

Government Funding of Native American Cultural Foodways, Conservation and Land Management



This publication is a Capstone Report to complete a Master of Science degree in Sustainable Food Systems.

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Executive Summary

Tribes in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) are working to increase First Foods access, heal ecosystems, preserve their cultures, and prepare future generations to culturally manage First Foods landscapes as their ancestors have done for millennia. This paper examines present-day government food system funding and advocates for the integration of tribal governments into funding systems and to address the funding gaps where agricultural funding does not reach First Foods cultures. This paper explores existing USDA funding opportunities, analyzes their applicability to First Foods, and produces policy ideas and recommendations for USDA agencies, tribal governments and tribal food policy leaders.

In modern times, tribal governments represent tribes in their government-to-government relationship with the U.S., who has treaty and trust responsibilities to tribal governments. These trust responsibilities extend to food, land, welfare, education, health and many other promises made by the U.S. to tribes, with federal agencies like the USDA improving systems to be inclusive to tribes.

In the 2018 Farm Bill, the Native Farm Bill Coalition achieved important provisions for Indigenous foods, laying groundwork for potential funding to be directed to tribal governments for food and agriculture in the future. This paper explains how Pacific Northwest First Foods cultures are unique from agricultural tribes in many other regions of the U.S. and explores how funding structures built for individual businesses do not match the cultural and environmental context for First Foods.

Currently, tribal governments are limited in their capacity to address First Foods needs due to systemic issues, one of which includes funding systems. This paper explores policy proposals by leading Indigenous food policy organizations and seeks to add regional context and integrate First Foods needs into policy proposals for future Farm Bills. Lastly, this paper also seeks to outline the funding discrepancy for tribal governments, spark regional conversations to build consensus around First Foods funding needs, and prepare PNW tribes for potential funding for First Foods in the near future.

Preface

About the development of this research project

I am an enrolled Tribal Member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and started a “traditional foods” program for my tribe in 2010 called Healthy Traditions. The mission of the CTSI Healthy Traditions project is to improve the health of Siletz Tribal Members through educational activities which promote the use of traditional foods through: hunting, fishing, gathering, gardening, cooking, food preservation and protecting our natural resources. One of the main barriers that I found in building the program was the lack of access to ancestral foods, also known as First Foods. The abundance of First Foods maintained by our tribes’ ancestors have been depleted or extirpated due to the ongoing impacts of colonization that continue today with decimated salmon populations and landscapes of camas eradicated and replaced with modern conventional cropping systems, and development. Our communities have become, like all Americans, inter-dependent on commercial agriculture. Today there are many individuals and families who carry out their cultural roles in the food system as gatherers, fishing and hunting to feed their communities. However, the abundance of those foods has been threatened for generations and are under increasing pressures as commercial interests seek to commodify sacred foods and export them outside our tribal communities.

Often, when talking about funding challenges with non-Native allies, they say that tribes should be selling their First Foods so that they have the funding to continue their First Foods work. This is the modern commercial model of exporting your food to sustain yourself. I understand why they encourage this because that is how our modern food system functions. However, because these foods are not abundant enough for the needs of our tribal communities, how could we, in good conscience, export staple foods—sacred foods away from our communities? Our First Foods are sometimes rare or on the brink of extinction. The deprivation of our food system is what needs to be addressed before we can consider an export model as a feasible option.

What then is the economic system for tribes to heal their food system?

In the absence of commercial funding to support First Foods work, tribal governments are left to sue for damage to our ecosystems (litigation that they could lose, then set precedent for the denial of other tribes seeking justice), self-fund restoration of entire landscapes (with the limited funds available from economic development), seek donations from their communities or philanthropy, or apply for competitive, short-term, pilot-project grant funding.

