

Cultural Sensitivity Training: *Opportunities to Connect with Native American Communities*



Presented by

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&

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U.S. EPA Community Involvement Training Conference

Seattle, Wash.

August 20, 2009



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Defining Native American

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- Definition:
 - *n.* A member of any of the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere.
 - *n.* Any member of the peoples living in North or South America before the Europeans arrived.
 - *adj.* of or pertaining to American Indians or their culture or languages

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Defining Native American

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- **Usage Note:** Many Americans have come to prefer *Native American* over *Indian* both as a term of respect and as a corrective to the famous misnomer bestowed on the peoples of the Americas by a geographically befuddled Columbus. There are solid arguments for this preference. *Native American* eliminates any confusion between indigenous American peoples and the inhabitants of India, making it the clear choice in many official contexts. It is also historically accurate, despite the insistence by some that Indians are no more native to America than anyone else since their ancestors are assumed to have migrated here from Asia. But one sense of *native* is “being a member of the original inhabitants of a particular place,” and Native Americans’ claim to being the original inhabitants of the Americas is unchallenged. -Accuracy and precision aside, however, the choice between these two terms is often made as a matter of principle. For many, *Native American* is the only choice for expressing respect toward America’s indigenous peoples; *Indian* is seen as wrong and offensive. For others, the former smacks of bureaucracy and the manipulation of language for political purposes while the latter is the natural English term, its inaptness made irrelevant by long use. Fortunately, this controversy appears to have subsided somewhat in recent years, and it is now common to find the two terms used interchangeably in the same piece of writing. Furthermore, the issue has never been particularly divisive between Indians and non-Indians. While generally welcoming the respectful tone of *Native American*, most Indian writers have continued to use the older name at least as often as the newer one. -*Native American* and *Indian* are not exact equivalents when referring to the aboriginal peoples of Canada and Alaska. *Native American*, the broader term, is properly used of all such peoples, whereas *Indian* is customarily used of the northern Athabaskan and Algonquian peoples in contrast to the Eskimos, Inuits, and Aleuts. *Alaska Native* (or less commonly *Native Alaskan*) is also properly used of all indigenous peoples residing in Alaska. See Usage Note at American Indian. See Usage Note at First Nation. See Usage Note at Indian.

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Defining Native American

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- Synonyms:
 - American Indian
 - First Nations
 - Indian
 - Indigenous American
- Preferences:
 - Use individual tribal affiliations whenever possible
 - Makah
 - Nisqually
 - Quileute
 - Suquamish



Indian Country



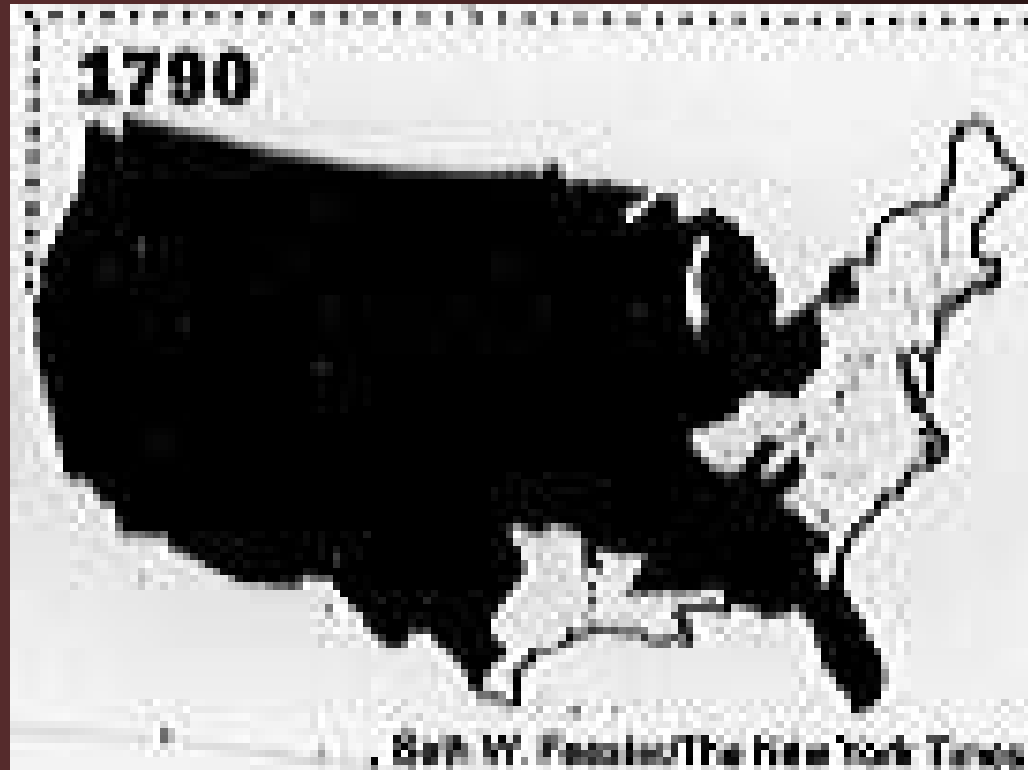
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Native America” 1491



