

The 2009

# Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau



**“An Indigenous perspective on leadership, sustainability and cultural survival”**

Presented by the Native America Program of the Grand Canyon Trust  
With support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Museum of Northern Arizona  
Colton House  
Flagstaff, Arizona

**November 8-10, 2009**

## GRAND CANYON TRUST



Dear Conference Participants and Interested Individuals,

We are proud to present the summary of the 2009 Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau Gathering, with the theme of “An Indigenous perspective on leadership, sustainability and cultural survival.” We encourage you to read and use this document in your future projects. A good share of the credit for the success of the gathering goes to each of you as participants

Those of us who have ancestors in this region are especially grateful to have shared in such heartfelt conversations. It was thoughtful of you to add your personal observations. Your contribution also gave a great boost to our efforts to recruit additional members, and observers in attendance also were a great presence at the meetings. Thank you very much for an enlightening and stimulating presentation.

Individual comments were exactly what were needed for us to envision land protection that has identity and meaning to Tribal peoples. Your discussion-group presentation was the highlight of the conference.

Your contributions will help the Grand Canyon Trust incorporate Native American perspectives in our efforts to protect Indigenous lands and develop future strategy. We have already begun to implement some of your suggestions, and we are confident they will improve our process to protect and restore the Colorado Plateau and promote a region where generations of people and all of nature can thrive in harmony.

This report also includes the evaluation summaries for the workshop(s) you conducted.

Again, thank you for your participation.



Tony Skrelunas, Native America Program Director

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**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

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Dale Phillips	Cocopah
Rex Tilousi	Havasupai
Stanley Manakaja	Havasupai
Alberta Manakaja	Havasupai
Roland Manakaja	Havasupai
Carletta Tilousi	Havasupai
James Uqualla	Havasupai
Dawa Taylor	Hopi
Benny Shrum	Hualapai
Loretta Jackson-Kelley	Hualapai
Drake Havatone	Hualapai
Vivienne Jake	Kaibab Paiute
Brittanni Wero	Kaibab Paiute
Melissa Nelson	Kaibab Paiute
Sunny Dooley	Navajo Nation
Glenmore Begaye	Navajo Nation
Marjorie Borst	Southern Ute
Lloyd Arrive	Uintah & Ouray- Northern Ute
Ernest House	Ute Mountain Ute
Norman Lopez	Ute Mountain
Phil Stago	White Mountain Apache
Octavius Seowtewa	Zuni Nation
Larson Gasper	Zuni Nation
Jim Enote	Zuni Nation

**Supporters**

Sara Presler	Mayor, City of Flagstaff
Robert Breunig	Director, Museum of Northern Arizona
Rick Moore	Associate Director, Grand Canyon Trust

**Facilitators**

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Enei Begaye	Navajo Nation/ Tohono O'odham
Gabriel Yaiva	Navajo/Hopi Nation

**Gathering Organization**

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Emily Anderson	Grand Canyon trust
Adrienne Sanchez	Grand Canyon Trust

**Conference Photography, Note-takers**

Karen Francis	Writer-Navajo Nation
Hertha Woody	Navajo/Hopi Nation
Nikki Cooley	Navajo Nation
Corey Begay	Artist-Navajo Nation

### **Gathering's Art Interpretation**

This art piece is part of the collection of interpretive works created during the Inter-tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau. The piece, a painting on canvas, was created by an inspiring art student attending Coconino Community College, Corey Begay, Navajo, from Cedar Springs, Arizona. He



completed this art piece as a way of interpreting the two-day conversation gathering.

The background colors are dark shades because many stories told during the gathering were dark feelings of heartache and sadness. Many attendees spoke of current issues that taunt their Native communities, and their feelings that immediate action is needed before Native nations of the region once again suffer from environmental impacts, social impacts, and physical health impacts.

The two-tone heart represents half heartache emotion, while the red color represents the hope of the attendees in the outcome of the gathering. The dragonfly represents the animal people and their connection to the land. The dragonfly plays a neutral role in many of the oral stories of

Native tribes across the Colorado Plateau. It represents goodness and balance between the plant life and animal life.

The center image of the tree represents the causes of an unhealthy balance between mankind and nature. The tree sits unhealthy because of the disturbed state the land is in right now. At the base of the tree the ground sits unstable, which represents the desecration that is going on through coal mining, uranium mining, and ground water pumping. The sheep image is Corey's signature image, which represents his culture and traditions from which sheep are considered the way of life. Corey's art piece is part of the Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau collection. This collection includes

dialogue notes, stories, art pieces, and pictures from the ten Native American tribes and twenty representatives.

Through his unique talents and technique, Corey was able to interpret the Inter-Tribal gathering in a whole new dimension.

**Executive Summary**  
**Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau**  
**November 8-10, 2009**

**Gathering Process: Vision, Selection of Participants, Meeting Process and Outcome**

Using processes that have been effective for a very long time, Native people of the Colorado Plateau created the story of this fantastic land and their Tribes, ensuring they would live in harmony with this land, environment, and neighbors. From generation to generation, oral history, teachings, natural laws, songs, art, and taboos were passed down to ensure harmony and cohesiveness of the Tribal group.

There was a process to create these teachings. A family or community group was made aware by a messenger of a problem. The problem may have been identified by careful observation by the Tribal observers. A gathering would be called to bring together several responsible and knowledgeable representatives from throughout the Tribe to discuss, recommend, and develop a solution. The solution had to be crafted in a way that could be shared with Tribal members – thus song, teaching, law, and art were the mediums used.

It was a high honor to be selected by one's community to participate in a gathering. Only those who lived an honorable life and followed the teachings of the Tribe were asked. After selection, the participant was prepared in various ways depending on the issue to be resolved. The elders would talk and recommend appropriate courses of action. Various prayers, offerings, and sings were conducted so the person would be highly respectful and mentally/physically/spiritually sound to discuss the issue.

Once at the gathering, a highly honorable space was provided. A family or community would host the gathering. They would prepare long and hard, making a meeting space, ensuring adequate food, calling on relatives to help with cooking, inviting elders to ensure honor and respect, starting the session with proper prayers and offering, and ensuring a great gathering. Representatives would arrive with the intent of working several days to make progress and solve the matter. They camped in the evenings. They had side discussions. And a facilitator could be used.

The meeting was conducted with high honor. Traditional rules of respect, honor, and integrity were used. Songs were sung. Drawings and art were created to depict a solution. Various experts would be

called in, perhaps even from another Tribe. Full understanding of the problem and solution was the goal.

Eventually, the gathering resulted in a solution. The results were shared in full detail with each representative's community members. There was honor in the entire process because it ensured the society, Tribe, and people's survival.

### **The Gathering for the Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau**

The Grand Canyon Trust and Tribal partners followed the old ways of honor and respect in organizing the first Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau held in Flagstaff, Arizona, in 2009. Two culturally knowledgeable representatives were invited from each of ten Tribes, including the Havasupai, Hopi, Hualapai, Kaibab Paiute, Navajo, Southern Ute, Uinta Ouray Ute, Ute Mountain, White Mountain Apache, Zuni, and a guest speaker from the Cocopah Tribe. Those who were invited felt highly honored and were active participants.

Many of the participants were respected artists, traditional song writers, religious leaders, story tellers or other long-time keepers of traditional knowledge. Among them were elders, former and current Tribal chairs, council delegates, and community leaders. The Tribal leaders acknowledged the value of the gathering. We also engaged writers, singers, dancers, and artists to add a truly cultural dimension to the meeting, and these participants recorded the discussion from their own perspectives. At every opportunity, from the opening reception to the closing session, dancers and singers recited the ancient rhythms.

The gathering was held at the Colton House on the campus of the Museum of Northern Arizona. The space was perfect for this meeting, offering history and sense of place, and in view of the sacred San Francisco Peaks. Traditional foods such as Native teas, corn mush, and lamb stew were eaten for nourishment.

The meeting opened on Sunday evening, November 8, 2009, with a grand reception and welcome presentations from Flagstaff Mayor Sara Presler, Museum Director Robert Breunig, and Grand Canyon Trust Associate Director Rick Moore.

On Monday morning, November 9, the meeting opened with an appropriate prayer by the representative of the White Mountain Apache. Jim Enote, member of the Grand Canyon Trust Board of Directors, gave an overview, noting that the intent of the meeting was to hear the voices of the Tribes and have that serve as a guide for future work.

The meeting was highly focused on finding out what processes worked in the past, what is currently happening, what issues these processes can be applied to, and what the group would

like to do in the future. A qualified team of Native facilitators came prepared to lead the conversation: Enei Begaye, Gabriel Yaiva, and Tony Skrelunas.

Guest presenter, Chairman Dale Phillips from the Cocopah Nation, enlightened the gathering about the efforts of his Tribe and the Tribes of the Lower Colorado River to honor traditional processes in preserving rich riparian resources.

**The conversations focused in several key areas:**

Initial conversation centered on how the culturally important teachings, stories, and values were created in the past and how they were adapted to remain relevant over time. This included exploration of unique aspects of the processes utilized by each Tribal group. The goal was to better understand how new teachings and stories appropriate to today's circumstances might arise. A number of traditional processes were identified that offer promise in developing durable teachings, stories, and values.

Using the insights gained from the first session, the group then considered how to use these traditional means to address major issues confronting Tribal communities. Ten classes of issues were identified and then condensed. Three were ultimately prioritized for immediate discussion: protection of water resources; protection of sacred sites; and promotion of health. At this point the gathering broke into three groups to more deeply consider these issues and what might be done about them.

The entire gathering reconvened with reports from the three discussion groups, which are radically abbreviated here:

1. Water – Issues: scarcity; overconsumption; costs; and contamination. Strategies: education in traditional values; Tribal involvement in assessment of springs; stronger leadership at the community level; reinvigoration of ceremonies and prayer; inter-tribal collaboration; and involvement of youth in future discussions.

2. Sacred Sites – Issues: uranium mining at Red Butte and around Grand Canyon; San Francisco Peaks snowmaking; and the Lake Powell pipeline through the Kaibab Paiute lands. Strategies: partnering with the Red Butte committee; developing inter-tribal positions on uranium mining; conducting a workshop on cultural resource law; providing resources for understanding Federal laws; sharing expertise with smaller Tribes; and additional gatherings.



3. Health – Issues: disappearance of traditional foods; diabetes; pollution; community physical/emotional/spiritual health; and food distribution systems. Strategies: reinvigorate use of traditional foods and ways of preparing them.



Image illustrates the common setting during the gathering's open discuss, Tony Skrelunas facilitating.

The final conversation centered on next steps and how to move forward with the keen insights and wisdom gained. It was widely agreed that this should be the first of a series of meetings of the diverse Tribes surrounding the Great Colorado River. Participants want to work together and with nongovernmental organization partners on the issues they identified. They also laid plans to visit each other and help smaller Tribes. They want to be engaged in planning a future gathering to build on this first meeting, incorporating many recommendations on how it can be improved. Future gatherings will be held with added scope, more preparatory information, and additional participants. The group also recommended that results be shared with their Tribal communities, colleges, and leaders.

**INTER-TRIBAL CONVERSION ON THE COLORADO PLATEAU AGENDA**  
**Colton House, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff AZ**

**Sunday, November 8, 2009**

**6:00 pm Opening Dinner Reception**

**Entertainment: Havasupai Dance Group by Alberta and Stanley Manakaja**

- **Tony Skrelunas - Overview and Introductions**
- **Welcome by Flagstaff Mayor Sara Presler**
- **Dr. Robert Breunig, CEO, Museum of Northern Arizona**
- **Rick Moore - Associate Director, Grand Canyon Trust**

**Monday, November 9, 2009**

**7:45 am Breakfast and Welcome Session**

- **Welcoming Prayer – Phil Stago, White Mountain Apache**
- **Jim Enote – Grand Canyon Trust Native America Board Chair  
Welcome and “The Zuni Art Map Project”**

**8:30 am Facilitators begin Morning Conversation**

- **Introductions**

**Inter-tribal  
Conversations  
on the Colorado  
Plateau**

- **Conversations to build the base of knowledge and sense of future directions**

**12:00 pm Lunch break and Shared Stories and Song**

**Lunch Entertainment – Lloyd Arrive, Uintah Ouray**

**1:00 pm Guest Speaker Guest Speaker – Honorable Dale Phillips – “The Cocopah Riparian Restoration Project – A model in Tradition and Honor”**

**1:30 pm Afternoon Session**

- **Group focus conversation on 3 case studies**
- **Groups report Results**

**4:30 pm Break for the afternoon**

**6:00 pm Dinner at Salsa Brava, 220 East Route 66**

**Tuesday, November 10, 2009**

**7:45 am Breakfast and Morning Session**

- **Morning Welcome and Review Prior Day Conversation**
- **Conversation towards summary, next steps and closure**

**11:30 am Closing - Jim Enote**

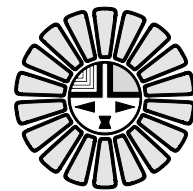
**11:45 am Closing Prayer**



**Inter-tribal  
Conversations  
on the Colorado  
Plateau**

## CONFERENCE HISTORY

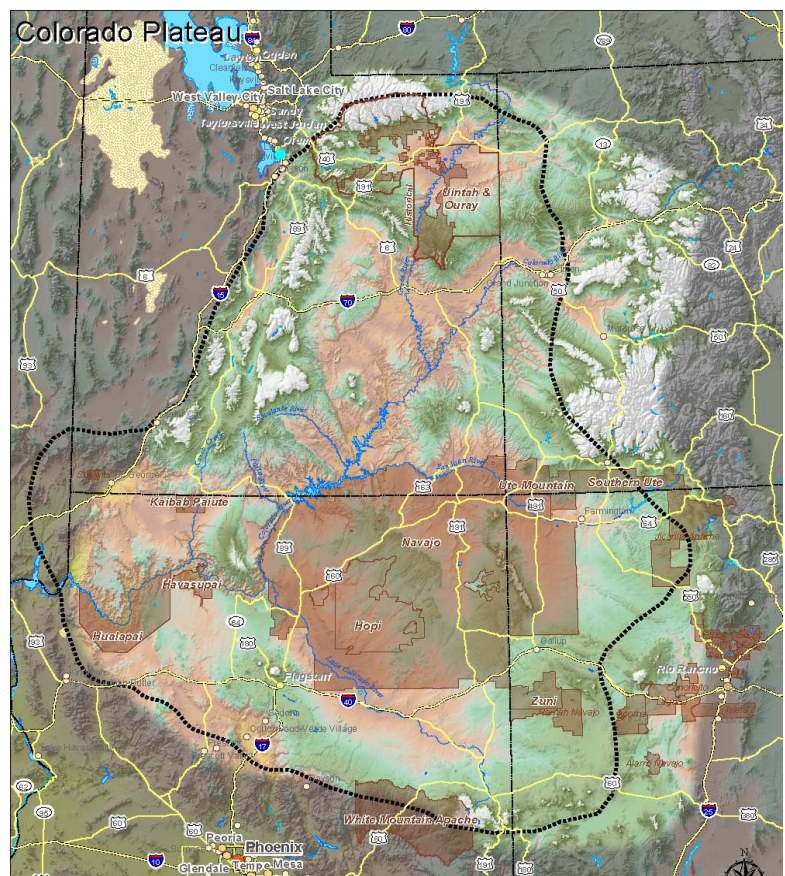
### Native American Nations on the Colorado Plateau



More than one-third of the Colorado Plateau's 120,000 square miles is Native American land. To the extent there is to be a comprehensive vision of conservation and sustainability in this region, Tribal lands and Tribal perspectives must be included in the dialogue.

