-management projects.

**Native Movement**

*Fairbanks, AK*

Funding helps develop an annual cohort of 10 Alaska Native youth, ages 18-24, to learn transformative organizing skills while building statewide relationships to defend the rights of Indigenous peoples and the rights of Mother Earth.

**Native Public Media**

*Flagstaff, AZ*

Funding leverages advanced broadcast alert systems and community efforts to enhance the rescue and recovery of missing, murdered, or endangered adults; increase public safety; and create a resilient community framework.

**Native Star Foundation**

*Porterville, CA*

This grant provides general operating support and organizational capacity-building.

**Native Village of Kotzebue IRA**

*Kotzebue, AK*

This grant supports the Native Village of Kotzebue with flood and storm relief.

**Native Village of Shaktoolik**

*Shaktoolik, AK*

Funds support the hiring of additional elders to mentor, teach, and educate youth campers, increasing the sharing of traditional, cultural customs, and beliefs.

**Native Village of White Mountain**

*White Mountain, AK*

This project supports recoding elder stories to preserve culture, language, and stewardship practices.

**Native Ways Federation**

*Minneapolis, MN*

Funding provides general operating support for Native Ways Federation capacity-building.

**Native Ways Federation**

*Minneapolis, MN*

Funding supports capacity-building in 2024.

**Navajo Breastfeeding Coalition**

*Window Rock, AZ*

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

**Navajo Nation**

*Window Rock, AZ*

Funds help create a co-management plan between the tribe and the National Park Service to increase community involvement in the management of cultural resources at a landscape level.

**Nitamising Gimashikinaan**

*Maple Grove, MN*

Funding provides resources for breastfeeding, maternal care, and other essential parenting needs to support women, families, and children.

**Nkwusm**

*Arlee, MT*

This project increases language acquisition by providing language curriculum; increasing staff and student participation in language leadership and training; creating opportunities for families to learn and experience language pertinent to ancestral Aboriginal territories; and recording fluent speakers.

**North Dakota Native**

**Tourism Alliance**

*Bismarck, ND*

Funding supports tourism development in the Indigenous communities of North Dakota. To date, four tribes have developed guided tours to emphasize the importance of Native lands: Spirit Lake Nation, Three Affiliated Tribes, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

**North Dakota Native  
Tourism Alliance**

*Bismarck, ND*

This grant will be used to build community capacity through website development by strengthening technical skills of two community members; and complete and launch the updated NDNTA website.

**North Fork Mono Tribe**

*Clovis, CA*

Funding provides general operating support.

**Northern California Indian  
Development Council, Inc.**

*Eureka, CA*

Funding supports general operating and technical assistance to strengthen Indigenous ceremonies, culture, and traditional knowledge in Del Norte, Humboldt, Siskiyou, and Trinity counties.

**Northern California Tribal  
Court Coalition**

*Eureka, CA*

This grant supports technical assistance for the Acorn Camp Program.

**Northern California Indian  
Development Council, Inc.**

*Eureka, CA*

This project helps increase capacity to participate in the First Nations' research in workforce development and economic justice by helping to cover the organizational costs of participation.

**Northwest Indian College**

*Bellingham, WA*

Funds will support an art exchange between elders and the next generation of artists to increase the sustainability of Indigenous accessorial art, designs, and historical significance.

**Oceti Sakowin Community  
Academy**

*Rapid City, SD*

Funding helps increase exposure and daily use of the Lakota Language by OSCA students and families through cultural teaching, thought, language, and philosophy of the Oceti Sakowin people.

**Oglala Sioux Tribe**

*Kyle, SD*

Funding helps build a relationship with the U.S. Forest Service and develop agreements to co-steward and collaborate on Buffalo Gap Grasslands to benefit tribal wildlife, resources, and the tribal community.

**Okanogan  
Basketweavers Association**

*Omak, WA*

Funding helps use traditional knowledge and skills of master weavers to increase the number of masters in the next generation.

**Oneida Nation**

*Oneida, WI*

Funding help enhance workforce development and expand employment opportunities in the community.

**Organized Village of Kake (OVK)**

*Kake, AK*

This project supports a third year of leveraging funding to increase the impact of the shellfish garden program to create and retain jobs that support climate preparedness utilizing education, training, monitoring, and strategic planning.