This research project seeks to advocate for tribal government funding resources. This is an advocacy report, intentionally partial and focused on drawing attention to the inequity of the funding system that tribes find themselves in today. As a student, I have done my best to represent the voices of my tribe and neighboring tribes who are deep in the work of healing our food systems. I take responsibility for the contents of this report and invite any criticisms or constructive feedback if I have misinterpreted or misrepresented tribal history or study participants in any way. I respect the research agreements made with partnering tribes and am accountable to make any requested changes.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Methodology.....	10
Project Scope.....	10
Research Design and Framework.....	10
Chapter 1 - Tribal Government Funding.....	17
US Trust Responsibility to Tribes.....	17
Tribal Government funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).....	18
First Foods Funding Gap.....	21
Chapter 2 - Tribal Government Interview Data.....	23
Funding Need Theme: Capacity.....	27
Funding Need Theme: Cultural Resources and NEPA.....	37
Funding Need Theme: Outreach, Education and Workforce Development.....	41
Funding Need Theme: Access to First Foods.....	46
Other Funding Needs.....	60
Chapter 3 - The state of USDA funding for First Foods.....	65
NRCS Funding.....	68
NRCS Funding Opportunity 1: Conservation Technical Assistance.....	68
NRCS Funding Opportunity 2: Urban Agriculture Innovation Grants.....	71
NRCS Funding Opportunity 3: Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities.....	72
NRCS Funding Opportunity 4: RCPP - Regional Conservation Partnership Program Projects.....	73
NRCS Funding Opportunity 5: Equity in Conservation Outreach Cooperative Agreements.....	75
NRCS Funding Opportunity 6: Conservation Innovation Grants.....	79
NRCS Funding Opportunity 7: Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership.....	80
NIFA Funding.....	81
NIFA Funding Opportunity 1: Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.....	83
NIFA Funding 2: Tribal Programs.....	84
NIFA Funding 3: Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI).....	89
Forest Service Funding.....	95
Forest Service Funding Opportunity 1: Collaborative Forest Restoration Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) funding.....	98

Forest Service Funding Opportunity 2: Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA).....	99
Forest Service Funding Opportunity 3: Urban and Community Forestry Program.....	101
Chapter 4 - Policy Recommendations	102
Funding Policy Recommendations	102
Capacity Recommendations	102
Cultural Resources and NEPA Recommendations	104
Outreach, Education and Workforce Development Recommendations.....	105
First Foods Access Recommendations.....	106
Other Funding Recommendations	108
Recommendations for Tribal Governments	109
Future Policy Ideas for Native Farm Bill Coalition and advocacy groups.....	115
Conclusion	119
Resources	122
Leading policy advocates and resources:	122
Appendix.....	123
Appendix A: About Tribal Government participants	123
Appendix B: Funding from the Department of the Interior (DOI)	128
Appendix C: Example of DOI funding that will soon be available to tribal governments	131
DOI Land and Water Conservation Fund.....	131
Appendix D: NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant award data	133
Appendix E: NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) grant award data	141
Appendix F: Acronyms.....	147
Appendix G: Additional Terminology.....	148
Appendix H: Mainstream vs. First Foods	149
Appendix I: Interview Questions.....	150
References.....	154

Introduction

When making an argument for resources, it is encouraged to identify the “why” of your mission. This study does not seek to validate why Indigenous food systems have value, rather this project affirms the inherent value of First Foods and the value of Native American tribes and tribal cultures. This study seeks to understand “how” Indigenous food systems can be funded to ensure the abundance of First Foods for current and future generations.

How can tribal governments access funding resources to restore First Food ecosystems and revitalize their First Food cultures?

The following chapters provide an overview of how tribal governments are funded. To start, a discussion of how Pacific Northwest First Foods cultures are distinct from domesticated agriculture is presented (Chapter 1). Next, tribes share their funding needs for First Foods (Chapter 2). Then existing United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding opportunities are assessed for their accessibility to tribal governments and their applicability to First Foods (Chapter 3). And lastly, policy recommendations are presented to improve funding accessibility for tribal governments with the goal to make funding more applicable to First Foods (Chapter 4).

