



WORKBOOK FOR UNDERSTANDING AND IMPROVING PARTNERSHIPS WITH AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVES



Andrew Gordon 06



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**RC&D Workbook for
Understanding and Improving Partnerships With
Native Americans and Alaska Natives**

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An RC&D Workbook for Understanding and Improving Partnerships With Native Americans and Alaska Natives

Introduction:

This workbook is intended to help non-Indian RC&D volunteers to foster partnerships with American Indian and Alaska Native communities so that the entire RC&D Area will benefit from developing and implementing the RC&D Area Plan.

RC&D Councils throughout the nation have been working with the American Indian and Alaska Native tribes in their RC&D Areas with varying degrees of success. Several RC&D Councils have included tribal representation on their boards of directors and have developed solid working relationships between the local RC&D Council and the tribes located in a particular RC&D Area. Other RC&D Councils have experienced great difficulty in establishing any kind of relationship with tribes. One RC&D Area – the Navajo RC&D Area – is entirely composed of one tribe.

You will learn some things about being sensitive to tribal cultures, being respectful of tribes, and about the tribes' unique relationships with local, state, and the Federal government in this specially designed training for non-Indian RC&D Council members. The workbook will provide you with some common terminology, important legislation and historical facts regarding American Indian and Alaska Natives, and will provide a few tips that are important in any cross-cultural endeavors.

The environmental, social and economic conditions that RC&D Councils are required to address are not necessarily restricted by jurisdictional boundaries. Social barriers, however, often exist that limit our ability to work together on wide-ranging issues in an RC&D Area. When these conditions exist, the barriers between the “haves” and the “have nots” seem to grow in magnitude and be insurmountable. However, the purpose of the RC&D program and of the RC&D Councils is to overcome existing barriers so that real progress can be made toward improving the social, economic and environmental conditions throughout the area. The non-profit, non-governmental RC&D Councils provide an excellent means for all communities to work together to improve the entire RC&D Area.

“Ignorance is one of the greatest barriers to understanding between two peoples. If we don't understand each other - if we do not know the culture, the languages, or the history of each other, we are unable to see each other as human beings with value and dignity. This is especially true in relations between Indians and non-Indians.”

*William C. Wantland (1975)
Former Attorney General
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma*

The most successful RC&D Councils – those that are making an impact on conditions in their RC&D Areas - have proven that the active participation of all communities is a key component of their ability to make things happen!

Definitions:

We will consistently use a few terms in this workbook that we need to discuss and define since we are working with a nationwide audience. We strongly recommend that you get to know the people you are working with in your local RC&D Area to foster common understanding and acceptable language. In any case, everyone deserves to be treated with respect at all times.

Indians: Indians have their status as Indians because they belong to tribal nations recognized by the United States. Most members of tribes do not think of themselves as “Indian,” but rather call themselves by their affiliation. The 2000 U.S. Census estimates that 4.3 million people have declared themselves to be American Indian or Alaska Native--the majority of whom live outside of reservations.¹

Indian Tribe: The terms nation, tribe, and band have been used interchangeably in Indian treaties and statutes. A Tribe is any American Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, community, rancheria, colony, or group that is recognized by the government of the United States and possesses the power of self-government.²

Tribes determine eligibility standards for tribal membership. Many have varying degrees of blood quantum as an eligibility standard required for membership.³ Others require membership applicants to be descendents of someone on the tribe’s membership roll.

Eligibility for tribal membership can get very confusing. Each government - tribal, state and federal, determines who is an Indian for the benefit of their laws and programs. Indian tribes can determine who is an Indian for the tribe’s membership but not for state and federal purposes. As a result, an individual can be recognized as an Indian by a tribe, but not under federal law, under federal but not under tribal law, under tribal but not under state law, and so on.⁴

Native people of Alaska: Native people of Alaska are comprised of three groups: Eskimos, Aleuts, and American Indians. Eskimos and Aleuts are ethnically distinct from, but are related to, American Indians. Eskimos and Aleuts are two culturally distinct groups and are sensitive about being referred to as Indians. They prefer “Alaska Native.” Each group has an extremely strong tie to the land that provides food, shelter and protection. Their people continue to live off the land and its resources. According to the 2000 Census, Eskimo was the largest tribal grouping followed by Tlingit-Haida, Alaska Athabascan, and Aleut. When Congress enacts Indian legislation, it usually states it will apply also to Eskimos and Aleuts. There are several laws that apply only to Alaska Natives.

Like American Indians, Alaska Natives are the original inhabitants of the region, claim aboriginal rights, a trust relationship, and self-government powers. At the same time, unlike American Indians, Alaska Natives experienced very little pressure to surrender lands, including traditional hunting and fishing grounds. Alaska Natives were not conquered by Euro-Americans, did not sign treaties, and were not forced on to reservations.⁵

¹ The American Indian and Alaska Population: 2000, Issued February 2002, US Census Bureau

² The Rights of Indians and Tribes; Stephen L. Pevar, October 2002. The criteria, regulations and process for obtaining Federal recognition as an Indian Tribe is located in 25 CFR 83.

³ The Rights of Indians and Tribes; Stephen L. Pevar, October 2002

⁴ The Rights of Indians and Tribes; Stephen L. Pevar, October 2002

⁵ Forest Service, Alaska Region Tribal Relations Deskguide.

Indian Reservation: Lands set aside for the benefits of American Indians that were created by treaty documentation or an executive order. The Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has the responsibility to administer reservation lands for the benefit of Indian people.

Not sure how to refer to American Indians? Native Americans? Alaska Natives?

If a person needs to be referred to, the foolproof method is to ask a tribal person the term that they prefer. The important thing to remember is that no two people are alike in their preferences and neither are any of the 562 Federally Recognized Tribes exactly alike. Expecting each Indian tribe to be the same as every other tribe is unrealistic. It would be like choosing 562 small towns and expecting them all to be the same. This training will give general advice, but you need to tailor it to the people and tribes with whom you work. When in doubt, ask!

A full glossary of terms relating to American Indians and Alaska Natives can be found in Appendix A.

Communication across Cultures⁶:

If you are going to partner with people, your most important tool is communication. There may be differences in the way that two cultures communicate. These may lie in the following areas:

1. The way we structure communication

In the English discourse system, we may make relevant points first and may explain the background later. Some Alaska Natives, for instance, outline the generalities first and make the specific point later on. Too much directness may seem rude to them. The potential problem here is that your perception may be that if a person is not able to make their point immediately, they are not able to express themselves clearly and may be trying to avoid communicating, when really the opposite is true. Be patient and listen.