Tribes have a tremendous ecological, cultural, and economic stake in the Colorado Plateau, as well as knowledge and perspectives on how to sustain it. To tap into these perspectives, we must begin building authentic relationships, including listening to and integrating the voice of Tribes. The process will not be conventional, but instead will be built around a series of recurrent, culturally appropriate interactions to build a forum for trust, listening, and planning.

Over the past decade the conservation



community has made numerous efforts to intercede in conservation issues on Tribal lands. Almost all these efforts have failed for one universal reason-- a poor track record of engagement in Native American processes, including but not limited to listening to and respecting the perspective and wisdom upon which all Tribal cultural and ecological meaning is based.

Efforts to apply scientific and conservation technology and techniques are meaningless until there is first a willingness to listen, a respect for traditional perspectives, and a building of trust. Only then can the integration of science, technology, and cultural meaning begin to find common ground, purpose, and application.

Toward this objective, the Grand Canyon Trust organized this gathering called “Inter-Tribal Conversations on the Colorado Plateau” from November 8 to 10, 2009, in Flagstaff, Arizona. This initial gathering involved representatives from ten tribes, pueblos, and nations with cultural affiliations to the Plateau. The intent of the gathering was to lay an aesthetic, artistic, intellectual, and educational foundation for later gatherings to be organized around conservation themes such as water, air, forests, wildlife, growth, grazing, and energy.

### **An Honorable Gathering**

The 2009 meeting was designed with elements of prestige and honor using a traditional Native gathering process. It was conducted in ways that hearken to the old methods used by Colorado Plateau ancestors to create many of the current natural laws—using story, teaching, song, and art.

The meeting was documented and archived by young Native American writers, artists, and photographers.



**Gathering of Ute leaders**

Using the traditional approach and thoughtful screening criteria, the planning committee selected two representatives from each of ten different Tribal nations on the Colorado Plateau. Participants included members from the Havasupai, Hopi, Hualapai, Kaibab-Paiute, Navajo, Southern Ute, Uinta Ouray Ute, Ute Mountain, White Mountain Apache, and Zuni Tribes, and a guest speaker from the Cocopah Tribe.

### **Culturally Respectful Facilitation**

The conversation was professionally facilitated by Enei Begaye, Tohono O’odham/Diné, Co-Director of the Black Mesa Water Coalition; Gabriel Yaiva, Hopi/Diné, director of the Peace & Balance Youth Project; Tony Skrelunas, Diné, director of the Native America Program at the Grand Canyon Trust.

### **Conversation Topics**

The conversation topics included:

- How did our Tribal communities historically care for the land and what did the family and community units do to ensure its sustainability?
- What are other Tribal nations successfully doing to protect their landscapes across our Mother Earth, and what can we learn from them that would improve efforts to protect our lands?
- Selected topics ranging from water, health, to cultural sacred properties.

### **Meeting Objective**

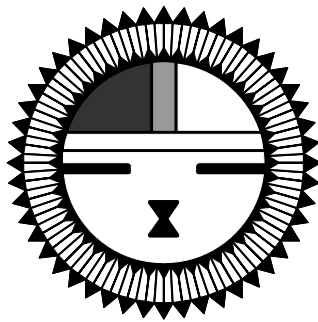
The overall objective of this first gathering was to communicate, identify, and recommend processes and creative ways Tribes can approach pressing issues of high concern to Tribal members. They were effective processes that resulted in harmonious living.

We anticipated that additional meetings would be recommended with added scope, information needs, and additional key participants. We felt that participants might also recommend that results be creatively shared with their Tribal communities and leaders. The proceedings, stories, and art created from observation of the meeting may be highly useful as a document, teaching, and discussion tool.

Additional speakers will be useful from other First Nations across the world to share and add credibility to the momentum created from this first Gathering.



Image 2: Left to Right: Phil Stago (White Mountain Apache), and Sunny Dooley (Navajo Nation), Loretta Jackson-Kelley (Hualapai)



**Chapter 1**

**WELCOMING RECEPTION**

**Sunday, November 8, 2009**



**OPENING WELCOME RECEPTION & ENTERTAINMENT**

On a crisp November evening, an intriguing group of Tribal elders and cultural leaders from eleven Indigenous Nations of the Colorado Plateau gathered for a welcoming reception next to the sacred San

Francisco Peaks. The historic and grand Colton House, where the meeting was held, exemplified honor and dignity. The meeting had a festive feel – with young adults and elders and several Tribal officials including the Chairman of the Ute Mountain Tribe and the Chairman of the Cocopah Tribe. All gathered around the dinner table in the Colton House to share stories of ancestors and to listen to other relations who have traveled across sacred landscapes.

The opening prayer was conducted by Gordon Isaac, an expert carpenter from the Navajo community of Tonalea, Arizona. Gordon prayed for that there would be goodness in the food, that the Tribes would share their ideas, and that the meeting would accomplish its intent. The participants were energized and enthusiastic to introduce themselves and learn from one another.

The evening began with a grand reception, with welcoming presentations. City of Flagstaff Mayor, Sarah Presler, welcomed the participants to the community beneath the pines. She shared her support of efforts to stop uranium mining around the Grand Canyon and its Indigenous lands. Mayor Presler also elaborated on her position against the use of reclaimed water for artificial snowmaking and expansion at the Snowbowl ski resort located on the San Francisco Peaks.

Robert Breunig, Director of the Museum of Northern Arizona, shared his thoughts on the importance of having Indigenous voices heard in discussions about the Colorado Plateau. He also told the history of the Colton House, which was built by Harold S. Colton, founder of MNA with his wife, artist Mary-Russell Ferrel Colton. In the mid-1990s the Colton house was renovated and made available for people to come together and “share ideas and dreams and think about the future,” said Breunig. “The goal of the museum is to foster cross cultural dialogue and respect.”

Associate Director of the Grand Canyon Trust, Rick Moore, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the gathering. He expressed the hope that we will all continue working in the future toward the harmonious goal of protecting the Colorado Plateau cultural landscape. He told about the Trust’s origins and its conservation advocacy program, including such efforts as the requirement of air pollution controls at the Navajo Generating Station

## **WELCOME & CONFERENCE OVERVIEW**

As introductions were being made, a contingent of highly esteemed Havasupai elders made their entrance. The room grew silent. The elders had come from their community of Supai, within the Grand Canyon, to represent their views and hopes for their homelands and sisters and brothers.



## **ENTERTAINMENT**

On her 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday, Alberta Manakaja (Havasupai) performed an ancient dance of her people, while her husband Stanley Manakaja (Havasupai) sang their traditional song. The Havasupai songs do not



have specific names, but rather the meaning gives the songs identity. The song which Stanley sang was a song of the Earth.

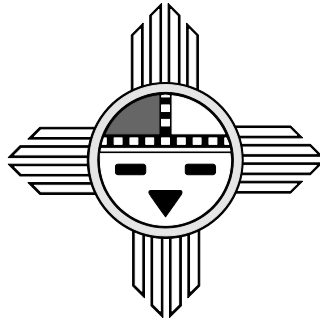
*Short Story of the Havasupai – by Karen Francis*

The round dancing conveyed a simple message about the cycle of life and balance. Just being able to see each other's faces and smiles as we attempted to coordinate our feet in time to the beat of the drum brought a sense of balance to open up discussions. The Havasupai elders were the ones to lead us in this dance. Their songs and their spirit brought joy and respect from the participants in the gathering of the region's tribes, but even as the gathering took place and people began feeling optimism in the joining together of the tribes, the Havasupai people had sadness. But they realized the importance of getting to this gathering because they know that their story needs to be heard. Their voices are soft when they speak and they are full of grief for all they have lost, but their message is strong.

For some issues, the discussions come very late, but for some, the gathering of tribes came just in time. The Havasupai are trying to fight attempts to mine uranium on the rim of the Grand Canyon. There are not enough people who know their story. There are not enough people speaking out for them. These are their steps to make sure that their story is told. They are a small tribe, and so some elders made the journey from their homes on the floor of the Grand Canyon to Flagstaff to meet with other tribes and to tell them about their struggle. While the mining is proposed to take place on the canyon rim, the Havasupai know it will have effect inside the canyon. The water from the top gets carried into the canyon and into the sacred springs there.

"An elder told me once, in the end, water is going to be just as powerful as gold," said Rex Tilousi, a Havasupai elder. "Development is one thing I see happening. The animals I used to see in herds are no longer there." For the Havasupai, all life came from the canyon. It is their grandmother. "We regard the canyon as a part of the people. We shouldn't be digging holes inside our grandmother and taking parts of her," Tilousi said. Even exploratory mining could be considered desecration in that sense.

There are areas that are sacred to other tribes as well. Potential mining not only hurts the Havasupai but is also a concern for the Zuni people. Red Butte, in the Kaibab National Forest, is mentioned in a Zuni story



## Chapter 2

**Monday, November 9, 2009**



### OPENING SESSION

As in every traditional gathering, each day begins with traditional prayer. The prayer serves as a pathway for the daily activities, it also gives appreciation to the holy elements for existence and blessings of life. Phil Stago, from the White Mountain Apache Tribe, conducted this blessing in his traditional ways as his people have done for years. He began his prayer first with his traditional cattail pollen as a blessing element to the presenters and participants. Mr. Stago prayed for good thoughts and protection of our land; he also prayed that the day's ideas and speech would be performed across the Tribal communities of the Colorado Plateau in good spirit. He told participants, "We are here at a place next to the San

Francisco Peaks; we are all on sacred ground.” At his invitation to use the pollen to do prayers, most everyone did so.



## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Jim Enote, Grand Canyon Trust board member and chair of the Native America Working Group, gave an overview and the intent for the gathering. He described the gathering as a place to hear the voices of local Tribes and have their voices serve as a guide toward future work. Enote talked about the board’s intent for the meeting and of his own Zuni Tribe’s efforts to have traditional artists map out traditional sites of great importance. He assured Tribal attendees that their opinion would be a valuable asset. “GCT is the leader in this area, they are thinking more openly and liberally today. On the board there needs to be more brought to the table when talking about land and there needs to be Tribal voice in those conversations.”



From left to right: Rex Tilousi (Havasupai), Octavious Seowtewa (Zuni), and Jim Enote (Zuni-Grand Canyon Trust Board Member)

*“It is usually Navajo something, Navajo tacos, Navajo bun... there are other groups on the Colorado Plateau, other Tribes. This is about including all of you in these events.”*

*“The elected governments represent the Tribes, they are not a voice for all of us, and we elders have our own voice. They need to hear our voices.”*

*“Expressions of this meeting by art, poems, songs, or online with twittering. The youth have a responsibility to advance the information with the technology they have in their hands. There are several different ways to interrupt this information.”*

As Jim Enote closed out his introduction, he invited the attendees to introduce themselves. Many did so, in their traditional language. Eleven ancient languages echoed through one room, but stood to represent the entire region of the Colorado Plateau. Languages heard from across the landscapes showed the unity of Tribal Nations.



**The Conversations focused in several areas:**

A team of Native facilitators-- Enei Begaye, Gabriel Yaiva, and Tony Skrelunas-- came ready to lead the highly honored Inter-Tribal Conversations. The meeting began with a brief outline of several questions with each relating to traditional Tribal organizing. The facilitators divided these questions into three groups which the attendees later elaborated on from their each Tribal perspective.

Questions for Group 1

- What was our traditional process for decision making?
- What were the conditions under which they were created?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses?

Questions for Group 2

- What are the current decision making processes?
- What processes do Tribes use to deal with matters today?

Questions for Group 3

- Do you know of a traditional modern model for decision making?
- What would a past and present balanced process look like?



Tony Skrelunas

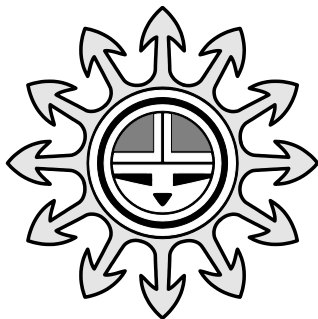
You are here because you're on a good path in life. Looking back 100 years, you might ask yourself "what would happen if our tribes failed to ensure traditional knowledge was not passed, if they didn't ensure that our communities knew the old ways to survive, eat, hunt, plant, etc?" In those days, to be called to a gathering to solve an important issue was an honor. A solution was crafted over a long time. We all have adapted things from each other. There was honor in the entire process because problems were solved to ensure the existence of our peoples. It's where songs, stories, dances, prayers were created that last to today.

