

USDA Conservation and Tribal Engagement



Tribal Perspective

○ American Indian Historical Perspective

1. Manifest Destiny
2. Discovery, Conquest and Treaty-Making (1532-1828)
3. Removal and Relocation (1828-1887)
4. Allotment and Assimilation (1887-1928)
5. Reorganization and Self-Government (1928-1945)
6. Termination (1945-1961)
7. Self-Determination (1961-Present)

Federal Responsibility and Power over Indian Affairs

1. Roots of Federal Responsibility
2. The Sources of Federal Power

The Process - Our approach to Tribal Conservation discussion

• Phase 1

1:1 Engagement

Tribes are key to the success of Conservation efforts in the United States.

Initiate a conversation among a small group of Tribal Leaders & Tribal Technical Experts

Listen

• Phase 2

Comments & Feedback

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• Phase 3

Next Steps

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Tribal Communities to discuss the following topics:

- To learn the purpose and process of Public Lands Conservation efforts
- To learn from one another and learn from Tribes what they see as opportunities to collaborate on protecting lands and other natural resources that are important to Tribes and to NGO's
- To emphasize the significance of Tribal involvement going forward in Conservation efforts and convey ways Tribes can be involved and stay connected
- Strengthen tribal engagement, consultation, capacity building, implementation, and process to ensure Conservation efforts are responsive and engaging with Tribal Communities.
- What should Tribes expect to be engaged with NGO's, Conservation community and Advocacy groups in helping shape the planning process that will be used to develop the management plans for Conservation efforts
- Tribes need assistance in Funding, Technical Assistance, Training and Capacity Building to address all of the asks of NGO's conservation goals and efforts

Words of Wisdom

“Our communities deserve fresh air to breathe, clean water to drink, and a livable planet, but right now inaction on climate change is putting everything at risk, particularly in communities of color.”

Rep. Haaland, Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, (February 7, 2020).

“It was definitely an honor to be representing Mojave in that moment, but his knowledge of Avi Kwa Ame and talking about it as soon as he walked up... there was no need for reminder there, he knew exactly what was taking place,” he said on “[ICT News with Aliyah Chavez](#).”

Avi Kwa Ame, also known colloquially as Spirit Mountain, is a 450,000-acre site about 80 miles south of Las Vegas located between Lake Mead National Recreation Area and the Nevada and California border.

Williams said Avi Kwa Ame is the place of the Mojave people’s creation and spiritual connection as well for the nine other Yuman-speaking tribes along the Colorado River, as well as the Hopi and Chemehuevi Paiute tribes.

USDA Resources and Conservation Programs

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is NRCS' flagship conservation program that helps farmers, ranchers and forest landowners integrate conservation into working lands.

PROGRAM

[Conservation Innovation Grants](#)

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is a competitive program that supports the development of new tools, approaches, practices, and technologies to further natural resource conservation on private lands.

PROGRAM

[Conservation Stewardship Program](#)

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation.

USDA Resources and Conservation Programs cont.

NRCS and American Indians share a common interest in conserving and managing the natural resources of our earth. To help meet our goal of providing high quality conservation products and services to American Indian operators, offices are located on both [the Southern Ute Indian Tribe](#) and [the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe](#) located in southwestern Colorado. NRCS is committed to providing assistance to American Indian producers and tribes in planning for and managing natural resources.

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) includes provisions that address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially disadvantaged, beginning, limited resource, and veteran farmers and ranchers (“[historically underserved producers](#)”). The 2018 Farm Bill provides for voluntary participation, offers incentives, and focuses on equity in accessing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs and services.

USDA and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Enters Historic Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Agreement to Support Working Lands Conservation

CREP Provides Critical Support to Landowners for Sound Conservation Practices

HURON, S.D., April 14, 2023— The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe is partnering with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help conserve, maintain and improve grassland productivity, reduce soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat through the [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#) (CREP). It is one of three Tribal Nations in the Great Plains to enter CREP agreements with USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) to enroll eligible grassland, pastureland, and other agricultural lands within the boundaries of their reservations in this conservation program. The Oglala and Rosebud Sioux Tribes finalized their CREP agreements last November.

“We are proud to have the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe as part of this historic milestone for USDA, helping us to deploy climate-smart agriculture and conservation in the Great Plains,” said Steve Dick, FSA State Executive Director in South Dakota. “This agreement highlights the vital contribution Native communities make to our country’s agriculture and conservation efforts.”

This partnership with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, along with those with the Oglala and Rosebud Sioux Tribes, are the first-ever CREP agreements in partnership with Tribal Nations—reflecting priorities and goals of USDA to broaden the scope and reach of its voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs to engage underserved communities.



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