Indian Country

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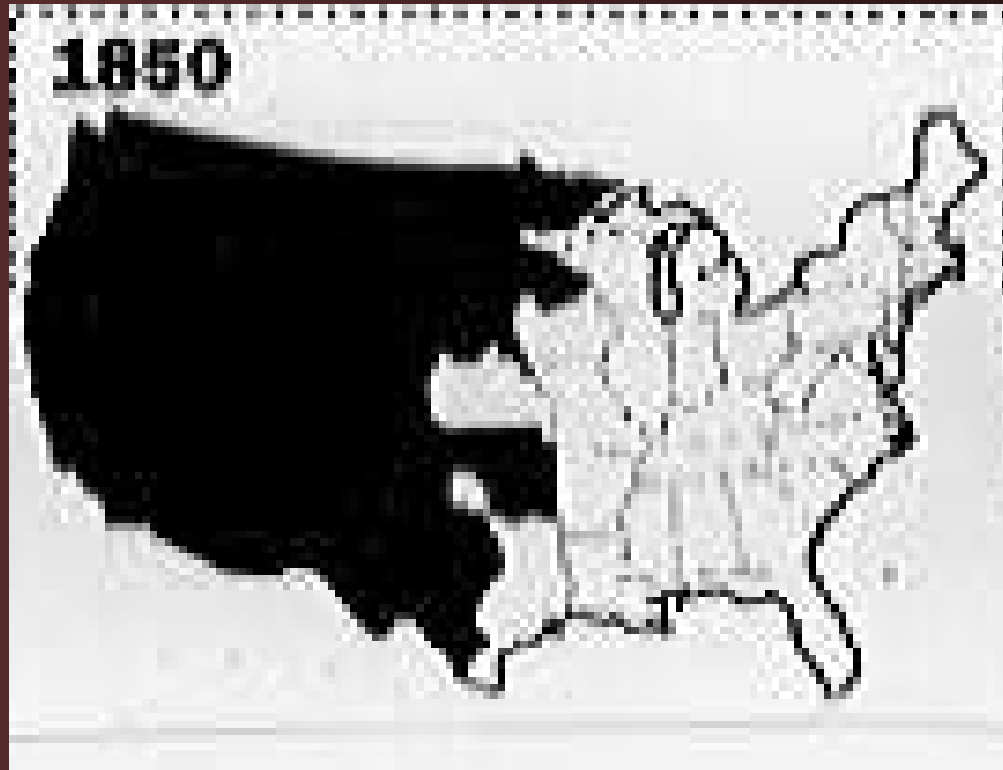
Native America” 1790