We have the talents here to once again hearken to these time- tested methods to solve our current and future problems. Teachings, natural laws, taboos, were passed down through generations to ensure survival of culture and old ways of knowing and doing. Family, community folks complained about a problem and there was a process. Tribal process: it was sophisticated which gave strength, and solutions were crafted and identified by tribes. Processes were shared among everyone, and if tribe called upon individuals to participate in process it was considered an honor, elders identifying processes of solutions.

In the past, I served as an executive for the Diné and was involved in many of our Tribe's early efforts to utilize old processes of honor and respect in modern government. It is important to take our time. Sometimes it took several days to come up with solutions, and it was considered an honor by everyone to be a part of the process.

**Discussion Focus for the First Morning**

1. How can we utilize old ways and processes today?
2. Why aren't we using the old ways today?
3. Is it possible to use old processes today?
4. If you created a solution, how would you share it?



**Chapter 3**

**BREAKOUT SESSION ONE**

**TOPIC:** Traditional Process - Past and present lifestyle on Indigenous lands

**QUESTIONS:**

What was our traditional process for decision making?

What were the conditions under which they were created?

What were the strengths and weaknesses?

**DISCUSSIONS:**

The breath of the conversations ran very deep about family.

**Sunny Dooley, Navajo Nation**

I grew up in a big family, mom was designated family representative and there were different roles for family members; food makers and money givers. These processes happened naturally, there was no agenda. Disrespect of old ways has come to bite the Navajo people in the butt. We must all respect women and female roles. The current 3 branch government goes against traditional native numbers of 4, 6, 7, etc.

The traditional Navajo ways mandated that Diné women received the wealth in the family. It seems that colonization has overtaken the traditional way of life for my people and possibly other tribal nations. Colonization has restructured the social lifestyle of the Navajo people, which is tracked back to the time of Kit Carson's raid on Navajo country. Such changes have affected our youth in which they don't respect themselves, our traditional way of selecting leaders were based on codes of behavior rather than economic status. On Navajo it seems that the societies are defined by economic status, and the governments foster people to stay within a specific economic status (i.e. welfare, etc.)

**Norman Lopez, Ute Mountain Tribe**

*(In response):* Individuals, groups gathered with roles defined. There was no blame, no judgments.

**Octavius Seowtewa, Zuni Nation**

How could tribes gather together to solve problems?

*(In response):* Religious leaders are responsible in decision making processes. How to define roles and decisions? A tourist took photos of a ceremony at Zuni and a participant saw them and took the camera away with no intention of giving it back. The tourist wanted to sue tribe but the tribe told the participant to give the camera back to the tourist. This is an example of where religious leaders told tribal council the traditional protocols must be followed. Sovereignty rights are first. *It's been a long time coming for our tribes to get together like this. I think we have direction now. We can do our battles together.*

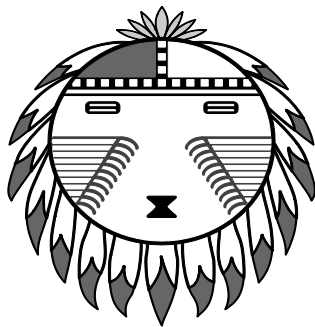
**Dale Phillips, Cocopah Tribe**

*(In response to discussion questions)*

There's a lot of preparation going into the decision making process. Before there was a Tribal council established, our way of life was common knowledge. Since the Cocopah Tribal council was established 1964, the process in which the policies and laws can be seen as money vs. preservation. I have learned

to always know who you are and to know what protocols must be followed.

**Lee K., Hopi:** *(In response)* Language preservation is the key



## BREAKOUT SESSION TWO

**TOPIC:** Advice from Tribal elders

### **QUESTIONS:**

What are the current decision making processes?

### **DISCUSSIONS:**

#### **Jim Enote, Zuni Nation**

*(In response to questions)*

At Zuni we have the family level, matriarchal society. The women on your father's side and the womenfolk basically make a lot of decisions. Major life decisions, I would ask my aunties what they think. Village level, we're looking at religious level. They have those all-night conversations. That is when things were under duress, really difficult. There could have been threat from outside or threat from within. Sometimes they designate someone else to do it. The Zuni say that the sacredness can be the denominator and reason for conservation, for example this mountain (San Francisco Peaks) is important. The Zuni Elders carry more weight than scientific viewpoint. We are new to democracy. (Mentioned Iraq). Our experience changing from theocracy to democracy has not been so easy.

#### **Larson Gasper, Zuni Nation**

*(In response to questions)*

*Go to immediate family.* I would ask what should I do? If there's a problem within the family you go from there. In our tradition we do have a feast coming up Shalako, it's the end of the year celebration then it's the beginning of the New Year. The thing is to go to your aunties. They do the cooking the whole year. On the Tribal or village I think the way Jim has it, it's the correct way. Go through the elders of your kiva group. If it's religious you go to your kiva group or religious society. Council is the one that takes care of the village.

#### **Advice from the Hualapai Participant**

I think there was a council but that is an English name. In terminology today we call it council. They are the ones who make decisions for tribal members. Hualapai have their own court system and handle their own issues. Hualapai - I think traditional is coming back to the kids. I don't know how many dancers we have. I think that's where some of the kids are getting role models. We have 57 dance groups. Hualapai always taught children not to marry into own tribe. Feathers are the certificates of accomplishment for Hualapai, that is, feathers in vehicles are a symbol of protection as one travels, like they used to on horse. What really changed the kids is when they started building juvenile departments.

#### **Brittanni Wero, Kaibab Paiute Tribe**



*(In response to discussion)*

I was raised traditionally on my reservation. When I went home I was horrified what I found at home. None of this exists. It's all different. Back on my homeland we're all geared toward the white man's way. We're only a tribe of about 300 members.



*In my homeland there is a dam excavation taking place as I speak and bodies of possible ancient people are being found and the dam is for the recreation of boaters.*

In this situation traditional people would step in but we're so tiny no one is stepping in. Our council is so young, they don't know. Traditional people, where are you? We need your help.

*(Present Elder) – A lot of Native American tribes, we are stuck between progress and*

*tradition.*

From left to right: Enei Begaye, Alberta Manakaja,  
Rex Tilousi, Dale Phillips, Phil Stago

Our Tribes we have elders on committees. Nowadays Native American communities are looking at creating jobs, but leadership is stuck in one position. If you have elder support, it makes leadership and discussion making more manageable. In Utah, they say it's all private property. When our elders such as my mother challenge issues discussion falls back on the council.

Specific issues such as a water pipeline through the reservation face my tribe today and we are the weak link.

### **Advice from Ute Mountain Participant**

*(In response to question)*

In the case of Ute Mountain, chiefs would get together and make decision. Back in the olden days we were not as friendly as we are today. Now that's different. We have Mesa Verde National Park and Tribal Park.

The Utes saved the Hopi from starvation and the Hopis have similar songs. The way we dealt with these the chief would decide. The selected chiefs, the sub chiefs, would make determination. If religious, would go to sun dance chief or other chief. Still today there are chiefs still in place.

The chiefs were selected by their band, their family. Ute - i.e. eagle feathers. Instead of the chief it's the Tribal Council or the Tribal chairman teaching the young people about what we have to go through on a

daily basis. Now we practice chairmanship.

**Advice from Hopi Participant**

*(In response to question)*

The decision making process is still deferred to the 12 Hopi villages. Since time immemorial they have been pretty much independent of each other. They practice a life way philosophy. Villages were independent and to a large degree that's how Hopi see themselves. Government found it difficult to deal with 12 villages. Today we have a Tribal council with a process for selecting council and chairman. Villages have still been asserting rights to self govern. Hopi is matrilineal.

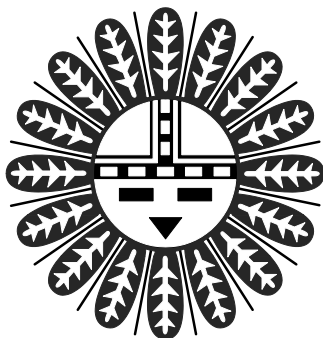
*(Present Elder)- The way I look at it today the Anglo people they are coming to us natives for help.*

They come to us and ask us how you do it. In Third Mesa, decisions are made ceremonial and ceremonies are governed by clans. The Hopi Tribal Council is modeled after American government. Through self declaration they have certain authority and powers vested. Hopi governance is about responsibility to others. Leadership is at bottom. Hopi say you assume the burden of the people. *Knowledge would be reinforced.*

Today villages are opposing each other. Traditional ways of trying to be proactive are being affected. Today arbitrator is for council to dispute. We have encountered a changeover of leadership, now they review personnel policy. One policy says you have to have a degree. Then some favor family. This entire changeover has a lot to do with what direction the Tribe is trying to go.

**Enei Begaye, Navajo Nation (facilitator)**

*Today we all have to deal with federal governments and state governments. Maybe that's a common ground for us, although sometimes it's a different process for different issues.*



## Chapter 5

### BREAKOUT SESSION THREE

**TOPIC:** Traditional process of decision making

**QUESTIONS:**

What would a past and present balanced process look like?

Do you know of a traditional modern model for decision making?

**DISCUSSIONS:**

Historical means of traditional decision making process

**Natural laws**

Observing nature, wild life – what they used as medicines. This is the universal truths. People from the rocky mountain, law we taught by the worriers, aggressive. Learn the ways, the aggressive grandma taught the women how to survive, if you did not learn these ways you will not survive. Even now we have weak tribal members and leaders. To tell other kids in their tribes to stop and think. Tribal members that age afraid to teach or discipline other families. Cross reference, Christians or eagles, confusion of who to send our payers to. The teachers had to be assertive and progressive. They would be the keeper and the protectors. Now no one will be aggressive or assertive to teach these ways. It was a teaching method. Don't put respect and mean in the same sentence.

My grandpa would only say things once. You are shown something one time because your life depended on it, like with teachings in a sheep corral. Life depends on the listening skills, people would always just talk. You have to know, listen to me I will show you only once. Nature and in life look at the trees, the leaves turn up. Observes the ants and you will learn a lot by looking at the land.

Creation stories understand how world created and purpose of being here. Oral transmission, how things came to be, reinforce the values. Elders sometimes are not recognized. The outlines of things, some elders need to be educated just as student, some people learn late in life. Behaviors and taboos reinforce today you don't do certain things because of the repercussions. Don't be like Coyote, Coyote practiced incest. In the time we were created we were non-humans, we were animals and insects.



**How these things were created:**

- Observation is very important, it teaches you how to be honest
- Updated thought historical events, changes on earth such as earthquakes and floods
- Plant gathering, shearing sheep



**Traditional ways have been impacted today:**

- 1) Leaders are Christians at the Tribal table; they don't support the traditionalist in the community, like the elders. Changeover has a lot to do with the loss of youth involvement. The teachings come from the families. The Tribal Council was put together by the US government and it is not working. We need to go back to the chief system where the knowledge comes from elders.
- 2) Traditional process
- 3) We are all different tribes
- 4) Family level
- 5) Matriarchal society
- 6) Tribal council back then was different than what we have now
- 7) Three bands of Ute's, use to be 7 bands in the past. They would come together if the tribe was threatened by something
- 8) Hopi = differ 12 villages, independent. Now they have Tribal government which follows the US government

**Current Decision Making Process**

Updated through events, earthquakes war and droughts, these were all historical events. They were depicted through oral story, rock writing. This is how we give the prairies and valleys the name. The area and the name have their own stories and their own creation stories. We have to understand our purpose of being here; it has a lot to do with your identity. Core protocol is in communication in traditional ways, an observation is a key word. Experience something in how to experiment something and make it applicable to interact with each other. Traditional protocol! Coyote stories about incest. Fragmented because of tribal constitutions, not a traditional form. What are your tribe's current decision making processes?

They are coming to us natives for help. Coal mines and power plants creating environmental impacts. Frightening to us is the youth with drugs and alcohol and being young parents. The older council members are younger people, they're not the elders. The young don't really know what is going on Tribal knowledge. The young Tribal members are teaching the younger generations about things and they don't know what they are saying.

Eagle feathers are very important to our culture. We display it in our cars. We don't need to do that.

Sometimes we display those for protection. It gives us the balance; it gives us the ability to walk the right way.

- Values – teaching taught by aggressive ones to young. To survive – combat tribal weaknesses.
- Listening skills, the elders only said it once.
- Moral values knowing right from wrong. Respect people all around you and respect the natural laws
- Current issues
- Leader no respect for land, just in power
- Elders today are different then the past
- No morality with our leaders
- Leadership take the path to corruption, it takes years to repair that abuse
- It is responsibility of the people to let the Tribal members know they need to honor the earth
- Mandate youth service tribe for two years, to obtain scholarships
- Where they see the change in some of us that have gone through rough times. It is good to have remodels that they can lead the way as a traditionalist is what we need to see

Mental health, they are told to see a psychologist. But we go to our elders. Now we have a juvenile department, which is not good for that youth. We need to go back to the Coyote stories; we behave like these animals sometimes. That is how we learned.

Home, no traditional ways or believes. It is all different. We are all geared toward the white man. We are only a few 300 members in our tribes. The elders chose to move away, because they don't speak up to the youth. As far as traditional leaders where I come from there is no one and it is scary. My mother is traditional, she is on the tribal council now and she has to re-teach the youth on the council to help with them lead in the right

- Today
- Religious differences
- Councils more and more young people on the council not much elders on the council
- Council delegates are elected for their positions. Back then the elders would be selected from their wisdom of the land and the culture and out of respect
- Alcohol and drugs are taking over our youth
- Youth don't belong in detention center, we need to bring in tradition to these youth to help them
- Kaibab Paiute = Traditional cultural property (TCP) for their land near Kaibab because of the digging up of ancient people
- We need TCP workshop: some creation of an office for TCP work so that all tribes have access this information
- April (TCP) workshop in Flagstaff
- Sacredness can be a means to this TCP
- Outside people are imposing outside views
- GCT diplomatic with tribes

- Money and jobs versus traditional values religious leaders, leader year responsible for time frame



Do you know of a traditional/modern model for decision making?