2. Differences in pausing sequences and silence

Cultures have different pausing times between asking and answering questions. People with longer pauses (more silence between their answers and questions) may not get a chance to complete their thoughts before they are interrupted with yet another question or comment from a person accustomed to a shorter time pause.

3. Different ways of showing politeness

What may be a sign of politeness to one group may seem insulting to another group. For example, silence may make some non-Indians feel uncomfortable. We associate it with some kind of breakdown in communication. Sometimes we even associate it with hostility and a lack of competence. Just the opposite is true in many American Indian and Alaska Native cultures where silence or pausing after a question and before an answer is a sign of respect.

4. Differences in the way we speak

Some of our communication is based upon answers and questions. There are some basic differences in the way that we speak that can lead to miscommunication. One basic difference is linguistic (how we hear things and how we say things). Another is cultural (knowing the right thing to say at the right time).

In English, we show contrast by use of *tones*, *pitch*, and *stress* to make a point. Other languages may not use these signals, but use *words* instead of intonation to show contrast or make a point.

Cultural communication deals with knowing what the appropriate cultural response is in a given setting. Whatever culture people grow up in, they know what the expectations of their society are, communication problems occur when two cultures interface and their expectations are different.

These situations may make communication a little uncomfortable for both cultures, but they are normal. It merely requires that everyone be more diligent in trying to understand each other.

5. Cultures may have a different concept of time.

While time is important to some people, it may not be as important or interpreted the same way with some other cultures. Meeting times may only be a suggestion to the culture. When you ask a tribal person a question it is appropriate and respectful for you to listen to the complete answer, no matter how long it

⁶ Working Effectively with American Indians, NRCS 2004, Cross Cultural Communications Training for US Forest Service, March 22-26, 1999, University of AK, Center for Instructional Communications

takes. To say, “I only have fifteen minutes to listen to you, can you get to the bottom line?” is extremely inappropriate and disrespectful.

6. Listen!

A Paiute elder once said “How are you going to learn anything if you talk all the time?” This was a very wise woman.

More important than anything, **listen**.

- If you ask a question, give the person who is answering it as much time to answer the question, as they need.
- Don’t be overly uncomfortable with pauses and silence in the conversation.
- After giving the person as much time to answer the question as they need and waiting through longer silences than you’re used to, if you still need more information, try asking the question a different way.

Remember, Communication Breakdown Is Part of the Real World

1. What is important in cross-cultural communication is to establish a common understanding of issues and what actions need to be taken to make changes.
2. Be aware that miscommunication does happen and is natural.
3. Accept the idea that miscommunication is not deliberate or intentional; one side is not trying to confuse the other.
4. Be willing to work at resolving communication differences.
5. Anticipate different ways of:
 - Showing politeness
 - Demonstrating competence
 - Speaking
 - Handling questions and answers
 - Handling silence and pauses
 - Different tones of voice

All these differences exist on both the linguistic and cultural levels.

All these differences can be hard to see and understand.

Exercise:

List experiences you have had where communications between Indian and Non-Indian communities could be improved.

How can your RC&D Council improve communications with Indian communities?

Establishing a Relationship

The relationship between an RC&D Council and a tribe must be seated in trust and respect for the sovereign powers of the tribe and the elders. Building a relationship with tribal leadership and appropriate tribal council staff is integral to any future partnerships to successfully implement your Area Plan and provide a real, tangible service to all the residents of your RC&D Area. This may require several meetings to determine how you can best work together.

When planning to visit a tribe to establish a partnership, do your homework. Know whom you are meeting with, the tribal government structure, issues that are of real concern and importance to the RC&D Council and the tribe, what services and relationships that the RC&D Council can partner on and perform well. As in any “sales” effort, do not commit the RC&D Council to more than you can deliver. It is always important to produce what you promise.

Partnerships are built on a foundation of what the two partners know about each other and what they have in common. People who form partnerships are looking for the “What’s in it for me—or what’s in it for us?” Many successful partnerships are formed because one partner meets the other partner’s needs.

Who do I need to meet with?

The answer to this question would probably depend on the subject that was going to be discussed. Tribes have tribal governments, people who work for the tribes (both Indian and non-Indian), tribal spiritual leaders, tribal members and others. Remember, federally recognized tribes have a government-to-government relationship with the government of the United States of America. This means that the tribal government leader has a direct relationship with the President of the United States (This is further clarified in the section on Sovereignty and RC&D Council Relationships). The Bureau of Indian Affairs has full staff working with each tribe. Other federal government agencies such as the NRCS and Forest Service have liaisons with tribes as well as archeologists who work on cultural resource issues with the tribes. If you are planning on meeting with a tribe, NRCS or Forest Service staff would be an excellent resource to help you determine with whom your meeting should be scheduled. Since these agencies have worked with the tribes that you are going to be working with, they are also a good resource of initial material on tribal history and issues.

Tips and Suggestions:

The following tips and suggestions will help your council develop relationships and partnerships with Native American and Alaska Native tribal contacts:⁷

- Visit, listen, and communicate in person. Face to face and onsite meetings are important. Be prepared by becoming familiar with the tribe’s organization and culture.
- Be friendly and courteous, respect others as equals, and avoid jokes that can be misinterpreted.
- Develop tribal points of contacts for tasks or projects. Determine with whom staff work should be conducted. Many tribes have technical staff, legal counsel, advisors, and administrators employed to run tribal affairs. Understand multiple levels of power. Check the internet for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and National Congress of American Indians’ web pages for current contact information. *See website resource in Appendix B.*
- Do not assume that all Indian tribes have the same culture or that all members will be alike. Ask for help and advice dealing with a specific tribe from more than one source.

⁷ See generally: *Working Effectively with American Indians, Working Effectively with Alaska Natives*, NRCS training, *Forest Service National Resource Book on American Indian and Alaska Native Relations*. FS 600, April 1997

- Identify preferred methods of communication. Develop protocols or an agreement on how consultations should be conducted.
- Accept timeframes and paces different from your own. Be flexible with deadlines and be ready to negotiate decisions. Be very clear if deadlines are needed and explain why they exist.
- Answers to questions may not be provided immediately. Allow tribal leaders the time to consider any questions or decisions and discuss it with tribal committees, members, or tribal councils.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Respect tribes as sovereign governments.
- Be sensitive to the effects of history on the relationship. There may be a lack of trust. Remember RC&D Councils are working with and through all governments in the area and rely on several sources of funding and other assistance to complete their RC&D Area Plans.

