

Insights and Reflections: Tribal Perspectives on Resilience

A Resilience Exchange took place on May 25, 2022. The Resilient Nation Partnership Network and the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) co-hosted. The topic of the panel was Tribal perspectives on resilience. The following key points were discussed by the panelists.

Key Points and Considerations

- Knowledge first requires participation.
- Tribal people do not separate the environment from culture and society.
- Working with Tribal peoples and governments is an ongoing process. It is not an event. Engaging a Tribal nation is a relationship with a community. It is not a business transaction with a client. It requires an investment in the Tribal nation, on both the community and government levels.
- Do not assume that a tribal member is officially speaking for their Tribal government. As in any sovereign government, that responsibility lies with the elected or appointed representative(s).
- Each Tribal community has its own history and culture including that of shared experiences of colonialism that has affected respective cultural and social survival mechanisms.
- The U.S. government has a federal trust responsibility, which is the fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of Tribal Nations whenever Tribal interests are concerned.
- Indigenous peoples still maintain place-based knowledge that holds thousands of years of social, governance, economic, political and natural resource relationships. This diversity gives them multiple ways of understanding resilient interactions between humans and the ecosystem.
- The cornerstone of resiliency is recognizing that there are intertwined tangible and intangible relationships that must be tended and mended through healing, acknowledgement and trust.
- Traditional cultural and ecological knowledge is sound science. It is passed down through oral traditions. You must be ready to hear it before the elders can share it with you. You must earn their trust and be emotionally/mentally ready to learn. Further, you partner with Tribal Nations as equals for the purposes of mutual benefits; you do not study them as they are not “laboratory/research subjects.”



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Contributors: Diné Nation; ITEP; Volya Innovative Solutions; Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska; Climate Science Alliance; L.I.G.H.T. Foundation; Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Climate Change Program

Projects and Resources Shared by the Private Sector and Nonprofits

Panelists and participants shared projects and resources during this event. The materials' inclusion in this list is not an endorsement by FEMA or the federal government.

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- [Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Climate Change Program](#)
- [Building Authentic Collaborations with Tribal Communities: A Living Reference for Climate Practitioners](#), Climate Science Alliance
- [Climate Science Alliance](#)
- [Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals Tribes & Climate Change Program](#)
- [L.I.G.H.T. Foundation](#)
- [National Diversity In Stem Conference](#), Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science
- [Tribal Climate Change Assessments and Adaptation Plans](#), Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals
- [Tribal Climate Change Project](#), University of Oregon
- [Tribal Program](#), GRID Alternatives
- [We Come For Good: Archaeology And Tribal Historic Preservation At The Seminole Tribe Of Florida](#), University of Florida Press