- No agenda, let process happen naturally
- Pre-defined roles
- Look to religious - calendar year responsible for the time frame
- Consensus of societies
- Protocols within tribes take precedent
- Tribal council must respect cultural traditional, law, rules est., preparation going into process
- No exclusion of gender roles within tribe respect religious foundations
- Respect family process
- What were conditions that current decision processes made under?
- Colonization boarding school
- Imposed decision making processes
- Money versus presentation of culture (must be able to do both)
- Always remember your culture code of behavior
- How can we teach young ones good decision making processes?
- Hualapai teaching of plants, culture good examples
- Teach traditional perspectives ways
- Language preservation is valuable tool for teaching general consensus
- Immediate decisions may be more detrimental than not making a decision

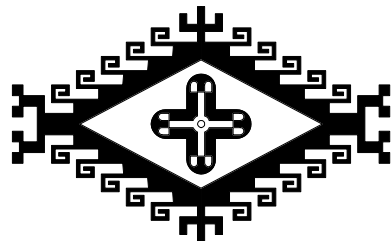
It is all up to us, once you have items. Write a letter for a resolution for support related to the issues. Resolution is a format that some of us use in our Tribes.

Get Tribal leaders that will listen and be both government and a traditionalist.

The key is being made right now, right here with this group.

The creator gave us all a very different mind all of us. Our planning strategy, we have to plan and conquer. How do I know when the creator talks to you? The young people have a powerful gift today, we elders need to teach them this awareness.

- Consensus of having a strong family connection
- Communicating-- listening is better than saying
- Boarding schools
- Teach traditional
- Family to bring back values
- Believe in the power of our words
- There should have been a fire here at this meeting



## Chapter 6

### LUNCH BANQUET



#### Lunch Entertainment

As lunch proceeded into the afternoon hour, participants were well engaged in conversations. To accommodate the conversations among attendees, Lloyd Arrive from the Northern Ute tribe felt it would be perfect timing to share his traditional music of his tribe. Lloyd sang four songs that ranged from eagles singing, little children, grass dancing, and in most respect he sang an Honor song that brought everyone to their feet in respect to all Honorable individuals of our lands.

Following Lloyd Arrive's songs, Bennie Shrum and Loretta Jackson-Kelley both of the Hualapai Tribe shared their culture with the group. Bennie began singing in a low tone voice, but the sound of his rattle brought up the volume and music. As Bennie sang, Loretta danced in traditional clothing to the tone of the rattle. The two were performing the Bird Song, and all the participants were taken in a trance to their traditional home of Grand Canyon.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION



#### Guest Speaker: Dale Phillips, Chairman of the Cocopah Tribe

Dale Phillips is the current Chairman of the Cocopah Tribe, who live in the deserts of southern Arizona. He was invited to partake in the gathering as a guest speaker as well as provide insight from the Indigenous nations to the south. His presence reminded the attendees that no matter w

here your tribe is located, all Indigenous nations are facing dilemmas within our Tribes. His topic focused on riparian restoration along the rivers of his homeland. He begins his story....

“A Model in Traditional and Honor.” Rumor has it that the Cocopah Tribe still owns 350,000 acres in Mexico near Mexicali, according to Spanish journals. What does the river mean to the Cocopah?

The creator came under the water and talked about bring life, the ants came and the earth came up with them. The Colorado River came to be and from the river the creator made the Cocopah people, universe, plants, trees and animals, the creator told the Cocopahs that this is their land and to care for it and to respect it because everything is alive! The Cocopah migrated up and down the Colorado River. The creator took clay from the river and made the river. One day the Europeans came up the river and the Cocopah first encountered them but the Cocopahs were not easily trained or changed by the Europeans.

One day the people noticed the river quit flowing due to the Hoover, Morales, and Glen Canyon Dams, and this had a huge effect because the Cocopah used the river for food, water, clothing, etc. The animals started disappearing. The Cocopah reservation attracts drug industry because the reservation is so close to the border. In 1970s the drug problems and other issues of the Cocopah were featured in a popular magazine. Magazine made a lot of money but the tribe received no benefits.

Tribal elders said Cocopah needed to come back. The Tribe began to revise songs; they started to train people in the old ways such as traditional gambling games, bird games/songs, etc. Culture is coming back and Coyote stories are being told. The mesquite is used medicinally, food, etc. My dad went through government assimilation but survived. In recent years the Tribal Council passed a resolution to restore the river by planting native flora and fauna as the river serves as migration stop for birds.

Today the river is coming back and it has pools, flora and fauna are coming back, planted trees are tapping into the underground water system. There is a Tribal policy in their manual that says “let the creator take care of it the way he intended it to grow.” There is a Cocopah Casino which is helping bring the past to the future through DVDs, movies, videos about the Cocopah culture.



## **ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

As reports were been given by groups, the participants were identifying issues that needed to be addressed. The facilitators decided that issues should be fully discussed and prioritized as the group wanted.

### **URGENT ISSUES FACING TRIBAL LANDS TODAY:**

- Federal Indian policies are racist
- Long- term solutions
- Youth leadership programs we can't access (re-educate)
- Climate change (nuclear power plants, renewable energy)
- Uranium development
- Protection of sacred sites (Arizona Snowbowl, the Moon)
- Qualities of a traditional leader
- Energy development
- Expansions of power plant (the haze over Shiprock from APS power plant)



- Power plants, national sacrifice area (contaminate water sources)
- Enviro-economic security, survival on their small farmlands
- Tribal council, fearful of what they are going to do

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Find a common ground (reading material)
- Health, traditional foods
- Women's economic rights (no more pawning) – micro-loans
- NCAI, these are the people's voices, take our people to these hearings
- Native American think tank
- Don't waste our time, let's get something done
- Self-determination (Sovereignty relationships with Federal agency)
- Grassroots voice on issues

#### PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Traditional cultural property workshops planned for Flagstaff in spring
2. Reading list for next meeting
3. Subgroups on policy
4. Mailing list of all participants
5. November 18<sup>th</sup> Tribal summit meeting for the buy-out option at the Museum of Northern Arizona. How do we continue dialogue?
6. Urgent issues
7. Pipeline in Kaibab
8. Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act

You are not forgotten. Your voice is not ignored.

I will remember you in my prayers. I will remember you in my dreams.

I will remember your battle

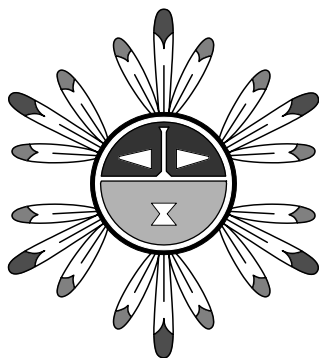
I hear your battle cry across the plateau

And I am preparing.

It is time. The battle is beginning.

You are worth fighting for.

*By Karen Francis*



## **Chapter 7**

### **FINAL MORNING SESSION**

#### **Tuesday, November 10, 2009**

- 1) The final morning session started with categorizing the issues identified the previous evening. Traditional cultural property and protection of sacred sites; Red Butte proposed uranium mining, pipeline and reservoir lake development on the Kaibab Paiute Reservation
- 2) Federal Indian policies
- 3) Energy development and climate change [power plants, uranium development, environmental concerns, renewable energy, water issues, solar energy project (visual impacts)]
- 4) Leadership and youth development, women's empowerment, self determination, leadership

- aggressiveness, educate Tribal leaders, values, understanding of laws for our benefits
- 5) Economic development (environmental and economic development), green jobs
  - 6) Health, diabetes, pollution, traditional foods, Indian Health Service contract health issues, hunting, alcohol and drug abuse
  - 7) Cultural property rights, distortion of our cultures by selling our culture
  - 8) Water as a basic human right (sacred springs)
  - 9) Make the whole reservation a sacred site (nomination of protection)



Immediate needs that the group felt should be addressed by organizations and Tribes present included: immediate strategy (help Supai in the fight against uranium mining) and pipeline (Kaibab Paiute) from Lake Powell to Saint George, Utah.

Participants were then asked to choose their top three issues out of the nine categories by casting their vote. Each participant had three pieces of paper labeled one, two, and three, and each prioritized choices related to what is the most important to their Tribal community. All agreed and voted. The overarching three categories are:

1. Water
2. Sacred Sites
3. Health



#### Letting the Eagles Fly

The participants were then asked to participate in any of the work groups that appealed to them. The work group conversation focused on fully discussing the issue, what is already being done, what is still needed, and what could be completed over the next 6 to 12 months. The final conversation, entitled “Letting the Eagles Fly,” focused on summary, next steps, and closure. What did we learn over the last two days? How do we move forward with the keen insights and wisdom gained? What can we do in 3 to 6 months? What can expect to do in the next year?

As a result of the conversations, several important tools, teams and networks, issues, and a desire for future gatherings were identified:



**Tools:** Traditional processes that worked in the past and that can work in the future were identified.



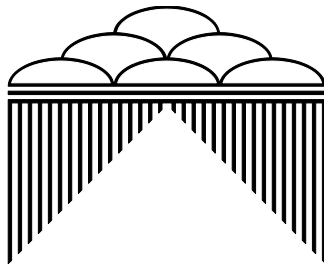
**Teams and Networks:** This was the first meeting of a diverse group of Tribes surrounding the Great Colorado River. It was a meeting of top- notch folks who want to work together, help and visit each other, and help smaller Tribes.



**Issues:** Many issues were identified and discussed. The issues were categorized and prioritized into three achievable strategies that the Grand Canyon Trust, Tribes, and local and regional organizations can incorporate into their work strategies.



**Future Gatherings:** Participants want to be engaged in planning a future gathering to build on this first meeting. They made many recommendations on how it can be improved.



## **Chapter 8**

### **WATER ISSUES**

**TOPIC:** Water issues and concerns

**QUESTIONS:**

What are the current water situations on our traditional homelands?

Water is not considered a property of ownership, what is the representation of water in your culture?

**DISCUSSIONS:**

One of three main concerns addressed during the final session was local water issues on the Colorado Plateau. Many participants felt that the water issues their Tribes are facing should be a priority topic to discuss in the final breakout session.

For people living in the Four Corners region and along the Colorado Plateau river corridors water is considered the most precious element for life stability. Many Native American Tribes of the region, including the ten Tribes attending this gathering, consider water one of four elements sacred to the land. Water is usually represented in most Tribes as a spirit that no individual can own. In many cultures of the region, water is seen to possess traditional teaching of life and fertility, whereas in many Tribes WATER IS LIFE.

The level of pristine, and scarce, water provides many teachings for the Tribes of the region. For example, in the Hopi and Havasupai cultures the natural existence and purity of a spring is the home of spiritual offerings. The natural existence of springs provides people of the land with hope that life will continue-- crop harvesting, vegetation prosperity, and herbs and medicinal plants.

In this breakout session each individual representing their Tribe and people distinguished the importance of water and the importance of the river systems in continuing sacredness and purity. Many participants voiced concerns about current development and contamination of dams along with the wildlife and aquatic life it supports. The following concerns were discussed regarding the river system, ground water, and water rights of the Indigenous nations.

- Dams- unbalancing of free flow
- *"Where is our electricity?"*
- Over consumption by larger cities
- Ground water-aquifer level stress
- Educate the people of traditional values of water

The group in the water breakout session identified the issues facing their people and Tribal homeland. The group then outlined and brainstormed avenues that could be taken to provide Tribal representation on water rights, as well a proper way to continue good stewardship to the water.

- Intertribal support- *"Not to fight alone"*
- Immediate action must take place- *"The problems are already heavy"*
- Bureau of Indian Affairs and Federal agencies debate tribal boundaries and fail to protect trust right and responsibilities to tribes
- Ceremony prayers and practices performed
- Family support and community involvement- *"put war paint on the youth to prepare them for the battles in the future-land was in the past, water is going to be the future battle"*
- Send our youth to get educated on environmental issues and encourage their involvement in gathering such as this
- Studies being performed to monitor springs along river corridors- *"they want our involvement to check spring quality and quantity"*

In conclusion, each individual gave a powerful quote that assured that the fight for water conditions and issues on the Indigenous lands will not stop, and that the fight will continue.

*"We are not fighting to own the water or to allocate it to cities or communities, we are fighting for the*

*water to run freely and clean so all creation will have access to life.”*

*“Colorado River – life giving source, how can we continue our prayers so that it runs down river?”*

*“It’s the backbone of the people.”*

*“There is no water; it’s all allocated and contaminated.”*

*“Cocopah have no water resources, no river runs through their land, they need restoration on their land.”*



## Chapter 9

### SACRED SITES

**TOPIC:** The preservation and identification of sacred sites

**QUESTIONS:** What are the weapons we have to preserve our sacredness?  
Why are our sacred sites being attacked and what solutions are available?

**DISCUSSIONS:** Many traditions and cultural teachings of Native people find root in the landscape. For many, the landscape of towering mountains, deep gorges of canyons, and the rough monoclines of rock cliffs are the shrines and temples of their culture. A place of sacredness normally is the setting of a holy ritual that takes place annually, or is the home of a holy deity, or the place to gather medicinal herbs. In any case the places hold high energy of ancestors and supernatural powers, and for these reasons many Tribes hold these places close to their hearts in faith to their religion.

For example, throughout Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado ancient homes and remains of the ancient people exist. For many in the region, these places hold high power of ancestor existence and energy of faith and reassurance. In other places the landmarks such as Red Butte Grand Canyon, and San Francisco Peaks in northern Arizona, and Sleeping Ute Mountain in southern Colorado, all hold significant representation to each of the ten Tribes attending the gathering.