Keep in mind: The tribes' council or "board" and technical staff meet regularly as a governing body to administer all the tribal business and address requests they receive. In that regard, they function as any other governing institutions. Council meetings may continue for long periods of time, be conducted in the tribe's native language and will have several agenda items to work through as do all governments. If you do not speak the language and are making a presentation, it is appropriate to inquire how your presentation will be communicated.

If you're going to be working with tribes, here is some general history your council may find helpful.

History and Transitions⁸

Please see the appendix for a brief overview history that interlocks the American Indian people with the explorers, conquerors and nation builders in North America. You will find this history to be fascinating and may see our relationships in a different light as a result of your study. In any case, there are about 400 years of history between the people native to this continent and the people that came from other places. It is important to be aware that this history exists and to work together to make your relationships work today for the good of the RC&D Area.

Exercise:

List the names, addresses, and phone numbers of tribal government, NRCS tribal liaison, Forest Service tribal liaison and local Bureau of Indian Affairs office.

⁸ See generally: *American Indian Policy Center*, www.airpi.org/projects/history.html, Native American Reservations, Poster, www.NativeAmericanonline.com ISDN# 1-881933-11-3, Digital History, Native American Voices, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/native_voices/native_voices.cfm Working Effectively with American Indians, NRCS 2004.

Sovereignty and Relationships with Tribal Governments

What are Federally recognized Indian Tribes? There are 561 Federally Recognized Tribes in the U.S. right now. Each is different. For any Indian group to be considered “Federally recognized” it may have: 1.) a reservation created by Congress or via an executive order, by treaty or statute, agreement, or valid administrative action; and/or 2.) a continuing political relationship with the United States, such as receiving services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The group must meet seven requirements established by the Department of the Interior to qualify for all federal Indian programs and benefits Congress has made available.⁹ (see reference for these requirements)

It is important for volunteers to understand that American Indians and Alaska Natives have a unique legal and political relationship with the government of the United States. Federally Recognized tribes are considered sovereign nations. Sovereignty means tribes have the power to establish a form of government to make and enforce laws for their people and lands. Tribes can administer justice, pass legislation, and establish courts and related forums for resolution of disputes. They can also determine membership and charter business organizations.

Because they are sovereign nations, tribes are on the same level as other nations are around the world to deal with the U.S. Government. When U.S. government policies are going to affect tribal lands, rights, or people, the U.S. government must consult with the tribal government. This relationship is called the government-to-government relationship and the consultation that takes place is called government-to-government consultation. When a tribal government is consulted by the U.S. Government, the head of the tribal government meets with someone who is representing the President of the United States. The government-to-government relationship between a tribe and the United States is extremely important and affords the tribal leadership an equal footing with the leadership of the United States government.

What are Indian Trust Lands?

Approximately 56.2 million acres of land are held in trust by the U.S. for various Indian tribes and individuals.¹⁰ These “trust lands” are in a tribal holding or ownership and the Department of the Interior has the responsibility to manage them in a beneficial manner for the tribe. The Secretary of the Interior serves as trustee for these lands on behalf of the President of the United States.

Please refer to the communications and opportunities sections for suggestions to councils for their tribal outreach and partnership development.

How can an RC&D Council relate with a tribe?

All RC&D Councils are incorporated as 501(c) organizations. They are not representative of government but are organized as charitable bodies with the general purpose of improving the economic, social, and environmental conditions in their geographically designated RC&D Area. This non-profit, non-government status provides an avenue for all the residents of an area to work together and still recognize and honor all existing governmental authority.

Tribes must be allowed to designate their relationship and participation with an RC&D Council as any other organization does. It is not appropriate for the RC&D Council to do the designating. You have plans for your area that will benefit everyone including the tribe(s) and their participation in your efforts will increase your effectiveness and address issues that are of mutual concern to everyone.

⁹ The Rights of Indians and Tribes; Stephen L. Pevar, October 2002

¹⁰ Bureau of Indian Affairs, <http://www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html>

Increasing Opportunities

RC&D Councils have many opportunities to include tribal communities in the planning and development of area plans and potential projects. RC&D projects involving natural resources, economic development, entrepreneurial development, and youth and leadership programs are very similar to tribal communities’ goals for protecting the resources of the land, expanding their business opportunities and nurturing their youth. A few ideas follow that RC&D Councils could initiate to improve participation:

- Ask tribe members to be on the council board of directors to increase diversity and gain a broader perspective of needs.
- Advise and consult with tribes on all projects that may affect them.
- Mutually share ideas. Seek out intertribal conferences or meetings to participate and share RC&D activities. Intertribal conferences have many tribal representatives and provide good networking opportunities for RC&D Council members to meet with tribal officials. Seek the schedules for these conferences through websites and tribal, NRCS and FS contacts.
- Training opportunities can be planned jointly for the benefit of the community.
- Transfer of information: open up two-way communication channels to share resources and information distribution lists.
- Work together to develop youth programs and vocational activities. Advise tribal schools of volunteer opportunities and community service projects.

Now it’s your turn – are there other ways you know of that lead to good relations with tribal communities?

RC&D Success Stories

Council: North Coast Resource Conservation & Development Council

State: California

Project: Tribal Outreach Project on Sudden Oak Death

Description: Native Americans are among the groups most affected by the impacts of the plant disease called “Sudden Oak Death.” The disease, caused by the relatively recently described pathogen, *Phytophthora ramorum*, has been documented in 14 counties in coastal northern and central California. The disease affects over 65 plant species, many of which have cultural importance to Native Americans. Tanoak, a heavily impacted host of the pathogen provides food and medicine, and is a source of spirituality for many of California’s Tribes. Several dozen other host plants, such as California bay laurel, huckleberry, salmonberry, and bracken fern are also important sources of food, basketry, and medicine, and are used in cultural practices. Fortunately, Sudden Oak Death is not known to affect human health.

To address the needs of California Tribes dealing with Sudden Oak Death, the North Coast RC&D has been working in cooperation with Tribal members and a number of groups and agencies on outreach efforts in identification and prevention.