**Osage Nation**

*Pawhuska, OK*

Funding supports the increase of the pollinator habitat on Osage Nation land, leverages existing staff through apiary management training, and creates a more sustainable tallgrass prairie ecosystem to aid in sound bison management, prevent erosion, and become more adaptable to changes in climate.

**Owens Valley Indian  
Water Commission**

*Bishop, CA*

Funding provides general operating support for current stewardship efforts related to Three Creeks.

**Owens Valley Indian  
Water Commission**

*Bishop, CA*

Funding helps purchase a freeze dryer to enhance food sovereignty and food security.

**Paah Aama Paddle Club**

*Hoopa, CA*

Funds support participation for Native teenage youth in the river-based overnight camps that include leadership and advocacy training to utilize their paddling skills in the historic first full descent of the undammed Klamath River.

**Pascua Yaqui Tribe Charitable  
Organization**

*Tucson, AZ*

Funding support a food security and nutrition program in the Pascua Yaqui community that combines immediate relief with a focus on education, inclusivity, partnerships, and sustainability to help residents increase access to more nutritious food.

**People of Red Mountain**

*Reno, NV*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Peoples Food Sovereignty Program**

*Ronan, MT*

Funds helps collect harvested deer and elk hides on a large scale, and provide space and infrastructure to process hides for other organizations on the reservation.

**Peoples Land Collaborative**

*Phoenix, AZ*

This grant presents an opportunity to finalize the Social Sustainability Map and develop brand guidelines that will not only enhance the organization's visibility and cohesion, but also serve as the foundation for long-term strategic planning.

**Piikani Lodge Health Institute**

*Browning, MT*

To help uplift Blackfeet cultural heritage, funding supports culture camps to educate youth on traditional practices, increase their connection to homelands, and build leadership for tribal stewardship.

**Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation**

*Crow Agency, MT*

This project will increase understanding of the impact of workforce and economic development on the Crow Reservation and in other Native Communities to create or modify existing projects and to leverage for future funding.

**Portland All Nations Canoe Family**

*Portland, OR*

This project increases the scope of Native Cultural Artists and cultural projects to reach more tribal/urban Native community members, particularly to bring youth and elders together to share knowledge.

**Potter Valley Tribe, Mendocino County, CA**

*Ukiah, CA*

The project creates increased cultural and environmental education opportunities for Pomo youth and launches new collaborative efforts between Potter Valley tribe and 12 other Pomo tribal groups with Xa Kako Dile.

**Pueblo Action Alliance**

*Albuquerque, NM*

Funds provide general support for 2025 Youth Justice.

**Pueblo of San Felipe**

*San Felipe, NM*

Funds help create a co-stewardship agreement with the Bureau of Land Management for culturally sensitive ancestral tribal land within the Pueblo's exterior boundaries held by the BLM.

**Pueblo of Santa Ana**

*Santa Ana Pueblo, NM*

Funds pay for the installation of a guzzler to create a habitat for wildlife and grow crops for local and migrating wildlife.

**Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska**

*Unalaska, AK*

Funds support participation in the TLC Fund Campaign.

**Quechan Indian Tribe**

*Yuma, AZ*

Funding supports drought mitigation efforts.

**Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia**

*Indian Neck, VA*

This project increases tribal environmental asset control on or near Native lands.

**Redbud Resource Group**

*Santa Rosa, CA*

Funding provides general operating support.

**Red Cloud Renewable**

*Fort Collins, CO*

Funds support Red Cloud Renewable in empowering Native tribal members by providing instruction and training, at no cost, in the newest renewable energy solutions to encourage self-determination and tribal sovereignty.

**Return to the Heart Foundation**

*Oakland, CA*

Funding supports the Newe Wa'a'ipe Nanamainka Camp, a transformative initiative designed to reconnect young Shoshone women with their cultural heritage and matrilineal lines through traditional ceremonies, teachings, and community-building.

**Rincon Indian Education Center, Inc**

*Valley Center, CA*

Funds help teach inter-tribal youth in Southern California about American Indian horse culture, traditions, and practices through nine horse camps on the Rincon Indian Reservation.