Through the breakout session on sacred sites, a repetitive theme followed each case and each story: in each homeland of each of the ten tribes a sacred site is being destroyed or exploited with no regard to the sacredness of the Indigenous people. Many of the issues revolved around uranium mining, coal mining, coal power plants, and other mineral explorations. The group listed and located some issues currently under fire, and brainstormed ideas and possible solutions or partners to work and collaborate with on this issue. The group compiled a list of sacred sites being desecrated within their homelands:

- Red Butte- threatened by uranium mining by VANE Minerals, a developing company
- Grand Canyon-threatened by uranium mining, water contamination, air pollution
- San Francisco Peaks- threatened by snowmaking with reclaimed water
- Kaibab Homeland/Arizona Strip- threatened by a proposed pipeline from Lake Powell to St. George, Utah, and a proposed reservoir in Kanab, Utah. This is where ancient people's graves are being dug up and disturbed.
- Ute Mountain Reservation-threatened air quality from Navajo power plants (Doo Da Desert Rock)- Agree to Disagree smaller tribes must be considered

The group then discussed their weapons of protection, and who they would have to help in the fight to preserve cultural sacredness.

- Use code of Law: TCP (Traditional Cultural Property), NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act), Section 10 Code, Title 5-2005 Transportation Energy Policies Act
- Educate Tribal members on environmental law and codes to proceed and represent themselves
- Use Grand Canyon Trust Native America Program as resource and network group
- Develop Red Butte Committee
- Include traditional people to stand for their culture
- Network with media to inform the public



**Chapter 10**



## HEALTH ISSUES

### TOPIC: Health concerns of Tribal Nations

#### QUESTIONS:

Define what health means to you?

#### DISCUSSIONS:

One major issue that Indigenous Nations face more often than other nationalities is health. For the Native people of the region, health concerns come in many different shades and it their most predominant problem. This breakout group identified health concerns and brainstormed possible solutions that would contribute to a healthier generation. The group first defined what health meant to them:

- Family dynamic health “values”
- Community health, religious views
- Physical health , physical/emotional, communication, spiritual
- Diabetes and mental health, diets/nutrition
- Absence of diseases
- Indian Health Service systems: trust between tribes and officials
- Food distribution – money/cookware/ preparation
- Resiliency
- Individual attitude-pros and cons
- Genetic
- Health definition
- Positive affirmations of living “*I am in balance*”

The group then broke the definition of health into four categories and elaborated on traditional and cultural perspectives.



#### **Spiritual**

- Ceremonial practices, traditional rituals, participation, value



#### **Mental**

- Behavioral, intelligent, awareness, consciousness, open-minded
- Student position “*always learning*”
- Western philosophy expansion
- Traditional philosophy



#### **Physical**

- Traditional exercises, dances, sleep, traditional sweat, diet, running
- Family structure – parent roles
- What is needed in family: emotional, physical, mental, spiritual structures
- Inter-tribal/inter-racial

- Discipline, hospitality
- Daily body examination



### Communication

- Expression of emotion, venting, release
- Relationship
- Listening
- Economy
- Post traumatic stress
- Historical events, boarding school, reservations, relocation, assimilation

### CONS

Alcohol, bootleggers

Depression

Lack of established wellness programs [Kaibab Paiute]

### PROS

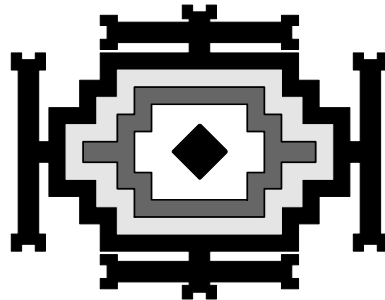
Rehabilitation (alcohol, drugs)

Safety net - gambling, Gamblers Anonymous

ALANO – for family members that live with an alcoholic

Wellness programs-healthy life style, spinning, walk-run, Zuni fitness center, a mile walk for elders and youth [Tribes with programs: Zuni, Navajo, Hualapai, Southern Ute, Ute Mountain, Northern Ute, and Havasupai]

Ethno-botany education, Hualapai program – dances, traditional food, restoring—Peach Spring



## Chapter 11

### Closing Ceremony

Before ending the meeting, we asked participants to provide closing comments, an honor offered at traditional gatherings. Here are some of the highlights of that discussion:

**CONCLUDING COMMENTS:** Recommendations from the group on how to proceed

- Moral ethics, religion, and education
- The creator gave you responsibility
- It is going to be a battle
- Do the moral thing, the ethical thing
- Do not become a rubber stamp organization
- Compassionate
- We need to be aggressive
- Courage- do you have the courage to make a stand?
- Wisdom
- The great people of the great Colorado River
- Your mind must be ready to go into battle, the Apache chief
- Respect the elders, you are worth fighting for
- Ask for help from other Tribes, it is difficult for Native peoples because we are very proud
- It is a challenge to keep everyone together and connected to these issues and to keep the focus on the solutions

**Discussion about the proceedings document:**

- Share proceedings at an inter-tribal level, to new Native America embassy, to US Presidents
- Feedback – executive summary
- Feed-back to individuals (non-tribal government approval)
- Colleges and universities -Fort Lewis College, Northern Arizona University Applied Indigenous Studies
- Make summary, art work, poems, and stories available to other Tribes, historic preservation offices
- Make a traveling educational document, representation of our voice, include writings and reading list
- Bless the traveling document in the traditional way

**Group and future gathering:**

- Lot of knowledge sharing, wisdom from tribes of Colorado
- Keep this out of the Tribal councils, sometimes some Tribal governments
- are sensitive We don't want to mess with Tribal members
- Next gathering?
- How did our elders do this in the past?

**Participants identified the need for a next gathering:**

- Nation building is happening through this process
- Next gathering early April – should be longer, leave original structures out for now
- Voice of the Earth and Universe was heard
- Elders gave us the strength to go on
- We are beginning a long battle; prepare young ones for the battle
- We are the warriors
- We have to teach the young “*here is the way*” as the elders have stated in this gathering, the children need this now
- Creator brought us together
- Dream to unite Tribes is happening
- We now have a steering committee of wise elders and traditionalist; we can enlist them in planning future events

- Want to see us two times a year

**Dale Phillips, Cocopah**

It was destiny for Indian tribes. I talked about it with elders. We made a decision we don't want Tribal government there. We had it (gathering). It was very successful. The elder said you don't know this but it's going to get bigger than what we see today. We didn't say it out loud but we told the young ones we're in for a fight. You've got to get ready. You've got to build that foundation. I am anxious to see the future. With leadership you're going the way of white man. *Let's let the Creator guide us.*

**Rex Tilousi, Havasupai**

We don't have such a word as good-bye in Supai. We say "Walk softly. Be careful. We will cross paths again, either in this life or in the spirit world. We will come together again."

Thanked the young people. You have shown us through your work you have given us the strength to go on, before I came here I thought we were the only ones fighting for these things. I feel we are not alone. We are as one together. Just like our brother says, this is the beginning of a long battle. We must have the young ones to be here at this type of meeting.

We must prepare our young ones for that battle. We must begin wearing that red paint (connects us to earth/rock). You are the warriors. We are the warriors. Let's not let this fail. I have seen a lot of these meetings. After I left nothing happened. As the Navajo say, walk in beauty, we also say walk in beauty.

**Drake Havatone, Hualapai**

My language, that's me. In my Native way and in my language I am educated. In our Native ways, we don't give out papers. It was feathers. I agree with Phil that we don't do it the Anglo way. We're in the middle. We have to respect both sides.

**Brittanni Wero, Kaibab Paiute**

Before coming to this meeting I was frustrated with Tribal governments. This has given me such hope that there are people outside of Tribal politics. It was hard to tell the story of what the Mormons did to the Paiute people. I thought, what do I have to bring to the table? I truly believe the Creator has put me here for a purpose. Thank you for the words to my son Brad. (This needs to begin with young people. We need to lift them up.)

**Glenmore Begaye, Navajo**

I've been alone, carrying the battle on, carrying on the efforts of my grandparents and great grandparents to hold on to the land. Now I have heard the voice of the universe that preserved this for

them. It's very strong for me to learn that people here are still decent people. I had gone into my shell like a turtle, now I am coming out. Various tribes have squabbled over this and that. We need to repair those relationships. Now I have direction to take home and to say to the youth, this is the direction

**Roland Manakaja, Havasupai**

I am going to commit myself and dedicate myself. After I quit drinking I looked to my ancestors. They did a lot. I said to myself I need to do what I can for my people. Some of your faces I recognize. I've seen your faces in my dreams. My uncle told me that a relative is buried under Red Butte. Grandma would tell me stories of land. I decided then I'm going to commit myself to protect these resources. Native people are like the tree. It stands strong. It has roots there. That's how I want to be - stand strong against the federal government. It's always been my dream to see the Tribes unite. I saw this as the direction we needed to go and talk to the children. I can tell grandchildren there are people who feel the same way about the land. Some are real hungry for our songs, and wisdom. A lot don't have dads. I'll be there as a warrior like my brother Stago (Phil Stago). The Creator is bringing us together because it's time for us to be together. Boundaries have changed our values. I want you to know my love is with you, the love of my people is with you. This is why they sent me here.

**Tony Skrelunas, Navajo**

You feel the calm, the purpose; you feel this is the right thing. The past two days have been almost like a ceremony but wise people have told us how to live better balanced. In our Tribe that's what a ceremony is. I look for leaders that have substance that are willing to do what it takes. There are leaders like that. This is big time guidance. We could've spent years going to Tribal councils. The people we asked to come to this meeting were the right people to ask.

**Stanley Manakaja, Havasupai**

I've learned from all of you. My heart was heavy. Right now my heart is happy to be among you. Being here reminds me of younger days. (Stanley sang two songs, one in Navajo and one in Havasupai. As he did so his wife Alberta Manakaja danced around the circle in blessings for all to have safe travels.) That is my goodbye song. Songs and prayers go out to Creator. I'm glad I shared my songs. This is my way of saying thank you to you all. They say this is the sound of the Great Spirit. There are other stories from



other tribes of how we flute players came together. We play the same tune.

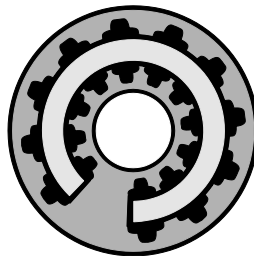
**Alberta Manakaja, Havasupai**

I've adopted some of you as my grandchildren already. I feel so comfortable with you and it makes me strong and I see all of you enthused, ready to go into the community. When I first came here I was very sad, very humble, but I

feel I have more of your prayers, encouragement. I can feel the power of it. I thank all of you for that. Thanks for spending so much time with us.

As in the beginning of the gathering Phil Stago gave a traditional closing prayer in the White Mountain Apache Language. While giving the prayer, Lloyd Arrive sang a traditional closing song. Everyone attending and all participants were at comfort and all was in beauty at this time. The meeting is strong and the recommendations will be implemented.

APPENDIX



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*“I’ve adopted some of you as my grandchildren already. I feel so comfortable with you and it makes me strong and I see all of you enthused, ready to go into the community. When I first came here I was very sad, very humble, but I feel I have more of your prayers, encouragement. I can feel the power of it. I thank all of you for that. Thank for spending so much time with us.”*

Alberta Manakaja, Havasupai Elder

*“I’ve been alone, carrying the battle on, carrying on the efforts of my grandparents and great grandparents to hold on to the land. Now I have heard the voice of the universe that preserved this for them. It’s very strong for me to learn that people here are still decent people. I had gone into my shell like a turtle, now I am coming out. Various tribes have squabbled over this and that. We need to repair those relationships. Now I have direction to take home and to say to the youth, this is the direction.*

Glenmore Begaye, Diné

*“It’s been a long time coming for our tribes to get together like this. I think we have direction now. We can do our battles together.”*

Octavius Seowtewa, Zuni

## **Miracles Do Happen In Gatherings**

Karen Francis

Miracles happen. That could have been a theme. It’s almost a miracle that we were able to meet at all. The federal government attempted to terminate us before we were even born.

And yet we were all there together, watching a Havasupai elder dance. Her ankle had given out before we were told, yet there she was making the simple steps that have been made to the beat of a hand drum for time immemorial.

These traditions are our strength - when the policy was termination and when the policy then became assimilation. This is what saved us and why we were able to meet within the realm of our sacred mountain, the San Francisco Peaks.

What we found is that there are some things that are still worth fighting for and that we must be in this fight together. We found that there is another way to begin this fight.

The belief is that we were meant to come together on these November days. For some, it was reminiscent of an actual dream and for others it was the manifestation of a long-held vision. Then, there were those that just believed the Creator was at hand in the gathering.

The presence of the Great Spirit, however one believes the Creator to be, was evident all around - from the sounds of the flute that one man played to the visits from the herd of deer-- as discussions took place and the crisp mountain air from the nearby and sacred Peaks. The sacredness was there in the prayers that were done, in the Native languages that were spoken, and the pollen that was offered.

One could close his or her eyes and imagine going back to a time when such a gathering was not rare, to a time when stories, history, songs and dances were shared in the belief that a solution could be found to whatever issue the gathering had been convened to solve.

Nearly everyone spoke of children and grandchildren as personal inspiration. Looking to traditions does not only mean looking to the past. It also means looking to the future, planning for the next generations.

We looked at what we are leaving for the future and saw that it is not satisfactory. More must be done. Some tribes are small and some people are uncertain where to start, but that is why these gatherings are needed. Where someone is lacking, another can provide direction and inspiration.

The direction came from members of the Zuni Tribe to a woman of a different Tribe when she was at a loss. The inspiration came from the entire group to one man who had been isolated for so long. They found they are not alone. They found that they are connected to other Native peoples and that they can draw strength from that.

It has been too long since such a gathering has been called, and in the time since then the issues have built up - too many to tackle within a few days. There are issues of disintegration of family, loss of cultural values and traditions, environmental degradation, health concerns, water rights, alcohol abuse, protection of sacred sites, federal policies, and leadership, to name a few. These are issues that deserve commitment.

In the old days there might have been an indeterminate amount of time devoted to such a gathering, but in modern times it may seem impossible to commit a long block of time. However, in the time we were together, there was a lot of listening. The constraints of time did not allow for every single story to be told, but it allowed for the dialogue to begin and for the connections to be made for the dialogue to continue.