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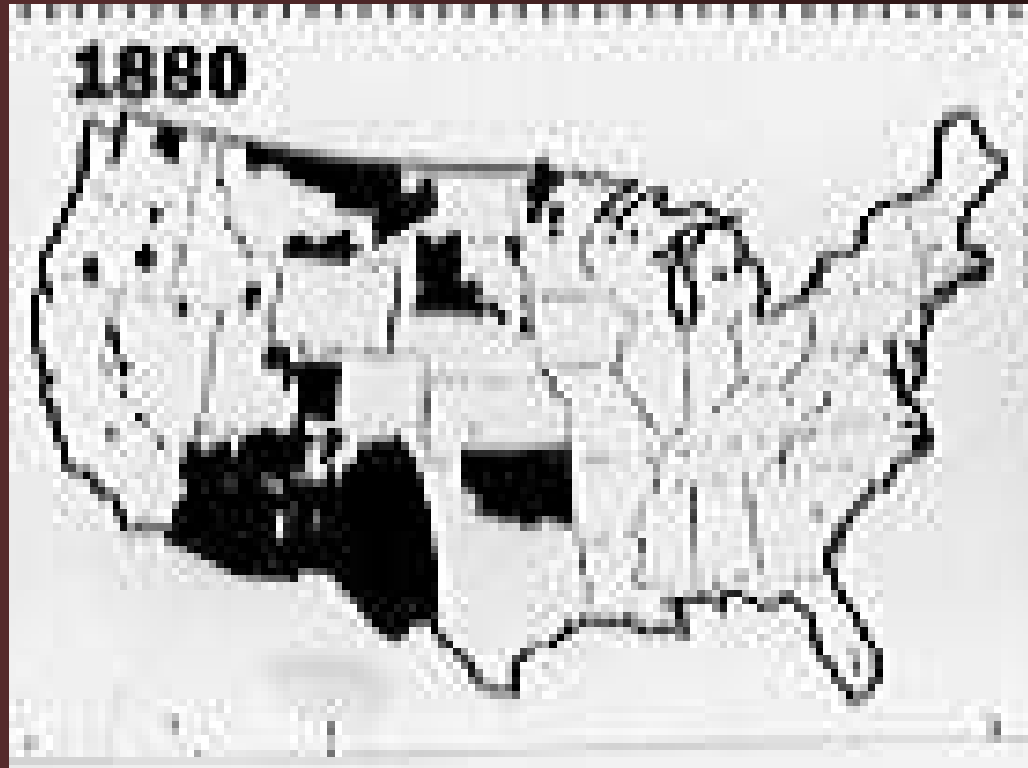
Native America” 1850