**Rosebud Sioux Tribe**

*Rosebud, SD*

This project works to build a relationship with the USFS to co-steward the Ironshell Flats National Grasslands by drafting a proper agreement to plant trees, restore native wildlife, and restore native grasses and other species to provide clean water and a healthy wildlife habitat.

**Round Valley Indian Tribes**

*Covelo, CA*

Funding enables the tribes to carry out Indigenous fire practices through prescribed burns, called cultural burning, to expand climate-smart knowledge.

**RuralOrganizing.Org****Education Fund**

*Columbus, OH*

This grant supports the Native American Electorate Voter Exit Poll, the large survey conducted every two years along with BSP Research.

**Saad K'idilyé**

*Albuquerque, NM*

Funding helps the language nest create a curriculum for the new toddler classroom (age 4) and use caretaker language apprentices to create new teachers.

**Sacred Bundle**

*Cass Lake, MN*

Funds helps establish the Mishko Wisitoon Wilderness Academy, designed to serve the Anishinaabe communities in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Northwestern Ontario. It supports staffing, elder participation, equipment, and other necessities for a successful and rewarding camp experience.

**Sacred Pipe Resource Center**

*Bismarck, ND*

This project creates a safe, centralized, and collaborative resource hub for organizing Native artists in North Dakota to leverage art as a way of life into businesses, increase knowledge of endangered traditional art forms, and control and increase their own development.

**Salish School of Spokane**

*Spokane, WA*

Funding supports the Salish Immersion Language Nest Development Project to establish a language nest for families with children ages 1 to 3 years with inter-generational, culture-based care, education, and support services.

**Santa Fe Indigenous Center**

*Santa Fe, NM*

Funding helps the center buy healthy, fresh foods from Food Depot and local Native farms for drive-up food distribution to Native communities to promote with food security.

**Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians**

*Anza, CA*

This project increases the continuation of knowledge about the history of Cahuilla culture by teaching participants about traditional pottery and basket weaver legends who created a pathway through the arts forum.

**Santa Rosa Rancheria/ Tachi Yokut Tribe**

*Lemoore, CA*

Funding provides general operating support for the repatriation of ancestors and their belongings from the Field Museum and Pittsburg State University.

**Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

*Sault Ste. Marie, MI*

Funding supports Sault Tribe forest stewardship in emerging markets.

**Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

*Sault Ste. Marie, MI*

Funding helps create a tribal Vegetation Ecology Program, building upon active co-management and co-stewardship; create a decision-support framework for newly rematriated tribal lands and waters; and increase collaboration with ceded-territory landowners.

**Save California Salmon**

*Orleans, CA*

This grant helps host additional Indigenous science- and traditional food-focused youth camps and raft or canoe trips on the Eel, Trinity, and Sacramento Rivers, and San Francisco Bay, and maintain current programming on the Klamath and North Coast.

**Scott Valley Indian Community**

*Etna, CA*

This funding provides general operating support for nonprofit capacity-building

**Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians**

*Lakeport, CA*

Funds will support seasonal camps for youth in three separate age groups.

**Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe**

*Tokeland, WA*

Grant funds help further food sovereignty and TEK practices of land management for the tribe to protect and promote resilient cultural use and recreational areas, and ensure access to these locations as the climate changes.



**Sicangu Community Development Corporation**

*Mission, SD*

Funds increase the impact of and participation in the Wotakuye Wellness After-School program at the Lakota language elementary school to empower and uplift the next generation of Sicangu leaders through cultural and recreational activities.

**Sicangu Community Development Corporation**

*Mission, SD*

This grant enables SCDC's team to attend First Nations' Food Sovereignty Summit to engage with, and learn from, Indigenous leaders and experts – who are advancing innovative food sovereignty and sustainable agricultural practices – to help benefit the broader Sicangu Lakota Oyate.

**Skarure Katehnuaka Tuscarora Nation**

*Red Springs, NC*

Funds supports protection of ancient burial mounds, cultural resources, and old growth forest from a large tract housing development project.

**Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate**

*Agency Village, SD*

This project consists of the planning and development of a co-stewardship agreement for the Sheyenne National Grasslands that has cultural and natural resource significance to the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate.

**Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate**

*Agency Village, SD*

This project leverages the Memorandum of Understanding between the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and the USFWS for co-stewardship of the Waubay National Wildlife Refuge.