Much of the talk hovered on the subject of a balance between modern and traditional worlds. How can such a balance be achieved? Tribes need economic development, but they also need to protect the environment for future generations. The Navajo people, for example, believe that they are the stewards of the land, and other Tribes have similar beliefs.

Throughout the conversations, the similarities and the differences were noticed. Our tribes often adapted from each other, and these types of gatherings were where the knowledge would be exchanged so long ago.



With today's technology, knowledge can be shared among the young people, but the young people still need the teachings of the elders. There is not one piece of technology that can replace what our elders can teach us.

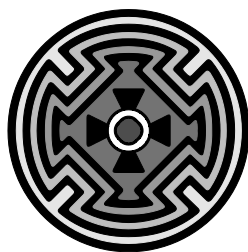
For many Native peoples, there is no word for good-bye. Yet so many were choked up as we all bid each other well as the discussion came to a close. There were tears, there were many thanks, there were songs sung and songs played, and there was the dancing and the art.

This was how the conversation stopped until continued again - with the realization that these conversations are just beginning. We saw the similarities and we saw the differences, and we know we are not alone.

Tears flowed as people realized they are not alone. We were among brothers and sisters. We were among people who felt the same way and want something done.

The tears were also because a gathering was a long time coming. For too long the people have been separated and encouraged to conflict to suit other agendas. Now it is time to come together.

Among the huge trees in the mountains, the roots were planted to look to our neighbors and ourselves to begin to solve our numerous issues - roots that will grow with time and reach to the sky.



## BIOGRAPHIES

### **REX TILOUSI**

Rex Tilousi is a respected elder from the Havasupai "People of the Bluegreen Waters". He is the former Chairman of the Havasupai Tribe. He is the keeper of the traditional songs and stories of the Havasupai. He is a voice for his Tribe on issues concerning the community's sacred Red Butte, San Francisco Peaks, and Indigenous rights in protecting Mother Earth. He is a traditional leader for his Tribe and a long-time member of the Havasupai Tribal Council, and activist against Canyon Uranium Mine. Rex has traveled internationally to attend the World Uranium Hearing in Salzburg in 1992, with his daughter Carletta Tilousi.

Carletta Tilousi is an organizer to stop uranium mining. She is a member of Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice. She states that she was taught by the elders to understand Grand Canyon is her home and it always will be and we are considered guardians of the Grand Canyon. She escorted the elders to the gathering. Both Carletta and Rex were participants in the Red Butte Gathering in the summer of 2009, a four-day gathering of Native tribes and environmental groups that represented reoccupation of sacred land held near the Grand Canyon.

### **ROLAND MANAKAJA**

Roland Manakaja is from Havasupai. He has been the Cultural Resource Director for the past sixteen years in Havasupai. In 1988 he went on the Tribal Council because the council saw him as a future leader, and he has been working for his people since then. He is a leader among his Tribe on speaking about issues concerning religious rights and environmental justice of sacred lands of Indigenous peoples. He was also the Natural Resource Manager for the Havasupai Tribe. Roland was a participant in the Red Butte Gathering in the summer of 2009, a calling for protection from proposed uranium mining near the Grand Canyon and on the Havasupai sacred site.

### **DRAKE HAVATONE**

Drake Havatone is from the Hualapai Tribe of northern Arizona. Drake finds his passion in his homeland and being along the Colorado River. He is a river guide for Hualapai River Runners and a team member of the Cultural Resources staff for the Hualapai Tribal Government.

### **GLENMORE BEGAYE**

Glenmore Begaye comes from the community of Coalmine Canyon. He has experience first hand with the hardships of his people and the fight his family has endured. Glenmore continues to follow the traditional path of his people and the traditions of his family and their connection to the land at

Coalmine Canyon.

**SUNNY DOOLEY**

Sunny Dooley joins the team of panelist from the Navajo Nation. Sunny calls Vanderwagon, New Mexico, and the surrounding landscapes home. Her remote community is located in the checkerboard land use area, 23 miles south of Gallup and 10 miles north of Zuni with a population of 3,000. In 1988 Sunny took a shift in life, she stopped working the 9-5 hour job and decide she would not work for anyone but herself and the traditional lifestyle of the Navajo people. Ya' = the sky, at'eeh = the reality.

**LORETTA JACKSON-KELLEY**

Loretta Jackson-Kelley is from the Hualapai Tribe of Peach Springs, Arizona. Loretta holds much of her tradition, culture, and traditional homeland at heart. She has dedicated her efforts toward restoring and continuing the traditional teaching of the Hualapai Tribe. She now is employed with the local Tribal government in the Department of Historical Preservation. Her position as Director of the Cultural Resource Center places her in a good position to help her Tribe retain and continue cultural values.

**LARSON GASPER**

Larson Gasper joins the group from Zuni, New Mexico, from the great Zuni Nation. His interests focus around art and the traditional arts of his people. He now works in his community as a printer and artist and is currently working on a map project with Jim Enote. Larson finds great comfort in his traditional homeland and takes great pride in his ancient tradition and culture he still practices today.

**OCTAVIUS SEOWTEWA**

Octavius Seowtewa comes from the great Zuni Nation of Zuni, New Mexico. Octavius holds much pride in his tradition and culture, therefore has dedicated the majority of his efforts and studies toward cultural preservation. His passion has led him to work for his Tribal government under the Cultural Preservation Office. Octavius has experienced the water of the Colorado River twelve times and still finds the drive to continue his work with the land the people of the area.

**MARJORIE BORST**

Marjorie Borst comes representing her rich Southern Ute culture as well as her Zuni heritage. Marjorie joins the group of panelists from Ignacio, Colorado, where she works for the Tribal government and also stands as a representative on her Tribal Council. She is a strong believer and follower of the elders' teachings. Marjorie has found a passion in the media network for years but now she seeks to advocate for unity, community, and visions among Tribal people and to carry on in good health as Native people.

**BRITTANNI WERO**

Brittanni Wero is from the Kaibab Band of Paiute and calls the beautiful landscapes of the Arizona Strip home. She is the daughter of Vivienne Jake, a strong advocate and leader of the Kaibab Paiute. Brittanni returns to her traditional homeland after living off the reservation for 20 years. When she returned she found the fight that her Tribe is facing and the continued struggle to preserve culture and tradition. She was raised by her grandparent and knows the power of elders and their teachings. She is a strong believer in continuing traditional ways and following the teachings of the elders.

**DAWA TAYLOR**

Dawa Taylor is from the Hopi Tribe and is of the Bear Strap Clan and the Spider Clan. Dawa dedicates his

time and effort in advocating language and the importance of language to Tribal people. He is currently working on language revitalization on Hopi, and believes language holds the solutions to many of the existing problems Tribes are facing today.

**PHIL STAGO**

Phil Stago came representing the great White Mountain Apache Nation. He came to the gathering with the passion to advocate and inform resource management. Phil has dedicated his time, effort, and heart to the resources of his traditional homeland. He remembered the Rodeo-Chediski fire and the pain and emotion it had on the Apache Nation. Phil now focuses his work and energy toward land and resource management for the White Mountain region.

**ERNEST HOUSE, SR.**

Ernest House, Sr. joins the group of panelists from the Ute Mountain Tribe of Colorado. Ernest House is the current Chairman his tribe and is also a respectful Vietnam veteran. Ernest carries on the traditions of his people, and as a leader he continues the role of his grandfather who once was the Chief of the Ute Mountain Tribe. As a leader of his people, Ernest House encourages the continuation of their language and ceremonial dances and practices.

**LLOYD ARRIVE**

Lloyd Arrive is from Ute Mountain-Cortez, Colorado, but is representing the Northern Uinta Ouray Ute Tribe. Lloyd has been representing the Ute Nations for a number of years as a radio DJ, a Native Voltage advocator, and as a traditional musician. Lloyd's high energy and positive-minded personality allow him to be the media voice for Indigenous people of the Four Corner States.

**NORMAN LOPEZ**

Norman Lopez comes to the gathering representing the Ute Mountain Tribe. Norman holds his traditional teachings close to his heart, and he continues to follow them today. He has focused his energy toward ensuring that the traditions and culture of the Ute people are available for future generations and that the culture is harnessed in the highest level of respect.

**VIVIENNE JAKE**

Vivienne Jake comes from the Kaibab Band of Paiute of Northern Arizona. Vivienne is well known throughout her community as a respected elder of the Kaibab Paiute people. She has been fighting to respect and ensure tradition and culture. Vivienne is currently on the Tribal Council, and puts all her energy and passion into protecting her homeland and culture.

**STANLEY AND ALBERTA MANAKAJA**

Both Stanley and Alberta Manakaja are well respected elders of the Havasupai Tribe. Stanley is a traditional leader of the Havasupai Tribe, as well as a historical chief. Stanley and his wife, Alberta, are honored participants and guests with a performance of Havasupai traditional songs and dance.

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*INTER-TRIBAL CONVERSATIONS ON THE COLORADO PLATEAU*

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## INVITED ESSAYS

In an effort to explore subjects pertaining to the First Nations of the Colorado Plateau, we invited participants and guest writers to develop short pieces that would inspire thought and discussion. Three writers submitted articles: Daniel Rosen, Kelvin Long, and Jacquelyn Dyer.

### **From Sacred Land to Holy Land: An Indigenous and Jewish Writing on Surviving the Next 1,000 Years in a World of Uncertainty**

Daniel Rosen

*Daniel Rosen is an emerging clean-tech entrepreneur, writer, and speaker who lives in Jerusalem, Israel. Daniel is committed to bringing about change in the world through business and creating new industries as part of the energy independent, regionalized/ localized, and emerging clean-tech economies. He has been a part of many teams that have lead successful social-entrepreneurial ventures such as Native Movement and the Northern Arizona Center for Emerging Technologies, a high-tech business incubator. Daniel lived for several years in northern Arizona, where he led sustainable development projects in rural communities on the Navajo and Hopi reservations. For his work there, he received the Brower Youth Award of the Earth Island Institute, given to five youth annually for environmental leadership. Daniel was adopted by several families on the Navajo Nation and other communities. He was a Fellow at the Presentense Institute, where he worked with leaders in Israel on oil independence strategies. He is a partner in Mosaic Ventures, a venture capital fund that vertically integrates investments into the clean-tech economy.*

### **Our Current Path**

The cultural, historical, and spiritual framework of Indigenous peoples and the Jewish people provides purpose and meaning as we enter the 21st century. We face a century of uncertainty. Dramatic climate change threatens life as we know it on our planet. We face other huge challenges simultaneously such as water scarcity, food insecurity, terrorism and anti-democratic regimes, and the loss and destruction of vital ecosystems. The shift that needs to be made is not merely technological.

This is much bigger than a solar panel. We need to fundamentally shift our relationship with the Earth, with each other, with our sister and brother species, and with our Creator.

In the past, civilizations have crumbled due to challenges in food security and abuse of their land's broader bio-systems. Soil erosion and the shrinking harvest led to their demise. Do we face that same fate today? We have witnessed a historic grain price hike in the last few years that gives us all reason to worry. From mid2005 to mid2008, global prices of rice, wheat, corn, and soybeans roughly tripled, reaching historic points; as a result of these price hikes, hunger is spreading rapidly. In the 1990s there were nearly 825 million hungry people. As we enter the tenth year of the new millennium the number has risen to 1 billion. With energy shortages and energy crops competing with food crops, water shortages, and other trends such as climate change, scientists estimate that we will be pushing the number of hungry people up to 1.2 billion. The growing number of starving people in the world is a critical indicator that we are indeed going through a major period of food challenges. This is a threat to the survival of humanity.

Climate change may be the defining challenge of our generation. Indigenous peoples were the first to notice the impacts. Not in 50 years. Now. An Alaskan tribe is suing the major carbon polluters for having to move their village as waters of the sea rise. Hundreds of millions, if not billions, face the same fate, as climate refugees pose one of the greatest challenges of our generation. As the Greenland and Arctic ice sheets melt, as the oceans stop acting as a carbon sink, as the rains don't fall, and the seasons don't come and go with their time, it seems the whole world is watching as the pieces begin to break. All together. All at once. All of Creation. It's like seeing a glass fall from the kitchen table, and that split moment before it hits the floor, you know full well what is about to happen. The weight of the world in that moment. Histories. Schools. Memories. Mosques. Sacred Land. Synagogues. Ecosystems. Life. All in that cup moving faster and faster down -- crashing.

U.S. Senator John Kerry recently outlined some of the threats from climate change that could impact our planet's stability. It is worth quoting in whole to give the gravity of the situation.

*"Nowhere is the connection between climate and security more direct than in South Asia -- home to al Qaeda. Scientists now warn that the Himalayan glaciers which supply fresh water to a billion people in the region could disappear completely by 2035. Think about what this means: Water from the Himalayas flows through India and Pakistan. India's rivers are not only vital to its agriculture but are also critical to its religious practice. Pakistan, for its part, is heavily dependent on irrigated farming to avoid famine.... At a moment when the U.S. government is scrambling to ratchet down tensions and preparing to invest billions of dollars to strengthen Pakistan's capacity to deliver for its people -- climate change could work so powerfully in the opposite direction."*

At the same time, population is only expected to grow and urbanization to intensify. By 2050, global population is expected to rise from today's 6.7 billion to over 9 billion, in the fastest growth period in human history. Furthermore, the number of people expected to move to urban environments in search of a middle-class standard of living is expected to have critical impact on the planet. The United Nations



estimates that in 2015 there will be 26 cities with 10 million residents or more; just 30 years ago there were five. This will mean a far greater consumption of water, energy, housing, and natural resources.

In 1900, only 160 million people, or one-tenth of the world's population, lived in urban areas. Just after the year 2000, that number had grown twenty-fold to nearly half the world's population, or 3.2 billion people.