In spring and summer of 2005, the North Coast RC&D, which has 22 federally recognized tribes in its RC&D Area, provided small “train the trainer ” sessions for key Tribal members and department officials to provide them with the information and resources necessary to train and update other Tribe members, as well as act as a resource for support and information. The workshops focused on information useful for Native gatherers to identify the plant disease so they can avoid spreading the pathogen to uninfected areas, including to their own lands. Native plant gatherers collect plants wherever they travel, including the highway corridors and the larger county roads.

At the training sessions, the Council also provided participants with the Sudden Oak Death Educational “Toolkit” comprised of a compendium of hardcopy and electronic versions of outreach materials that they can use and tailor for their own outreach efforts to their memberships. This was intended to multiply the initial outreach efforts by the project partners. Tribal liaisons highly recommended this approach because by disseminating the information through the liaison Tribal member (and interested Elders, etc.), educational capacity was increased and other plant gatherers ultimately learned about Sudden Oak Death issues through another Tribal member.

The training team met with Northern California Tribal representatives at a Tribal environmental conference in Santa Rosa. The Council also conducted the first "train the trainer" workshop with Round Valley Tribal members in Mendocino County, and we helped the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians organize a workshop with surrounding landowners at the Stewarts Point Rancheria. As a result of the Kashia workshop, the Tribe received a toolkit and the Kashia Tribal Environmental Department will be working with surrounding landowners, University of California, Davis researchers, and USDA Forest Service

representatives to develop a management plan for dealing with the Sudden Oak Death infestation on their land.

Sources of Funding: Outreach grants from NRCS an in-kind contributions from staff at the University of California Cooperative Extension, California Oak Mortality Task Force, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Project Benefits: Provided Tribal liaisons and other interested Tribal members with the tools and educational resources to provide ongoing education on Sudden Oak Death for their memberships. This effort has reduced the spread of this plant disease, which affects numerous plant species of Native cultural importance.

Contact Person: Kate Symonds, RC&D Coordinator
Ron Roller, North Coast RC&D Council
2448 Guerneville Road, Suite 100
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone: (707) 569-9710, Fax: 707-569-9746

Council: Upper Peninsula RC&D Council
State: Western Region, Baraga County, Michigan

Project: Sand Point Stamp Sand Stabilization Project

Description: This successful partnership project involves assistance to the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) for the development of a waste sand stabilization and re-use plan for a prime Lake Superior location owned and managed by the tribe. The problem of stamp sand deposition at this location is the result of historic copper mining activity in the Rockland and Mass areas of Ontonagon County between 1902 and 1919. Mine rock from this activity was processed on the shore of Lake Superior in Baraga County, approximately 2 miles north of Sand Point. Over time, the lake currents have transported the waste material to its current location just north of the village marina site. The Sand Point lakeshore area is a heavy recreational use area, and is currently managed by KBIC for camping and community events.

Source of Funding: Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
U.P. Resource Conservation and Development Council
U.P. Engineers and Architects

Project Benefits: NRCS engineers, a District Conservationist, the Area Soil Scientist, the NRCS Plant Materials Center and RC&D staff cooperated to produce a report summarizing the success of various stamp sand stabilization options. Cost estimates have been provided to KBIC, allowing the tribe to leverage Brownfield funding to cap the stamp sands. Plans are currently underway to proceed with site re-vegetation and further development. U.P. RC&D Council continues to provide assistance in seeking funds for recreational site development and enhancement.

Project Contact: Paul Van Ryzin
Upper Peninsula RC&D Council
201 Rublein St.
Marquette, MI 49855
Phone (906) 226-7487, Fax (906) 226-7040
Paul.vanryzin@mi.usda.gov
www.uprcd.org

Council: Southeast Texas RC&D
State: Texas

Project: Alabama Coushatta 4H Christmas Tree

Description: The 4-H youth in the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas have initiated a program with the Southeast Texas RC&D Council and NRCS to plant, grow and eventually sell Christmas Trees. Tribal representative Perry Williams (who also serves on the RC&D Executive board) provides leadership to both the Tribe and the RC&D Council that has led to many successful projects and activities. The Southeast Texas RC&D Council provided a matching grant to the 4-H Youth Program on the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation to help establish a Christmas tree operation.

This project gives tribal youth first-rate experience in learning about the maintenance, conservation, cultivation and overall care of the tribe's trees and helps to develop their marketing and selling skills.

Sources of Funding: The Southeast Texas RC&D Council awards \$500 matching grants for various projects each year.

Project Benefits: The 4-H members have learned about planting, growing and caring for the Christmas trees by conducting soil tests, using appropriate equipment and tools, and researching proper Christmas tree production methods. Grant funds were used to purchase Virginia pine seedlings from the Texas Forest Service Indian Mound Nursery. The entire 4-H Club and adult volunteers planted the trees over a couple of weekends.

Contact Person: John Davidson
204 East Polk, Livingston, Texas 77351
Phone 936 327-6408
John.Davidson@tx.usda.gov

Council: Chihuahuan Desert RC&D
State: Texas

Project: Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Hueco Mountains Restoration

Description: In El Paso County, the Tigua Indians of the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo working with the Chihuahuan Desert RC&D Area are using grant funding to demonstrate brush management on lands adjacent to Hueco Tanks State Park. This demonstration project is located on the Tribe's Hueco Mountain property and has two objectives: 1.) apply recommended conservation practices to restore 30 acres of disturbed Desert Grassland and Shrub habitat, and 2.) conduct education and outreach to 400 tribal members in order to promote conservation awareness.

The Tribe has developed a resource management system including brush management to control invading brush, stabilize gully erosion with a series of check dams, and fencing to restrict livestock grazing on eroding areas. By fencing and stabilizing eroding portions of the tribal property, the project will eventually protect tribal sites of cultural significance. Once fully applied, these practices will promote healthy resource restoration of the property.

Sources of Funding: Grant from Texas NRCS and in kind funding from Tigua Indian Nation.

Project Benefits: Grassland Restoration, Brush Management, Erosion Control, Proper Grazing Use, and Conservation Education.