**Sitting Bull College**

*Fort Yates, ND*

Funding will support Elk Camp, where buffalo and elk will be harvested, and experienced hunters and elders will share stories and knowledge with tribal members on how to track, hunt, and prepare the meat.

**Sitting Bull College**

*Fort Yates, ND*

This project supports retention of Native Youth Entrepreneurship Programming.

**Sovereign Energy**

*Albuquerque, NM*

Funding supports the advancement of renewable energy initiatives, such as solar energy, centered on Tribal Sovereignty.

**Standing Rock Sioux Tribe**

*Fort Yates, ND*

Funds provide collaborative, educational, and professional development for tribal members, with a focus on grass ecology, and restoration principles and practices as they relate to traditional conservation and species recognition.

**Summit Lake Paiute Tribe of Nevada**

*Sparks, NV*

This project immerses youth in their culture, language, and history with mentoring from elders, tribal council members, and subject matter experts.

**Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation**

*Suquamish, WA*

Funding supports the 2024 Food Sovereignty Summit.

**Sweetgrass Food Lodge**

*Ft. Washakie, WY*

Funding helps with Sweetgrass Food Lodge's 501(c)(3) application fee.

**Tataviam Land Conservancy**

*San Fernando, CA*

Funding supports continued restoration and stewardship of traditional lands of the Tataviam people.

**Tewa Women United**

*Santa Cruz, NM*

Funds provides general operating support.

**Tolani Lake Enterprises Inc**

*Winslow, AZ*

Funding supports the One River One Voice project to create unified, community-based water and food security in the Little Colorado River Watershed of the Navajo Nation.

**Tubatulabals of Kern Valley**

*Weldon, CA*

Funding provides technical assistance to support receiving land donations.

**Tubatulabals of Kern Valley**

*Weldon, CA*

Funds help create a cohort of tribal youth that may become future leaders of the tribe by providing them with basic knowledge, skills, and abilities on tribal leadership and culture.

**Tulalip Foundation**

*Tulalip, WA*

Funding helps expand youth camps for the Tulalip Natural Resources Education and Outreach Program to inspire tribal youth to better understand our natural world by creating exciting and safe outdoor adventures and experiences.

**Tule River Indian Tribe**

*Porterville, CA*

Funding helps with the creation of an intertribal beaver cooperative and support costs associated with the housing of beavers.

**Tule River Tribal Council**

Porterville, CA

This project creates diverse riparian and aquatic ecosystems within trust lands by implementing nature-based solutions, such as meadow restoration and cultural burning, to increase flood mitigation, drought resilience, and wildfire protection.

**Ukwakhwa, Inc.**

DePere, WI

Funding supports the conversion of the main garden into raised beds, making the space more accessible to community members, especially those in wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers.

**Ukwakhwa, Inc.**

DePere, WI

Funds support Field to Basket, a basketmaking program that spotlights the intersection of art and agriculture, while sustaining Haudenosaunee cultural heritage.

**United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc.**

Mesa, AZ

Funds support UNITY's Earth Ambassador program, a cohort of Native youth who learn about environmental issues and how to become effective ambassadors for the earth.

**United Tribes of Bristol Bay**

Dillingham, AK

This project builds community capacity to steward land and resources in the Bristol Bay villages and strengthen economic opportunities for community members.

**United Tribes Technical College**

Bismarck, ND

Funds provide general operating support.

**Ute Mountain Ute Tribe**

Towaoc, CO

Grant funds help Nuchu Alive to hire a Ute Language Intern to mentor with existing elder language instructors to increase student achievement in the Ute language.

**Wabanaki Commission on Land and Stewardship**

Orono, ME

Funding helps create a clear list of priorities for each Wabanaki Tribal Nation, in what is now Maine, related to ongoing land-return efforts.

**Wallowa Band Nez Perce Trail Interpretive Center, Inc.**

Wallowa, OR

Funds support a camp for youth from three different reservations to help revitalize Nez Perce language and culture and encourage students to become leaders in their communities.

**Warm Springs Community Action Team**

Warm Springs, OR

This project supports elder artists and shares traditional knowledge of basketmaking, beading, singing, drumming, and mural arts with 40 to 120 tribal youth to nurture the next generation of traditional arts in Warm Springs.

**Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California**

Gardnerville, NV

Funds provide general operating support.

**Wilton Rancheria**

Elk Grove, CA

This project introduces tribal youth to their ancestral lands and expand their cultural knowledge of tribal language, resources and practices.

**Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative**

Kinnear, WY

This grant helps restore the conservation of buffalo for the Wind River Reservation and tribal members through land repatriation, community revitalization, and youth education.

**(The) Women's Foundation of Colorado**

Denver, CO

Funding supports the 2024 Annual Luncheon Sponsorship.

**Xine:wh-ding Inc.**

Hoopa, CA

Funds support hiring an additional language teacher to help create curriculum for the Hupa language immersion nest and support long-term efforts to create new Hupa language speakers and teachers.

**Xine:wh-ding Inc.**

Hoopa, CA

Funds provide general operating support for the second year of the Hupa Language Immersion Nest, which helps create a new generation of Hupa language speakers.

**yəhaw' Indigenous Creatives Collective**

Seattle, WA

Funds support this collective of more than 400 intertribal artists based in the Pacific Northwest.

**Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council**

Anchorage, AK

This project supports a tribal summit bringing together 70 tribal villages within the Yukon River Watershed to discuss concerns and actions around mining and extraction, and land and subsistence protection.

**Yukon River Inter-Tribal  
Watershed Council**

*Anchorage, AK*

Funding provides financial support for the executive board to meet and set direction for the organization and to plan for a Biennial Summit for all Alaska tribes and First Nations in late summer/early fall of 2025 to help meet its mission of protecting the Yukon River waters.

**Zuni Youth Enrichment Project**

*Zuni, NM*

This grant provides event sponsorship support for Zuni/Major Market's 2024 Earth Day Event.

**Zuni Youth Enrichment Project**

*Zuni, NM*

Funding supports the Delapna:we Project, which leverages the cultural treasures represented in the audio recordings of elders telling traditional stories, and incorporates them into the Delapna:we Camp.

**Zuni Youth Enrichment Project**

*Zuni, NM*

Grant funding helps ZYEP supply camp counselor training materials, fund an overnight camping retreat for the counselors to practice group management skills and participate in team-building activities, and fund counselor background checks to foster an important, ongoing partnership with the Zuni Public School District.

**Zuni Youth Enrichment Project**

*Zuni, NM*

Funding helps tribal youth acquire essential digital skills and entrepreneurial capabilities to create opportunities for growth, drive economic development, and foster a culture of innovation and engagement.

**Zuni Youth Enrichment Project**

*Zuni, NM*

This grant helps Zuni Youth Art Markets leverage education and skills that young artisans develop from ZYEP's apprenticeship program by creating spaces to put curriculum into practice through community-centered events that promote wellness and entrepreneurial efforts of Zuni artists.



*Gunalchéesh*

**THANK  
YOU!**

This year and every year, we are grateful for your support. We value your commitment and partnership.

Thank you to our many friends and allies, including donors, institutions, foundations, and corporations. Your investment in Native talent, skills, resourcefulness, and ingenuity continues to make the Indian “and” possible.

We are honored to share the full list of 2024 supporters in this special online supplement.

Visit [firstnations.org/2024-annual-report](https://firstnations.org/2024-annual-report)



## STAFF ✨ LISTED HERE AT TIME OF PUBLICATION

**Michael E. Roberts** | *Tlingit*  
President & CEO

**Jackie Francke** | *Navajo*  
Chief Operating Officer

**Catherine Bryan** | *Navajo*  
Vice President, Grantmaking,  
Communications, Administration,  
Native Arts, Language, and Knowledge

**A-dae Romero Briones** | *Cochiti, Kiowa*  
Vice President, Policy & Research,  
California Tribal Fund, Native Agriculture  
and Food Systems Investments

**Mary Adelzadeh** | *Navajo*  
Director, Stewarding Native Lands

**Molly Baker**  
Operations Associate

**Kimberleigh Begay** | *Navajo*  
Development Associate

**Leiloni Begaye** | *Diné*  
Associate Director, Stewarding Native Lands

**Chasity Casey** | *Ute Mountain Ute*  
Grantmaking Officer



**Jona Charette** | *Northern Cheyenne/  
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*  
Director of Individual Giving