According to UN projections, this process of urbanization is only going to accelerate. By 2025, the UN predicts 70 percent of the human population will be living in cities. By the end of this year, over half will live in urban areas for the first time in human history. Similarly, in 1950, the only city to exceed 10 million people was New York City. By 2015, of the 44 cities with 5-10 million inhabitants, as many as 39 of them will be in developing countries – the areas most poorly equipped to handle the challenges presented by a changing climate.

Either we must figure out another path forward, or we are going to live in a planet that will be as *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman describes, "Hot, Flat, and Crowded." A world that can be described as nothing short of chaos, ecological collapse, and turmoil.

There must be another path.

### **Indigenous Innovation: 500 Years of Indigenous Persistence, Resistance, Adaptation and Survival**

Indigenous peoples, who have survived the past 500 years of colonization and genocide, provide values and wisdom that are critical in this time. They have been a moral voice that has too often been ignored or intentionally stamped out. The Jewish people, thousands of years into their exile, also provide a road map on how to resist, persist, survive, and thrive in the modern world, while maintaining the essence of who we are. Exiles in a world full of exiles, our redemptive desire for our return "home," to rebuild our homelands, is the story of the longing of humanity and our world that is in exile, in war, and at the brink of chaos.

There are many myths of the past of the "ecological Indian," which help support the massive amnesia this culture faces in the responsibility of what happened in the Americas. In Charles C. Mann's groundbreaking book, *1491*, he helps to debunk this myth and shows archaeological and anthropological evidence that the Americas were actually much more inhabited and the land much more shaped by man's hands than previously imagined. To the European, the open forests and woodlands just represented unused land, but to archaeological eye, they were ingenious human design for sustainable food systems and urban developments. Mann goes on to demonstrate that the Amazon rainforest may have been one of the world's largest human artifacts - created by human hands. And due to these human feats, the Americas may have been more populated and developed than Europe.

Many people unfortunately overlook the significant contributions Indigenous peoples have given the world in math, science, agriculture, systems of government, and ecological design, before "green" was trendy. At one time, Indigenous innovations in food cultivation and forms of government saved the

Western world. Europe was in a state of famine, and Indigenous crops helped to alleviate the ecological consequences of Europe's irresponsible development. Two-thirds of the food we eat on this planet originated in the Americas before Columbus. Foods such as tomatoes, corn, and potatoes, staples in the global diet, often assumed to be always a part of the "Old World" actually originated from Indigenous innovation. The American system of democracy, considered to be the highest form of government in the Western world was taken from the Iroquois Confederation. Benjamin Franklin made a significant number of trips to the Five Nations in northern New York to understand their federation system that pulled together different groups in a unified front. Furthermore, discoveries and understandings in astronomy still puzzle scientists today--how the Indigenous people predicted so many things without the advanced optics. In mathematics, the Mayans discovered the concept of zero nearly 1,000 years before the Muslim world would bring that to the Euro-Asian world. Such contributions cannot be looked at in a vacuum. A person cannot say that these were isolated or stagnant events. History is always evolving, spiraling, and coming forth into being. As America looks forward to re-invent its economy and build the green economy, we must have the humility again to look to Indigenous wisdom. And this time, let us not take mere pieces, appropriate them as our own and run with them, but let's partner, collaborate, and give the respect and honor to Indigenous peoples. This would bode well for the reconciliation and retribution America must make to its Indigenous first inhabitants.

There are several examples of systems that worked and ones that did not. For instance, the Navajo hoghan, whose architecture displays cutting edge green technologies and designs. Many other native communities have these examples as well. Passive solar buildings that utilize local materials were the norm.

It amazes me in Native communities how embedded "green" is in the culture. Native communities are not shifting to green, they are returning to it. There is a true desire of people to live a life in balance with the Earth. This desire is not just for "green living," where products are bought because they are organic, or eco-chic, but socially and culturally. It's a holistic vision for sustainability. Community members work with one another, for example, "*you help me fix my car, I'll help you frame your house.*" They- share labor, skills, and ideas to survive, one example of how sustainability is transmitted and developed in Native communities.

There needs to be a revitalization and reclamation of this innovation as we enter the years ahead. Yet tragically, the Western world did not value the whole system of this knowledge and merely extracted parts of it. Like a buffet of food, they only chose what they wanted and did not take responsibility for the whole.

### **Our Basket, Our Gifts**

As we face each other in this gathering, our medicine instruments -- our sacred items-- surround us. They are our laws. In creation, the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island were given by the holy beings, The Creator gave us all that we needed to live and understand how to live. We were given knowledge to evolve as we each have on our journey on mother earth. As the Diné, we have the Navajo Basket. The

basket tells the story of creation -- of our journey into this world. It carries the songs, prayers, and ceremonies of our people.

Today manmade laws dominate our peoples. We see mother earth and father sky's retribution globally through climate change, water shortages, and poisonous food. On our reservations, we confront daily the challenges the Third World faces. Indigenous nations are oppressed and controlled by corporations and governments that make these laws to benefit themselves, without considering the impact of the Seventh Generation, or the sacredness of our planet.

The Natural Laws and our ceremonies are there to guide us in a necessary moral decision making process that benefits all our relations. As people today look to answers of stopping global warming and saving the global economy, it is within the framework of western values, through the same minds that created the problems. Indigenous societies understood the principles of the Natural Laws that kept things in balance and in order.

Rabbi Raz Hartman and his wife Leah remind us of the story in "Ki Tavo" in the Torah (Jewish holy book, written history and laws) the story of the Jewish basket. "Ki Tavo" literally means "*When You Come*," and it is about the Jewish relation with The Creator. It is the story about the Jewish people coming out of slavery and into that relation between man and Creation, the responsibility it holds, and what it looks like to come to the land - a place where we can build that relationship. The story begins with Moses telling the Israelites to give an offering of a portion of the first fruits of the trees they pick each year to the Creator. They are told to each make a basket, bring it to the Holy Temple, and give it to the High Priest, who holds it up and declares, "We were once slaves in Egypt where we were oppressed in slavery. We cried out to the Creator who brought us out of Egypt to this place. And now we bring our first fruits." Each of the Israelites is supposed to bring one-tenth of their fruit to the Temple, each of them saying to God, "We have done our part to bring this. You look down to bless us in the land. We give to you, you give to us." It shows a mutual responsibility and demands that our work be not only for ourselves, but also for a higher purpose.

There is a beautiful *mishnayot* (oral history) about this story - about the encounter at the Holy Temple between the High Priests who offer the sacrifice, and the Israelites who offer their baskets. It describes that the meeting between the Jewish farmer and the Priest represents the fundamental mission or responsibility we have on this planet. It represents the core of Jewish spiritual practice. The Priest spends his whole day in prayer in meditation in the Holy Temple. The farmer works the land and grows his food. With dirt in his hands, he lives according to the seasons, depends on the rain to fall in its time, and the wind to blow. The farmer meets the High Priest at the Holy Temple and holds up his basket and the Priest takes the basket. This is our work on our planet. The Creator doesn't want us just counting beads in a monastery and sitting all day in meditation and prayer. Nor does The Creator want us just to be in this physical world. The goal of humanity is to exist at the place of the meeting of the basket -- at the place where Heaven and Earth kiss. To be a bridge. To bring Heaven down to Earth.

We must renew this responsibility in this age.

**Where we meet: Strategies for resistance, persistence, survival, and thriving**

The Jewish people known for “The Book” and being people of “The Book,” did not start out that way. Like everyone else on the planet, we too were indigenous people. Our land was the Land of Israel, where we returned after thousands of years of exile. We returned a very different people than when we left, having developed into a people of great learning and intellectual rigor. But this is not where we started.

Originally we were a people of the land. Our lives and beliefs bound up and connected to the Earth upon which we walked. We had a central temple in Jerusalem. It was believed that this place was the holiest place on Earth - a remnant of Gan Eden (The Garden of Eden), a place where you could see holiness in everything. The Creator walked among us. It is believed that after we didn't follow the laws The Creator had set for us, we were exiled from Gan Eden.

From the beginning of our exile from the Garden, to many more forms of exile to come, we finally came to the land where we could once again build that relationship with the Creator. The Holy Temple was the central place of that meeting. We had priests that came from a specific tribe who were in charge of the animal sacrifices and all ritual connected with our belief system. Our holidays were and still are based around a lunar calendar, most holidays falling on either the new or the full moon. And these holidays are also based around the seasons – the transitions from one to another, harvest, rain, and planting times.

There is a deep connection to the Earth as we are meant to care for the entire planet – we are merely caretakers here to serve. There are ancient prayers and connections to animal spirits and a deep belief in our ability to connect and speak with animals and plant life. This is our root and foundation and this is a Judaism mostly unknown – even to the Jews.

Jews nowadays have been taught a belief system structured almost entirely around the study of the Torah – the Bible and commentaries around the Bible. The Torah is likened to water – we drink from it and it sustains us. Within the Torah is every story, law, idea and belief system espoused by the Jews over the last several thousand years. It includes all the creation stories and laws and all the commentaries and ideas as life continued to evolve for the Jews in the many places we found ourselves.

The writing began in earnest once we were conquered, taken captive, and brought in to exile. The Temple was destroyed, our blood ran thick in the streets of Jerusalem, and we were off our land, the main life source for our religion. As our old way was destroyed we realized the only way to survive was to adapt. What was once a deep oral tradition was all written down so it would not be lost. The old hierarchy of the tribe of priests was dissolved as the Temple was destroyed and we did not live in Israel anymore. Animal sacrifice was no more. Instead, along with writing everything down, we created a new form of worship.

Rabbis came into being. These people could come from any tribe within the nation, and the old requirement was that they were deeply learned in the Torah – the old stories along with all the oral

traditions, laws and commentaries. Likewise, as there was no more temple because there was no more land, synagogues were created. The synagogue is a place of worship, any place where Jews can congregate to study and pray. So, it was no longer on the sacred land, but nonetheless through the adaptation there was continuity. Externally it all seemed different but the root was still the same. There was always the heartbeat, the pulse of Jerusalem. Knowing where our home was kept us alive in exile. Outside the land, we still celebrated the ceremonies of harvest, rain, and planting according to Jerusalem. If there was still snow on the ground where we lived, we would still celebrate Pesach, because it was springtime in Jerusalem.

This was a great achievement. A small tribe adapting in such a radical way, leaving behind all the old external ways but maintaining the essence and transforming the religion to the new time and place.

What has happened in this time, now, is that we are in a new renaissance. The “People of the Book” are starving for some Earth. The adaptation, brilliant as it was, has reached its peak of efficacy and has begun to dwindle. The adaptation is what allowed us to survive for all these years and now that we have returned and in this new age, we need to regain some of the old ways. Not a return to the priesthood and animal sacrifices, but to heart and connection to the Earth.

This is where Jews and Native Americans meet. The Jews have tremendous amounts of information and knowledge in how to adapt, survive, resist, and thrive. Indigenous peoples are now in dire need of this information. It has only been a few hundred years since the Native Americans have been removed from their land, and their culture and religion has been severely disrupted. Modern society is not going away. The only way for survival is adaptation; otherwise it will be complete assimilation and the end of Indigenous culture.

The Jews (and the world) also need the help of the Indigenous community. In working for our survival, we lost our heart and connection to the Earth. There are some sects within Judaism that have maintained a connection to some degree, but the mainstream Jew has very little sense of this connection. That is why there has been a mass exodus of Jews from their religion. It feels dry and disconnected, secrets shared only with those who dedicate their life to the study of Torah. So many Jews seek elsewhere, as an example, Jews are about two percent of the population of the United States, but are about thirty percent of the Buddhist community here. They desire connection but feel that it is not to be found in their own religion. This is sad, as it is all there, waiting to be rediscovered. All they need is someone to show them the way.

A collaboration between the Jewish community and the Indigenous community could yield tremendous results. Jews imparting wisdom on how to adapt and maintain the essence while shifting external, ceremonial aspects, and Native Americans helping Jews to reclaim their connection to the Earth through a combination of their teachings and ceremonies and our own rediscovery of the teachings and ceremonies that have been part of our tradition for thousands of years.

### **From Sacrifice Lands to Sacred Lands**

Our generation faces the challenge of not only deciding what direction we are going as a country, but our generation decides what type of species is the human race. The survival of humanity depends on our generation. Are we going to be bumble bees or are we going to locusts? Will our works be a blessing or a curse?

We were the first generation born that could go beyond what divides us on our surface and create new relations, new families, beyond the old models of division that separated us. Like this writing itself, we can come across boundaries and form new ideas, new ways of relating to our world. We are exiles in a world full of exiles.

As our global economy crashes and the industrial era comes to an end, our generation can build the type of economy that includes all people, that considers all life sacred, and that helps to fulfill the promise of our ancestors. We can build an economy based on abundance as opposed to scarcity. Intelligence instead of stupidity. Renewable instead of finite. Sacred instead of destructive.

We are entering the climate energy era, where human- caused climate change stands to disturb all life on our planet. The moment beckons for global action. Not merely slowing down as we drive off a cliff, but radically changing directions. In order to build this new era, we must look to old ways that worked, and innovate and create new models that work today.

Indigenous peoples, thrown into exile into the hottest, windiest places, hold the resources to the renewable energy economy - sitting on over 80% of the renewable energy in the United States. As sovereign nations, we have the right to write our own laws, to break all the rules, create new ones based on old ones, and build a model of sustainability of human survival in the 21st century. We could make our homelands the first carbon-free zones in the world -- models for other nations.

Jews who have returned to our homelands have become technological leaders in renewable energy and water efficiency out of necessity. "To make the desert bloom," the vision of Jews as we returned to our ancestral homeland, now rings true for all of humanity as we look forward into a scary future of water scarcity, food insecurity, energy shortages, and development models gone wrong. Indigenous nations and Jews can partner together to come up with the solutions to the environmental challenges of the 21st century, while maintaining our cultures and renewing our responsibility of stewardship. The sacrificed lands and peoples of the last economy can become the sacred ones of this one. Where they once stood as a place of exploitation let them be a place of offering to save our world.