Project Contact: Tim Smith
Environmental Mgt. Officer, Tigua Indians
119 S. Old Pueblo Rd., P.O. Box 17579, El Paso, Tx 79917,
Telephone (915) 859-7913, Fax (915) 859-2988, ydsp_airquality@yahoo.com

Mark P. Donet
Chihuahuan Desert RC&D Coordinator
P.O. Box C-61, Alpine, Tx. 79832
Telephone: (432) 837 8247, Fax (432) 837 8701
<http://www.sulross.edu/pages/3542.asp>

Council: Alabama Mountains, Rivers and Valleys (AMRV) RC&D
State: Alabama

Project: Echota Cherokee Story Telling

Project Description: The Council assisted the Echota Cherokee in north Alabama to develop an outdoor education area. Native American story telling, told by the Echota Tribe members, was incorporated into an outdoor educational trail project on tribal lands in a way (story telling) that passed on the legends and cultural way of life of their ancestors. A trail with teaching stations has been developed. Plants with Cherokee cultural, medicinal or food uses have been identified. Currently the Council is assisting in the establishment of a historical village starting with a Cherokee log cabin. Plans are in place for an amphitheatre and a cultural center in the future.

Sources of Funding: The AMRV-RC&D is a major funder of this effort. Additional funds have been obtained from legislative discretionary funds and from private donations. Partners are the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Alabama A&M University, Cullman County Commission, Board of Education and Chamber of Commerce.

Benefits of Project: There are multiple benefits to this project:
Passing on Native American culture
Historical and environmental education
Tourist income for the area and potentially for the tribe

Contact Person: Mike Roden
RC&D Coordinator
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Decatur, Alabama 35603
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Fax: (256) 355-8285
mike.rodan@al.usda.gov

Council: Da Ka Doiyabe RC&D
State: Nevada

Project: Where Dreams Begin Park

Description: On June 10, 2003, Arbor Day, the Ely Shoshone Tribal Grants Writer and the Da Ka Doiyabe RC&D Coordinator welcomed a very good turnout of people to the park development project. The program contained opening prayers for everyone and for the trees; and other presentations about the significance of Arbor Day and the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley. The tribal community - children, moms and dads, uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents and friends laughed and shoveled soil, working in harmony to get the job done. Over 70 volunteers gathered for the planting of the trees, cleaning up the eastern side of the Reservation and cooking and eating of the barbeque. But most importantly participants enjoyed working together, and having fun. The Shoshone family had come together to give birth to a wonderful park, named “Where Dreams Begin Park – Hagavi Nabusai Diiwaaga.” The Ely Shoshone Tribal Pre-school gave the name of the park.

Project Funding: US Forest Service through the Nevada Division of Forestry Urban and Community Forestry Program, Ely Shoshone Tribal Council, City of Ely, Da Ka Doiyabe RC&D Inc.

Benefits: Bringing a community together to turn a unsightly vacant lot into a irrigated grassed playground, with latest playground equipment, Shaded BBQ areas with picnic tables, fenced area so children won’t run out onto the street, and a basketball court and memorial to those who signed the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley and naturally a tree planting with care education.

Contacts: Gerald Miller,
555 West Silver Street Suite 101

Elko, Nevada 89801
(775) 738 8431 x 114
Gerald.Miller@nv.usda.gov

Christine Stones
Ely Shoshone Tribe
16 Shoshone Circle
Ely, Nevada 89301
(775) 289 3013

Appendix I

Glossary

This Glossary, unless otherwise noted borrows heavily from **The Rights of Indians and Tribes**, Stephen L. Pevar, October 2002; NRCS **Working Effectively with American Indians**, 2004; FS **National Resource Book on American Indian and Alaska Native Relations**, April 1997.

Aboriginal Areas: The historic and prehistoric lands where a traditional tribe carried out food gathering, seasonal activities or traded with other Indian peoples.

Aboriginal title (original or Indian title): The possessive right to occupy and use the lands Indians traditionally used and governed before the time of non-Indian settlement.

Bureau of Indian Affairs¹¹: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is a division of the Department of the Interior. The BIA is responsible for the administration and management of 55.7 million acres of land held in trust by the United States for American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives. There are 561 federally recognized tribal governments in the United States. Developing forestlands, leasing assets on these lands, directing agricultural programs, protecting water and land rights, developing and maintaining infrastructure and economic development are all part of the agency's responsibility. In addition, the Bureau of Indian Affairs provides education services to approximately 48,000 Indian students.

Indian: Indians are a distinct race of people, as are Caucasians or African Americans. An Indian is an individual recognized as an Indian by that person's tribe or community. A specific tribe's constitution, tribal law, or tribal roll defines membership in a tribe. Degree of blood quantum is an eligibility standard required for membership to some tribes. Many tribes require that a person have at least one-fourth tribal blood to be enrolled in tribes. Others need the applicant to be a descendent of someone on the tribe's membership roll. The definition of Indian can be either ethnological (race) or in a legal or political sense. Congress has created many programs for Indians with varying definitions of the term. Examples of these different standards are: anyone of Indian descent, minimum blood quantum, or a member of a federally recognized tribe. That is why it can be difficult and often controversial to determine who is an Indian. The same person may qualify as an Indian for one program but not be eligible for another.

Federally recognized Indian Tribes: Any Indian group which has: 1.) a reservation created by Congress or via an executive order by treaty (before 1871) or statute, agreement, or valid administrative action; and/or 2.) Has a continuing political relationship with the United States, such as receiving services from the BIA. The group must meet seven requirements established by the Department of Interior to qualify for all federal Indian programs and benefits Congress has made available. There are 561 federally recognized tribes in the United States, including some 229 village groups in Alaska. (November 12, 2005, Federal Register) By being "federally recognized" these tribes and groups have a special, legal affiliation with the U.S. government, referred to as a "government to government relationship."

Government to Government Relations: Relationship between the federal government and federally recognized tribes. The relationship recognizes tribal sovereignty and the federal government's responsibility to meet trust obligations. Tribes as sovereign nations are on the same level as other nations around the world in dealing with the U.S. Government. When U.S. government policies are going to affect tribal lands, rights, or people, the U.S.

¹¹Bureau of Indian Affairs website <http://www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html>

government must consult with the tribal government. The consultation that takes place is called government-to-government consultation.

Indian Country: Land that has been set aside for the use of Indians that is under supervision of the U.S. Government. This includes all land within an Indian reservation and all land outside of a reservation under Federal jurisdiction and designated by Federal Statute (18 U.S.C.~ 1151) primarily for Indian use. Indian country can be described as the territorial boundaries of Indian tribal governments.