**Cetan Christensen** | *Oglala Lakota*  
Lead Program Officer,  
Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments

**Matthew Concho** | *Acoma, Laguna, Zuni*  
Intern

**Yesenia Cortés** | *Mexicana*  
HR Operations Associate

**Jasmin Coultas**  
Accountant

**Jessica DeLuna**  
Grants Development Associate

**Jacqueline Demko** | *Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation*  
Associate Director, Stewarding Native Lands

**Anaya Echo-Hawk** | *Confederated Tribes of the Yakama  
Nation, Pawnee, Paiute and Pit River*  
Development Officer

**Briana Edmo** | *Navajo, Blackfeet, Shoshone-Bannock*  
Program Officer, Stewarding Native Lands

**Richard Elm-Hill** | *Oneida Nation of Wisconsin*  
Associate Director,  
Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments

**Ethan Gallegos** | *Muscogee*  
Senior Program Officer,  
Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments

**Ariana Gloria-Martinez** | *Chicana*  
Program & Operations Officer

**Kenaba Hatathlie** | *Diné*  
Program Associate, Stewarding Native Lands

**Amy Jakober**  
Director of Communications

**Kayla Brooke Jones**  
Lead Grants Development Officer

**Adriana Khan** | *Lummi Nation*  
Database Coordinator

**Carson Kallenberger**  
Gift Services Associate , Development

**Simone Klein**  
Executive Administrator

**Ella Kohler** | *Sac and Fox Nation Tribe of Oklahoma*  
Program Officer

**Alicia Kovalcheck**  
Digital Communications Manager

**Amanda Kuehne**  
Donor Database Assistant

**Tonia Leureaux** | *Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan*  
Director of Human Resources

**Thalia Mack**  
Director of Finance

**Saul Maldonado**  
IT Associate

**Jenny Marquardt**  
Associate Director, Database Management

**Sujei Martinez**  
Communications Associate

**Patrick Murphy** | *Navajo*  
Operations Officer

**Chris Ortiz**  
Grantmaking Officer

**Michelle Risinger**  
Accounts Payable Specialist

**Yadira Rivera**  
Director, Native Agriculture and Food Systems  
Investments

**Sarayl Shunkamolah** | *Navajo*  
Director of Institutional Development



**Darrick Silversmith** | *Navajo*  
Individual Giving Associate

**Donald “Squiggie” Salcedo** | *Quechan Nation/  
Pueblo of Laguna*  
Lead Program Officer, California Tribal Fund

**Kristina Stanley** | *Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior  
Chippewa Indians*  
Lead Program Officer,  
Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments

**Lindsay Stout**  
Facilities Manager

**Nixtoli (Toli) Tate** | *Navajo*  
Program Associate, Stewarding Native Lands

**Rebecca Tortes** | *Payómkawichum, Cahuilla, Assiniboine  
Sioux*  
Director, California Tribal Fund

**Valencia Tsosie** | *Navajo*  
Lead Grants Development Officer

**Ashley Vargas** | *Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma*  
Operations Assistant

**Sabrina Walker** | *Tlingit*  
Lead Program Officer,  
Native Arts, Language, and Knowledge

**Abi Whiteing** | *Blackfeet*  
Director, Native Arts, Language and Knowledge

**Marsha Whiting** | *Chippewa Cree/Sicangu Lakota*  
Associate Director, Grantmaking

## IN MEMORIAM

**Dylan Fills Pipe** | *Oglala Sioux*  
Lead Grantmaking Officer



**FIRST NATIONS**  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Thank you for your continued interest and support. We value your commitment in helping First Nations uplift and sustain the lifeways and economies of Native communities.

**[www.firstnations.org](http://www.firstnations.org)**

First Nations Development Institute's 2024 Annual Report was prepared by the Communications Department with assistance from First Nations' staff members. Photos used in the publication were provided by First Nations' staff members, community partners, and others.

National Headquarters  
2432 Main Street,  
Longmont, CO 80501

Albuquerque Office  
8421 Osuna Rd., NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87111

California Office  
696 E. Colorado Blvd. Suite 222  
Pasadena, CA 91101