*This is much bigger than a solar panel.* What is our relationship to our planet, to each other, to our sister and brother species? Are we locusts? Or are we humming bees. Our work is not over even when we cover our lands in wind turbines and solar panels, creating the development models of the 21st century. Our work is not over if we just invent the next efficient solar panel or create the new technologies. Our lands were left for sacrifice and destruction, the demolition grounds for mining industries. Our people's bloods spilled for a system that didn't work. We must shift from the sacrifice of destruction to that of offering. To lift up our baskets, fill it with our first and best fruits of our labors,

and bring them to the place where heaven and earth meet -- where our works of our hands can be for a blessing.

**AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE ON LEADERSHIP, SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURAL SURVIVAL**

Kelvin Long

We as human beings are blessed to live in what I see as the perfect time for global healing and balancing. Negative impacts caused by corporations, colonialism, government, economy, wars and climate change are some of the most destructive forces to mankind and our environment. With global healing and balance, we will allow for the collective elevation of our consciousness. At different levels, we are all still connected to our homelands and ways of life.

Many of us also consider ourselves to be Indigenous. Our names for ourselves are “the people” and we continue striving to learn and live life, as intended when the creator put us here on our homelands. Through various means shared with us, we remember to heal and stay connected by the songs, prayers, ceremonies, and all the other ways that teach us as we each journey in this physical reality.

As Indigenous people we have an understanding that there are basic needs in order to live. It is the same understanding as what is being taught in today’s Euro-American classrooms, as well as other educational institutions around the world. What we realize is this: that there are four basic ingredients for life on our planet - water, air, earth, and sun.

Now more than ever it is important to understand the difference between what we want, and what we need, to live. Our lives and the future generations’ lives depend’ on comprehending this! The reality is that almost all modern societies are disconnected from the natural laws. Most have become dependent on the laws and technological advances of man. The problem with this disconnection is that people no longer own or control their own lives and become in a sense an unconscious slave. The decision makers who control government and global trade claim our natural resources and use this as a control mechanism.

In a controlled society the vision of humanity eclipsed with strategic marketing and propaganda, where what is assumed or created is a fantasy image of what we need. In America we are told what we need, and see it constantly on television, magazines, online, or hear about in music. These “needs” or rather wants, are disguised with the alluring temptations and suggestions of sex, success, wealth, and luxury. This is simply propaganda that blurs the reality of the corporations and government, which continue to commit human rights violations through illegal occupations as millions of people are being relocated, exploited, starved, and abused. This masks of fantasy hides the real identity of government and corporate rule of empire by any means necessary.

The majority of the population on our planet is working to survive. Everyday, about 99 percent of the world’s people compete for 10 percent of the world’s economy so that they can survive and provide food, water, clothing, shelter, and happiness for their loved ones. There is also about 1 percent that owns the other 99 percent of the world’s economy. These people do not have to worry about providing because they were either born into a wealthy, privileged, and powerful family or are part of a corporate structure that dominates over half of today’s global economy. These structured power paradigms are based on western and capitalistic economic value systems, which are structured empire. It is seen today with the political elite and corporations where a few continue to prosper while the rest of America and the world continue to spiral into recession.

Growing up with a traditional cultural foundation, as well as having a western education, I realized two very distinct value systems. This realization of value, in my mind stands out as the greatest difference between North American Native people and non-native people. The difference between Native traditional values and western economic values is also one of the answers for our decisions that we will have to make. The point is this. We are now at a very specific, pivotal point in our history both as



Native people and global citizens. We share a parallel path of survival, one is Indigenous cultural survival and the other is the human survival.

President Barack Obama, in a his MIT speech at MIT on clean energy, said:

So we are seeing a convergence. The naysayers, the folks who would pretend that this is not an issue, they are being marginalized. But I think it's important to understand that the closer we get, the harder the opposition will fight and the more we'll hear from those whose interest or ideology run counter to the much needed action that we're engaged in. There are those who will suggest that moving toward clean energy will destroy our economy -- when it's the system we currently have that endangers our prosperity and prevents us from creating millions of new jobs. There are going to be those who cynically claim -- make cynical claims that contradict the overwhelming scientific evidence when it comes to climate change, claims whose only purpose is to defeat or delay the change that we know is necessary. *(October 23, 2009).*

Income is the general measure for poverty and success in America. Now as we begin to share and understand our values, it is also important to identify in our Native communities what values will redefine our measure of success. Every government around the world has its own way to measure poverty and wealth. In recent times the American dollar has dominated the global market and has been used as that scale. At our local level we should undertake comprehensive efforts to improve all of our societies and environments, to lift people out of poverty, protect our clean water supplies, our land base for food and development, our natural resources, and our culture as we heal our nations.

Indigenous people now have more young people than ever, who have gone to college and have expertise in science, math, language, and politics to name a few. Together we unravel and discover the western world with our own interpretations and blend the values that will move us forward to a sustainable world. There are some key elements to our success, including networking, strategic planning, think tanks, writing, dialogue, action, and the wisdom that comes along with these practices. In Diné we identify this with the four directions: the East (Thought), the South (Planning), the West (Life or Implementation), the North (Wisdom and Success).

Now we all have a choice to make--either to continue down the destructive path of resource consumption and pollution, or embrace traditional sustainable values. Imagine a baby eagle leaving the nest for the first time, will it spread its wings and fly or keep it closed and fall?

By opening our minds to a value system that adheres to the natural laws, we see and understand that we are part of nature and must maintain a relationship to everything in our environment. The alternative is to keep our minds closed and live only within the context of the manmade laws, laws that put man first and above all others. These manmade laws have been the tools that allow for the corporate and government power paradigms to exist. As a human, it is a blessing to reason. In reasoning we allow for our individual selves to reach a full potential, and in reasoning as a group we can find the solutions we need and overcome any adversity.

In our traditional ways we have these instruments and teachings. For example, the Navajo ceremonial basket guides us in our reasoning with the laws of nature and creation. Also it guides our physical being, mental being, spiritual being, and emotional being so that they work as one. In one hand we have a traditional system in which honorable members of the family or community have long-term vision for all members of society, and are looked to for ceremonies, problem solving and planning to make moral decisions. On the other hand, we have the western structure, where the mental being is in control, and

the physical, emotional, and spiritual beings are separated and are not used in the decision making process. The government leaders are also elected to a limited number of years, and unfortunately as history shows, political decisions then become short term and legacy for re-election rather than what is best for all members of society.

We have a responsibility to all who exist, and to ourselves so we may stay balanced. The next millennium will be the greatest collective test of mankind. If we wish to continue to have our ways of life, our land, and our ceremonies, we must as Indigenous peoples of the Colorado Plateau stand together with one voice to become global leaders in sustainability, not only by speaking or writing but by example.

Our nations, tribal governments, and organizations can be conduits by taking ownership once again of our cultural identity, our language, our communities, and our homelands. With the guidance of our ceremonies and sacred instruments, moral decisions and laws that are in line with the natural laws, like the recent Navajo green jobs legislation, can be used as examples of how to transition our communities in a healthy way.

As we should all know, we do not stand alone, and we are not the first to face great adversity. We have many generations ahead of us and behind us to lean on. I often ask myself at times, how did my ancestors survive the Long Walk? Livestock reduction? Being put in boarding schools, and having language and culture taken with the lives of our elders and children by efforts to terminate and assimilate us?

I think about the strength and characteristics that they had and have passed on to me through stories and songs. So this is my conclusion. Each of us is on our own path, but we also share many similarities on our journey and that is why you are here now. Now you have a choice! And always remember, every word and thought is creation so please act as your morals and conscience guide you!

## **PLAN FOR A NEW NATIVE AMERICAN CENTURY**

**BY JACQUELYN DYER, HOPI**

Indian people are blessed with rich cultural heritage, a gift which we have preserved despite the adversity we have faced. For economic recovery to take place, it will be important to change the basis on which business practices were designed. Tribes can help with this in many ways by operating businesses in a manner that coincides with traditional values. Let's start with an introduction of where the ideas presented here came from.

Ever since I was small, my grandparents taught me about the importance of conservation. I am Water Clan in Hopi, so most of my teachings had to do with water. My grandmother would tell me to turn off the water when we brushed our teeth, and to take shorter showers. Wasting water was disrespectful. She would take me out to our family's ranch to show me about the springs. She taught me that water is living, that water is life.

When I was older one of the last conversations I had with my grandfather was about the role of my clan within this world. He told me that he is from the Bear Clan and that members of the Bear Clan hold the world in their paws. It is a great responsibility and I was part of that heritage. He told me to take strength from my bear ancestry.

More significantly, I was born for the Water Clan. He told me that it is the Water Clan's responsibility to care for the water of the Earth so that all life can survive. It was at that moment that I realized where my desire to be helpful to all in this life came from. I am Hopi and we pray for and work for all life. This philosophy has transcended into my work amongst the business world and for economic development on the reservations.

I predict there will be periodic surges of growth in the economy over the next few years. However, this will merely hide the underlying problem in our economy for a short period of time. A robust recovery will require a new playing field, one which must include new regulations in financial markets. Wall Street's insatiable greed must be replaced with a more sustainable attitude. This is where Native values can best contribute to an economic recovery. Native people have always cared for and thought about the welfare of future generations. The Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy states: "In every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

We will achieve this when all businesses are held accountable for the social costs associated with their business operations. It should no longer be acceptable to realize profits at all costs regardless of the long-term effects on the health of people, the economy, or the availability of resources for future generations. Perhaps we can learn a lesson from the Hopi.

Hopi villages used to have village criers. They would stand on top of the mesa and relay important information to the villagers. Often they would inform people when someone needed help fixing their house, or with their fields. This community approach to getting things done was an important way to keep the village in operation. Tribal businesses can take the village crier approach to doing business. Help each other and grow together, taking into consideration the benefit of all communities.

There are several approaches that Tribes can take to help turn this economy around and create a better world for doing business. Many Tribes have invaluable resources such as forestry, energy, fisheries, water rights, ecotourism and gaming, that can be utilized to create sustainable businesses while stimulating the United States' and international economies. Business development requires an infusion of capital which can happen with innovative finance practices.

First, we should make a goal concerning the economic recovery. "To create wealth." Real wealth. Different from much of the "wealth" gained in the financial sector during the last decade. Now let's take that a step further and ask what changes would our ancestors perceive or appreciate as valuable? There is little doubt to me that land would be at or near the top of their list.

After a century of neglecting Tribal lands, I propose the Indian nations take a bold step and start a sustainable forestry initiative. Forests all over the West are in desperate need of thinning and burning. At the same time, Chevron is predicting that forest biofuels could replace up to 20 percent of petroleum consumption in the US. A progressive, new forestry plan which addresses climate change through biofuels, sustainable timber harvest, prescribed burning, and so forth is necessary. Natives were the original foresters of North America, using prescribed fire as an effective management tool. This would also create new opportunities with regard to forest recreation/hunting/fishing/ecotourism.

In addition to biofuels, Tribes are blessed with solar, wind, and geothermal energy resources. There are many existing projects happening on Tribal lands that are in need of startup capital. Each Tribe should assess its individual ability to produce energy from various renewable resources. Stimulus money could then be diverted towards these projects. In this manner, Tribes could make good progress towards improving the US energy supply, Native people's independence, and the environment.

Some Tribes are engaging in sustainable fishing practices by constantly monitoring fish reproduction rates and setting quotas based on those reproduction rates. However, most Tribes are still being taken advantage of by the process of fish buying in itself. To take a fish to market, it travels through several different channels with the price increasing each time it changes hands. During the 2009 commercial salmon fishing season on the Northwest coast, fishermen were paid sometimes only \$.60 per pound for the best salmon in the world. That is an astounding price when the local market charges \$16.99 per pound for fresh salmon. Tribes with fishing rights can start their own fish processing plants which would then give them the opportunity to offer Tribal fishermen fair prices for their fish. This fish can then be sold on the open market, offering good profit margins to the Tribes because the channel of distribution would be minimized. The fish processing plants can also be utilized for food processing in the off-season. Food processing could offer local farmers a decent avenue to sell their goods.

Water rights present a great way for Tribes to utilize their resources to aid in the economic recovery. Most Native people are traditionally organic farmers of some sort, even the Hopis living in the desert in northern Arizona. We are learning that chemical farming has far-reaching negative effects on society. Tribes could engage in organic and sustainable agricultural practices. This would provide much needed fresh foods and jobs to Tribal members. The goods can be marketed as “Native Organically Grown” to provide income for the Tribes. The goods could be sold on the international market at a discounted price by utilizing the sovereign nature of Tribal governments.

Gaming was always a controversial issue for me until I worked for a gaming Tribe. I learned that it is providing an important source of income for many Tribes. I also learned that there is an opportunity to manage the money in a more efficient manner. By doing so, the money can be used as leverage for many other economic opportunities to ensure future prosperity. For example, the money can be used to provide seed capital for small business ventures for Tribal members or to buy land. Tribal small business ventures would create a demand for goods, thus stimulating the economy. Buying land increases the land base by which Tribes could promote sustainable ways of living.

Ecotourism presents a wonderful opportunity to bring money into local communities while teaching others about our important traditional ways of life. This is represented in ecotourism’s philosophies of having minimal impact on the land and cultivating the teachings of our ancestors. Arts and crafts have always been a big part of my family, and I have learned that this is pretty standard across Indian Country. People around the world are searching for more meaningful travel experiences. Nature tours and cultural experiences present a good way to fill this desire. Authentic Indian art makes the perfect souvenir.

Making all this happen requires capital. For small businesses, Native American community development financial institutions (CDFI) provide a perfect source for entrepreneurs to obtain low-interest, non-traditional financing. CDFIs also provide financial education classes, small business success coaching, and credit builder services. As the saying goes, it takes money to make money. It is also important to learn how to manage the money so it will continue to grow.

Native Americans can absolutely play an important role in economic recovery, both here and abroad. To do so we must incorporate our traditional teachings of sustainability and respect for the Earth into our economic plans. This will help improve the stability of our economy while preserving life for future generations to come.

Usquali (Thank you).