Indian Reservation: Lands set aside for the benefit of American Indians that were created by treaty documentation or an executive order. The BIA has the responsibility to administer reservation lands for the benefit of Indian people.

Indian Territory: Lands (unsurveyed) that were Federally documented to be occupied or used by Indians.

Indian Tribe: The terms nation, tribe and band have been used interchangeably in Indian treaties and statutes. Any American Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, community, rancheria, colony, or group that comes under the jurisdiction of the United States and possesses the power of self government. Those entities recognized in statutes or treaties with the United States.

Laws: The jurisdictional reach that Tribes and Alaska Native corporations may exercise varies considerably. Both Tribes and Alaska Native corporations exercise their jurisdiction over domestic and internal affairs. Criminal jurisdiction and the right to Tax are only given on Reservations, within dependent Indian communities and on allotment lands. In large part, Alaska Native sovereignty, and therefore jurisdiction, extends only to internal and domestic affairs.

Native people of Alaska: Comprised of three groups: Eskimos, Aleuts, and American Indians. Eskimos and Aleuts are ethnically distinct from, but are related to, the American Indian. Eskimos and Aleuts are two culturally distinct groups and are sensitive about being referred to as Indians. They prefer “Alaska Native.” When Congress enacts Indian legislation, it usually states it will apply also to Eskimos and Aleuts. There are laws that apply only to Alaska Natives.

Powers of Self-Government: An Indian tribe’s governmental powers: executive, legislative and judicial; all the offices, bodies, councils, or tribunals that execute the powers, such as Indian courts.

Sovereignty: The status, rule or power of a sovereign. Tribes have the power to establish a form of government to make and enforce laws for their people and the reservation. Tribes can administer justice and legislate laws; establish courts and related forums for disputes resolution. They can determine membership and charter business organizations. Because they are sovereign nations, tribes are on the same level as other nations are around the world to deal with the U.S. Government.

Taxes: Indians pay the same taxes as any other US citizen with specific exceptions: Federal income taxes are not levied on income from trust lands held for them by the United States; state income taxes are not paid on income earned on reservation land by members of the tribe that the land is held for in they live on the reservation; State sales taxes are not paid on transactions made on reservation land; and local property taxes are not paid on reservation or trust land.¹²

¹² Information Please database website, Facts about American Indians Today, Pearson Education, Inc..

Treaty: A legal and binding agreement between two or more sovereign governments. A treaty with American Indian tribes requires the document be negotiated by a representative of the President of the US and ratified by two-thirds majority vote of the US Senate. In peace treaties, the US would acquire land from tribes in exchange for set aside reservation land and a guarantee that the federal government would respect the sovereignty of the tribes and ensure the survival and welfare of the Indian tribes and their members.

Treaty Rights: Tribal rights or interests are preexisting or in treaties that Indian tribes can use for the benefit of members. The treaty document will identify the uses and benefits. Only the US Congress may modify or abolish treaties or treaty rights.

Tribal government: A documented system of rules or a constitution determined by the tribal governing body that governs all the actions and conduct of the membership of the tribe, within the bounds of the Indian reservation. Examples: law and order ordinances, tribal membership criteria, governing regulations on the use of Indian owned resources.

Tribal Self-Governance: Tribal Self-Governance is the ability of Indian tribal governments to make the decisions that affect their tribal members or tribal assets. (i.e. Independent decision-making process or self-determination.) In 1982, authorities which were passed by Congress enabled Indian Tribes to directly enter into a compact with the Secretary of the Department of Interior. Indian tribes have involvement in the Federal decision-making process and make the decisions on priorities for their own expenditures of Federal funds.

Trust Allotment: Federal land that is set aside exclusively for the use of any Indian who is the allottee. The Federal government retains ownership of the land.

Trust land: Any land within a tribal holding or ownership that the DOI has ongoing responsibility to manage in a beneficial manner for that respective tribe or individual. Some trust lands are considered compensation for claims against the government. The Secretary of Interior serves as trustee for these lands on behalf of the United States. Approximately 56.2 million acres of land are held in trust by the U.S. for various Indian tribes and individuals.¹³ The vast majority of Alaska Native lands are not considered trust lands.

Trust Responsibility: The unique bond or special relationship between the Indian tribes and the federal government. Millions of acres of land were obtained by the US government in exchange for a promise to respect the sovereignty of the tribes, and to protect Indian land and ensure the survival and welfare of Indian people. The United States government is obligated to keep the promises made in the peace treaties they entered. The President of the US through the Secretary of the Interior serves as the trustee for Indian assets.

¹³ Bureau of Indian Affairs, <http://www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html>

Appendix II

Native American and Alaska Native Tribe Internet References

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American Indian Alaska Native Data and Links - <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/aian/index.html>

US Census, Public Information Office, National American Indian Heritage Month -
<http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/multimedia/aian2004.html>

The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development -
<http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/hpaied/index.htm>

American Indian Policy Center - <http://www.airpi.org/>

Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy - <http://udallcenter.arizona.edu/> -->

American Indians on Reservations: A databook on socioeconomic change between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses -
<http://udallcenter.arizona.edu/nativenations/researchreport/may05.html#>

National Congress of American Indians - <http://198.104.130.237/ncai/index.jsp?pg=1>

Indian Country Today, The Nation's Leading American Indian News Source - <http://www.indiancountry.com>

Indian circle website contains webpages of tribes - <http://www.indiancircle.com>

Native American Nations - <http://www.nativeculturelinks.com/nations.html>

Alaska Native Resources - <http://www.nativefederation.org/flash.html>

National Association of Tribal Historical Preservation - www.nathpo.org

National and International Tribal Organizations

Amerind Risk Management Corporation - www.amerind-corp.org/

Americans of Indian Opportunity - www.aio.org

Center for World Indigenous Studies - www.cwis.org

First Nations Development Institute - www.firstnations.org

Indian Law Resource Center - www.indianlaw.org

Intertribal Timber Council - www.itcnet.org

Native American Finance Officers Association - www.indianlaw.org

Native American Journalists Association - www.naja.com

National Indian Council on Aging - www.nicoa.org

National Indian Education Association - www.niea.org

National Indian Health Board - www.nihb.org

National Indian Justice Center – www.nijc.indian.com

National Native American Aids Prevention Center - www.nnaapc.org

National Tribal Justice Resource Center - www.ntjrc.org

American Indian Higher Education Consortium - www.aihec.org

California Rural Indian Health Board - www.crihb.org/home.htm

Council of Energy Resource Tribes - www.certreearth.com

Intertribal Agricultural - Council-iac@I-a-c-online.com

Intertribal Trust Monitoring Association - www.itmatrustfunds.org

National American Indian Housing Council - www.naihc.net

National Indian Child Welfare Association - www.nicwa.org

National American Indian Court Judges Association - www.naicja.org

National Indian Gaming Association - www.indiangaming.org

National Intertribal Tax Alliance - www.indiantax.org

National Indian Women's Health Resource Center - www.indiantax.org

National Tribal Environmental Council - www.ntec.org

Native American Rights Fund - www.narf.org

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Appendix IV

History and Transitions.

