

American Indian Liaison Office

Mission: To improve relationships between American Indian tribes, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and the National Park Service through consultation, outreach, technical assistance, education, and advisory services.

Created in February 1995, the American Indian Liaison Office reports to the Director of the National Park Service. Staff include Patricia L. Parker, chief; Emogene Bevitt, program analyst; Ronnie Emery, historian [on detail]; Leslie Harmon, administrative clerk.

The American Indian Liaison Office developed a new National Park Service workshop on the “Foundations of Indian Law and Policy” to provide information necessary to improve relationships between the National Park Service and American Indian tribal governments. Over 350 superintendents and other program managers have taken the two-day workshop since 1997.

National Park Service relationships with Indian tribes are increasing in complexity in response to new statutes, executive orders, and administrative policies.

Indian tribes seek greater involvement in NPS planning and management decisions, and desire a greater tribal presence in units of the national park system that were once tribal lands.

The number of professionally staffed tribal natural and cultural resource agencies have increased over the past decade, presenting more opportunities for cooperative resource conservation between tribal governments and nearby parks.

Program Objectives

- Assist National Park Service field and program managers to carry out relationships with American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native groups on a government-to-government basis
- Educate National Park Service field and program managers concerning Indian Self-Determination, Tribal Self-Governance, and effective means of working with tribes.
- Help ensure that American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian concerns are considered in policies, regulations, and programs that affect them.
- Assist and promote American Indian participation in carrying out National Park Service policies, programs, and activities.
- Work with other National Park Service Indian offices, Indian offices in other agencies, tribes, intertribal organizations and other National Park Service partners in pursuing the above objectives.

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