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Native America” 1880

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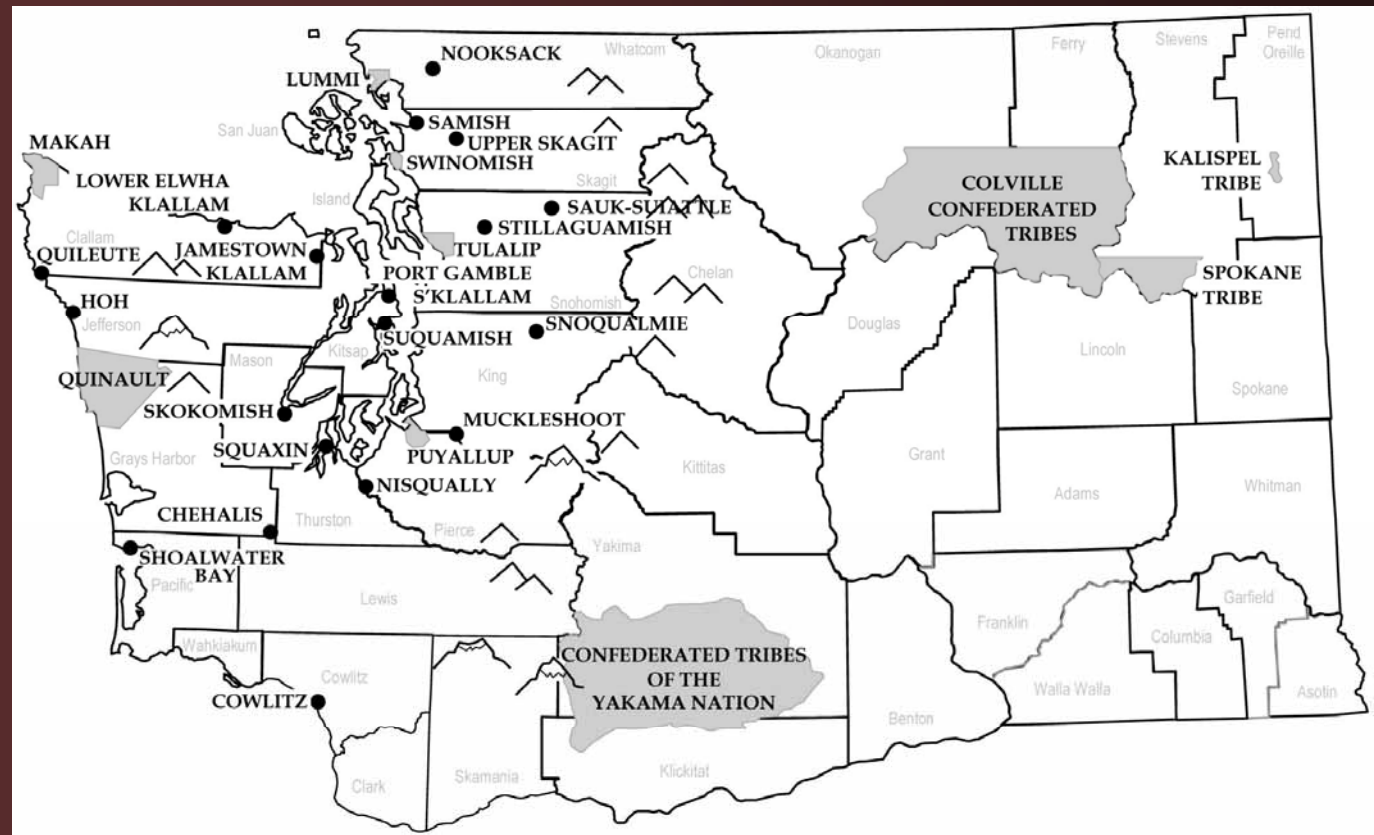
**“Native America”
Today**



Indian Country

- “Native America” today in Washington State

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By the numbers

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- National Numbers
 - Approx. 2,374,222 Native Americans in 2007
 - Less than 1% of population
 - Less than 3% of land base
 - 562 federally recognized tribes nationwide

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By the numbers

- California, Arizona and Oklahoma have the three largest populations of Native Americans.

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	<u>California</u>	<u>Arizona</u>	<u>Oklahoma</u>
American Indian/Alaska Native Population	423,238	297,422	285,764
Percentage of State Population	1.1%	4.7%	7.8%
Percentage of Tribal Land	4%	28%	10%
Federally Recognized Tribes	106	22	37



By the numbers

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- Washington State Numbers
 - Washington has the eighth largest population of Native Americans by state
 - 105,515 Native Americans in 2007
 - Approx. 1.6% of the total state population
 - Up to 30% of state land base
 - 29 distinct federally recognized tribes and 7 non-federally recognized tribes call Washington home
 - Washington State does not have state-recognized tribes



History isn't a thing of the past

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- History is contemporary
 - Things that happened in the yesteryears are very real and vital today
 - You are accountable for promises made by your predecessors
 - You have to overcome an automatic distrust for government