We feel it is important to provide a short summary of the extreme transitions the Indian people have made due to the settlement of the United States, the struggles that took place including the seizures of land and resources, and the resulting legislation. This history is fascinating, probably things you did not know before. This will hopefully give you more information on understanding tribes and make your working relationship better with them.

The Expanding Nation: 1607–1819

Starting with the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492, European nations were exploring for resources and sought settlements on the east coast of America. The English colony of Jamestown was established in 1607. Similar colonies developed and expanded across the lands. The American Indians resisted and the conflict between settlers and the tribes lasted for almost 300 years. By 1671, it is estimated there were 50,000 new settlers in the colonies.

In their experience, early European explorers recognized that Indians had an occupancy status on lands similar to the European concept of landownership. In Europe, treaties settled disagreements over land ownership between countries. In the process of recovering from the revolutionary war, the new U.S. Government had to make peace with tribes at least until they recovered from the war. Each individual state government could not do that task if peace were to be effectively obtained. The process of entering into treaties initiated by the President of the United States was established. For the new US to make treaties with the tribes, the tribes needed to be sovereign nations. (This sovereignty exists today. Tribes in the United States are sovereign nations. They are on equal footing with the Federal Government, and no state may impose laws on Indian Reservations.)

The settlers initiated agreements such as the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster (a treaty between the colonies and sovereign tribes), which designated the Appalachian Mountains as the boundary between the Natives and settlers to help settle the frontier.

President George Washington recognized that Indians could affect the outcome of the American Revolution, and authorized a U.S. Indian treaty in 1778 with the Delaware tribe (a treaty between the United States and the Delawares, a sovereign Indian tribe). The colonies initiated hundreds of treaties that were largely ignored by settlers as the settlers spread out onto Indian land. The tribes were exposed to the horrible effects of European alcohol and European diseases. Some Indian tribes fought to preserve their landholdings; however, U.S. armies defeated these forces.

Forced Removal: 1820–1860

President Thomas Jefferson was one of the first advocates of a policy to relocate eastern Indian tribes across the Mississippi to the Great Plains or designated Indian Country. In 1830, the Indian Removal Act eliminated land rights for Indians in the east and mandated

their relocation to the west of the Mississippi. Some tribes reluctantly moved. Others resisted and faced battles. The “Trail of Tears” refers to the forced removal of approximately 60,000 members of several southeastern Indian tribes to what is now Oklahoma.¹⁴ The Trail of Tears also refers to the forced march of 15,000 Cherokee natives to the Oklahoma Indian Country in the winter of 1838-39, during which some 4,000 died along the way due to exposure, disease, and starvation.¹⁵ The west also had its share of incidents as California miners and settlers murdered Indians to secure their lands. The Indian tribes, who lived off the land and existed primarily by hunting, fishing, and gathering, suffered severely when their lands were stolen.

Land and Immigrant Rush: 1860–1900

After the Civil War, railroad development and the discovery of the expansive natural resources, mineral wealth, and huge territories drew millions of land-hungry settlers west of the Mississippi. Gold seekers were finding their livelihoods and were extremely resistant to Indian presence. These new “immigrants” to the west viewed American Indians as a barrier to their progress and many wars took place. The U.S. ignored some of their treaties and forced some tribes to give up their lands. Indian tribes found themselves in a huge struggle to survive. The U.S. Army established forts and used force to subdue tribes in the Great Plains and the Southwest.

The Dawes General Allotment Act (25 U.S.C. 331), passed in 1887, authorized the U.S. government to eliminate the rights of Indians to hold their lands in common as a tribe. Tribal lands on reservations were partitioned into sections or private parcels with each adult member allotted 80 to 160 acres. If any land remained after the allotment process, it was sold to settlers. As a result of this act, some 80 million acres of Indian lands were transferred to private non-Indian ownership.¹⁶

Displaced Natives, the Termination and the Self-determination Eras: 1900–2000

As a result of the Dawes General Allotment Act, more than 100 reservations were created and Indians lost almost 90 million acres of their land. Over the past century, Native lands, which had already been reduced to all lands west of the Appalachian Mountains, are now reservations comprising less than 4 percent of the continental U.S.¹⁷ Some tribes are earning money from their casinos and have bought back some of their land.

The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) in 1934 (25 U.S.C. § 461-479), ended the forced land allotments and increased the power of tribal governments. This legislation encouraged Indians to re-establish their cultural heritage, prohibited new land allotments and promoted tribal self-government¹⁸ by encouraging tribes to adopt constitutions that would be voted on by their membership as government documents and to form federally chartered corporations. Congress and the Department of the Interior needed tribal

¹⁴ Source, National Geographic Poster, What is Indian Country

¹⁵ See generally : National Historic Trail, The Cherokee Trail of Tears, <http://www.rosecity.net/tears/trail/tearsnht.html>, www.NativeAmericanonline.com,

¹⁶ FS Resource book, Major Statutes of Indian Affairs and Natural Resources

¹⁷ Source: Native American Reservations, Poster, www.NativeAmericanonline.com ISDN# 1-881933-11-3

¹⁸ The traditional form of Tribal government was replaced by a form the Federal government thought was more appropriate.

governments¹⁹ with whom they could conduct business. The Indian Reorganization Act served this purpose.

The Termination Era policy was issued through House Concurrent Resolution 108, in 1953. Under this policy, Indians' status as government wards ended. Congress terminated the independent government status of some tribes. Terminated tribes were then subject to state laws and their lands were sold to non-Indians. Eventually, Congress terminated over 100 tribes. Under this new Indian policy American Indians would assume all the responsibilities of full citizenship.²⁰

Congress has since restored Federally Recognized tribal status to most of the tribes terminated in the 1950s. Many of these tribes have been restored with their treaty rights intact, but the land base that existed at the time of termination has not been restored.

A major event between the “Termination” and “Self-Determination” eras was the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 (25 USC §§ 1301-03) § 1301). This act extended most of the protection of the Bill of Rights to individual tribal members. This action was taken because the civil rights protection of the U.S. Constitution itself did not apply to Indian tribes.

Congress passed much legislation during the 70s and 80s to support Indian Tribes' rights. Important legislation includes: Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (Public Law 93-658; 25 USC 450 *et seq.*), Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. §1901-1963), American Indian Religious Freedoms Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. §1996) and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-601). It also passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).²¹

In a 1996 lawsuit against the Department of the Interior, Native Americans and Alaska Natives have sought a full accounting of all funds from allotted lands being held in federal trust. The struggle is not over.²²

¹⁹ It is important to note that the Tribes already had a system of governance, however, the Federal government wished for a form of government that they felt was more capable.

²⁰ http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/native_voices/native_voices.cfm

²¹ The Rights of Indians and Tribes; Stephen L. Pevar, October 2002 Working Effectively with Alaska Natives, NRCS 2004, Working Effectively with American Indians, NRCS 2004.

²² National Geographic Poster, Indian Country

Appendix V

Demographics of American Indians and Alaska Natives

The following material, unless otherwise noted, has been adapted from the *FS National Resource Book on American Indian and Alaska Native Relations, April 1997*, USDA Forest Service and *The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2000*, issued February 2002, US Census Bureau, Department of Commerce.

American Indian and Alaska Native tribes have a land base of approximately 156,200 square miles. Tribal landholdings and their jurisdictional reach over those lands can vary widely. Some federally recognized tribes exist that have no land. The states containing the most Indian Land are Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. The Navajo reservation contains approximately 15 million acres of land in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah.

There are currently **561 federally recognized Tribes including 229 Alaska Native Regional and Village Corporations.**²³ About half of the American Indian and Alaska Native population lives on or near reservations or Indian communities, and the other half lives in urban areas. Some reservations are 100 percent tribal trust lands and others are entirely owned by individuals.

- 44 million acres are tribal trust lands
- 11 million acres are individually owned

This represents an increase of over 4 million acres since 1980, because American Indian and Alaska Native landholdings are increasing as lost territories are reacquired. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) (43 USC 1601) resulted in the Alaska Natives acquiring another 44 million acres not included in the above figures. With the advent of Indian casinos, some tribes are earning money to buy back former tribal lands. Approximately 4.2 percent of the land area in the U.S. belongs to American Indian and Alaska Native groups.

Indian Nation Land and Resources

Historically, American Indians were able to occupy lands until there was an economic or political interest, such as the discovery of gold in South Dakota, or the discovery of oil in Oklahoma. As you see in the History and Transition section, most of the 500-year history of Indians and the U.S. Government has shown a struggle over land and resources, broken treaties, and unfair treatment.

Indian trust lands contain a diversity of resources. The tribes' once desolate reservations have now become valuable because of minerals, pristine resources, and urban locations.²⁴

- 44.0 million acres for range and grazing
- 5.3 million acres for commercial forest

²³ BIA, Federal Register listing

²⁴ Note that these figures do not include the 44 million acres of Alaska Native lands.

- 2.5 million acres for crop land
- 4 percent of U.S. oil and gas reserves
- 40 percent of U.S. uranium deposits
- 30 percent of Western coal reserves
- \$2 billion in trust royalty payments

Indian Population, 4.1 million

Of the total U.S. population, 2.5 million people or 0.9 percent reported to be American Indian. An additional 1.6 million people reported to be American Indian and Alaska Native in combination with one or more other races. This is **1.5 percent** of the total U.S. population. The 2000 Census included additional categories for respondents to self identify one or more races, therefore the combination interpretation. Between the Census of April 2000, and July 2002, the Nation's population increased some 103,000 people identified to be American Indian or Alaska Native alone or in combination with other races. During this period, the Indian population increased at a rate of 2.4 percent or closely the same increase rate as the U.S population overall.

The ten states with the highest populations of American Indians are: California, Oklahoma, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, New York, Washington, North Carolina, Michigan, and Alaska. The only other state with a population of more than 100,000 American Indians is Florida. These top eleven states combined contain 44 percent of the American Indian population.

There are **3.1 million** American Indians and Alaska Natives who claim membership in a specific tribe. The four largest groups of American Indians are Cherokee, Navajo, Choctaw and Sioux. Cherokee is largest, with a population of 729,533 who are Cherokee alone or in combination with one or more other races or tribes. In addition to these large groups, other American Indian tribes with more than 50,000 members are Chippewa, Apache, Blackfeet, Iroquois, Pueblo, and Latin American Indians. Eskimo is the largest tribal grouping alone or in combination for Alaska Natives, followed by Tlingit-Haida, Alaska Athabaskan, and Aleut.

Approximately **538,300** American Indians and Alaska Natives live on reservations or other trust lands. Of this number, 175,200 reside on Navajo Nation reservation and trust lands, which span portions of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. This is the most populous reservation.

Almost **66** percent of American Indians and Alaska natives live in metropolitan areas, which is the lowest of any race group. The greatest concentration of urban Indians, about 60,000, is found in the Los Angeles - Long Beach area of California.

Age Distribution

According to the 2000 Census, there are 1.4 million American Indian and Alaska Native children under 18. Children comprise almost one-third of this race group.

Approximately **292,000** American Indians and Alaska Natives are age 65 and over. This age group comprises 7 percent of the American Indian and Alaska Native population.

Education

Approximately **14** percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives age 25 and over have earned at least a bachelor's degree.

Approximately **75** percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives age 25 and over, have at least a high school diploma.

Approximately **4** percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives age 25 and over have an advanced degree (i.e., master's, Ph.D., medical, or law).

Homeownership

The number of American Indian and Alaska native households who own their own home is **55 percent** of their population.

Language

Approximately **381,000** people still speak their native North American language. Of these languages, Navajo is the most common.

These valuable facts about the Native Americans and Alaska Natives will help to prepare volunteers while they develop future partnerships. Please refer to the stories councils have submitted on successful projects with tribal partners.

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