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Historic Trauma

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- Collective emotional and psychological injury
- Over the life span and across generations
- Resulting from a cataclysmic history of genocide, imprisonment, forced assimilation, etc.
- Effects of historic trauma:
 - Unsettled inter-generational trauma
 - Depression and high mortality
 - Increase of alcohol abuse, child abuse, domestic violence and other social ills

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Social Construct and Governance in Native America

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- Each tribe has distinctive social and political systems
- Social: Family, clan, band, village
- Government structure: Village alliances, councils, chiefs, presidents
- Time and history created complex systems of governance
 - Today many tribes have central, regional and local levels of government, much like other modern political systems
 - Councils, business committees, tribal administrations, social services and court systems

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Traditional Peacemaking and Problem Solving in Native America

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- Based on a holistic philosophy
- Learned primarily by example and through the oral teachings of tribal elders
- Connects everyone involved with a problem or conflict on a continuum
- A mending process for renewal of damaged personal and communal relationships, including both victims and offenders
- Offenders remain an integral part of the community because of their important role in defining the boundaries and consequences of behavior



Traditional Peacemaking and Problem Solving in Native America

■ Differences in “justice paradigms”

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American Justice	Indigenous Justice
Vertical	Holistic
Written statutory law	Oral customary law
Separation of powers	Law and justice are an integrated part of the whole
Separation of church and state	The spiritual realm is invoked
Adversarial and conflict oriented	Builds trusting relationships to promote healing
Isolated behavior	Reviews problem in its entirety
Limits participants	Inclusive of all affected* individuals
Punitive	Corrective

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Decision Making and Thought Processes

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- Holistic
- Egalitarianism
- “Multi-logue”
- Reaching consensus



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Overcoming the barriers

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- Time is relative
 - Scales of time are different
 - Westerners think about “Hurrying Up!”
 - Native Americans value contemplation and thorough exploration of ideas
 - Learn to be patient
 - Have respect for both points of views
 - Sometimes last-minute things come up and one just has to plan for the unexpected, as much as possible

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Overcoming the barriers

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- Establishing trust and rapport is the key to success
 - Hands-on approach
 - Face-to-face interaction

- Be cognizant
 - Listen and understand
 - Don't oversell or make hollow promises
 - Sharing food is a sign of respect

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Overcoming the barriers

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- Keys to effective partnerships
 - Recognize tribal governments as sovereign entities
 - Acknowledge that tribal interests are not limited to tribal lands
 - Beware of stereotyping – on both sides
 - Communication style and character are a very significant aspect of culture
 - Tribal communities are not homogenous

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Cultural Practices and Appropriate Protocols

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- Suspicion of outsiders
 - Overcome the big city mentality
 - Earn trust
 - Dress casually
 - Shop locally

- Cultural practices
 - Time urgency
 - Interpretation
 - Photography
 - Irreverent humor



Cultural Practices and Appropriate Protocols

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- Tribal governments are sovereign
 - Same respect as other elected officials
 - Multiple layers of government function
 - More comfortable with federal than state, counties or municipalities
 - Tribal members are also citizens of their respective city/county

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Cultural Practices and Appropriate Protocols

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- Choose your media
 - Radio is huge
 - Newspapers work, but most are weeklies
 - Local TV is almost non-existent
 - Fliers at community centers are key
- Hands-on, face-to-face interactions are best
- Communicate through multi-faceted means
- Information should be translated into understandable, common language



Ensuring Accountability is the Lasting Legacy

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- Use your most powerful tool
 - You have a voice at the table
 - Remind the agency, proponents or planning team about what you've heard from the community and from stakeholders ~ it's your job!



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ITCA / Gila River Indian Community CARE Project

Maureen King, MS

Tribal Air Quality Program Coordinator

Brief overview of ITCA

- Established in 1952 to provide a united voice for tribal governments located in the State of Arizona to address common issues of concerns
- 1975, established a private, non-profit

public policy development

- 20 member Tribes in Arizona

Mission Statement

- The purpose of the ITCA is to provide the member tribes with the means for action on matters that affect them collectively and individually, to promote tribal sovereignty and to strengthen tribal governments.
- The Environmental Quality department works with tribal environmental programs in Arizona to assist with important capacity building services. The Gila River Indian Community Staff



CARE Project

- Work with the Gila River Indian Community to:
 - Educate the Community about the routes of exposure of environmental toxics in the environment
 - Address Community concerns and give the Community a voice in what they see as important issues in their environment
 - Prioritize the risks according to Community input
 - Which issue does the Community want to address based upon a workable project.

Challenges Encountered

- Lengthy process
 - Council meetings, Sub-group meetings, District meetings (7), Events in all 7 districts
- Rural, wide spread area
 - Lack of transportation was a factor
- Project difficult to explain to average Community

performing this work already :

- Lack of long term project involvement
 - Always new faces made it difficult to capture everyone's ideas in final decision making

Unique Tribal Governmental Relations to Community

- All decisions based upon Community's decisions
- Government serves Community in a real sense
- Must involve whole Community in all projects and decisions

Working Model in Indian Country

- Consultation and Communication
 - Essential Early on and Throughout Project
 - Include ENTIRE Community
- Recognize Differences and Uniqueness of Tribes
 - History, Governance, Culture
- Decision Making
 - Tribal Councils
 - Consider benefit and impact to their People and Land
- Patience
 - Tribes Operate at a Different Pace than Mainstream Society

Involvement at All Levels

- Community driven project
- Difficult to get the Community Members to commit to the project
 - Transportation issues
 - Time issues
- Impacts
 - Had to find creative ways to encourage Community to get involved
 - Clean Green Events (made non-toxic household cleaners)
 - Food is important

information from each opportunity as possible

- Benefits
 - Creativity spurred more Community involvement
 - Community began to embrace the project, took time and effort
- continue this project and apply for Level II

Understanding Tribal Communities

- Community has higher stakes involved in environment of Native Communities
- Elders have an important voice in all Community affairs
 - Important historical outlook of issues
 - Had to take time to get elders fully on board with project before could proceed
 - Cultural connections to environment
- Issues are felt for the longer term
 - Low mobility

An Outsider on the Rez

Jason Hurd
Consulting

Project Highlights

- Sanders Traffic Interchange
 - Working with local community to plan a new traffic interchange
 - Required agreements between multiple agencies/governments
- Agreement Seeking
 - Start at local level and work up
 - Multiple types of stakeholders
 - Multiple types/levels of agencies
 - Navigating tribal government structures
 - Ensure local-level concerns remain in discussion

Project Highlights

- Sanders Port of Entry
 - Planning a new port of entry on tribal lands
 - Included transferring some right of way from tribe to state
- Land issues – Right of Way
 - Proactively address local-level concerns
 - Years in the making, but serious concerns today

Project Highlights

- Fredonia-Vermilion Cliffs Scenic Road Corridor Management Plan
 - Involvement-intensive effort
- Multiple tribes affected by a single project
 - Agreement is not always possible
 - Not always appropriate to have everyone at the table at the same time
 - Acknowledge differences
 - Validate perspectives

Tips for Outsiders

- Get used to not knowing what's going on
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Be yourself – don't go Native
- Don't get hung up on the "little things"

Tips for Outsiders

- Ask, ask and ask again – and again
- No response does not equal no interest
- Develop contacts and be a resource
- Be respectful of inner-tribal processes
- Help other outsiders

Tips for Outsiders

- Be aware of who you are and where you are coming from
- Be aware of what you represent
- Be clear about what you can/cannot promise and what your role is
- But, be responsive about what you can do

Tips for Outsiders

- Tribal communities do not come with baggage – you do
- We, as government representatives, are responsible for helping to mend the poor relationships of the past with every promise kept – a long process, but we are all part of it