This study examines existing funding structures with special focus on funding available through the USDA, although there are additional federal agencies that also impact Pacific Northwest First Foods funding for tribes. During interviews with tribal government employees, questions regarding other funding sources were raised and those other funding sources will be included for context and additional information. The project does not address all funding questions from tribes due to the limited duration of this research project, however, this capstone report demonstrates the need for further research in this subject area.

Study Design

Research Questions:

How can tribal governments fund their communal First Foods’ food systems?

What are the funding gaps between USDA funding opportunities and the funding needs of federally recognized tribes to restore and maintain First Foods cultures?

What USDA funding sources can be used by tribal governments to support non-commercial, communal First Foods culture?

What funding policies would make it easier for tribal governments to grow and sustain First Foods programs?

This report examines existing USDA funding opportunities and examines their applicability to First Foods, while also building a basic understanding of how tribal governments are funding their work with

First Foods. Interviews with USDA employees expand on desk research on funding opportunities. Interviews with tribal government employees and representatives expand considerations and contexts specific to each tribal government and identifies funding needs.

By comparing funding opportunities to funding needs—funding gaps are identified and policy recommendations are developed to describe the need specific to First Foods and tribal governments (Figure 1).

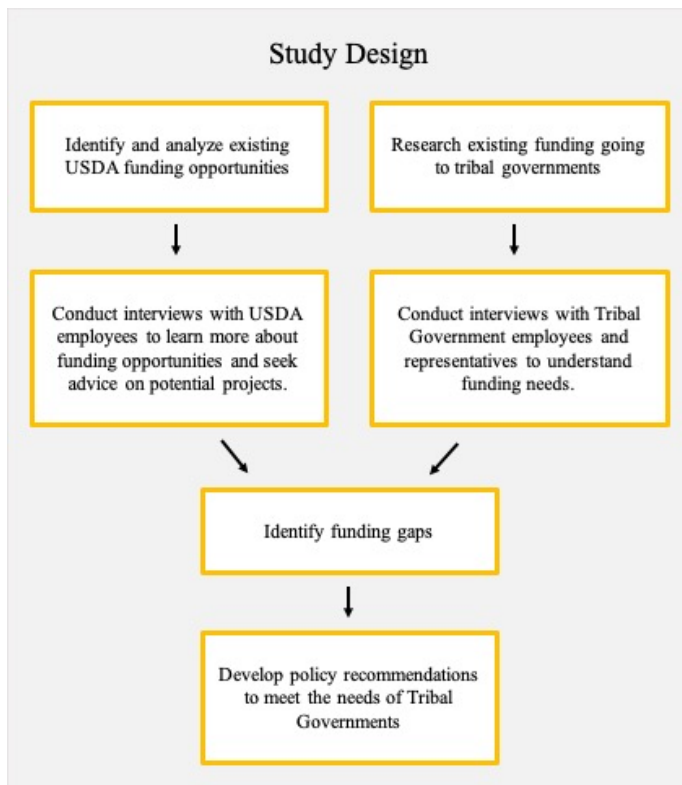


Figure 1: This study utilizes data from the USDA and tribal governments to identify funding gaps and inform policy recommendations.

What are First Foods?

First Foods is a common terminology used by many Native American tribes in the Pacific Northwest when referring to foods that their ancestors have eaten and stewarded since time immemorial. Many tribes have creation stories about how foods came to be, how the world was put together and how humans are to live in good relations with everything around them. Tribes have religious practices, traditions and ceremonies for specific foods, and honoring the foods with their respectful actions is what ensures the foods come back year after year. First Foods are central to tribal identity and cultural continuity.

There is no formal published definition for First Foods, however the term is used in publications about First Foods and the researcher can attest that the term is distinctively used by many Pacific Northwest tribes. When referring to First Foods, a speaker may also say Traditional Foods or Cultural Foods, but the

meaning is specifically talking about pre-contact ancestral foods. Tribes might also refer to First Foods in their own unique languages. The researcher has chosen to use the term First Foods throughout this publication, because of its prevalence and because the name clearly indicates a distinct regional foods culture common amongst Pacific Northwest tribes.

What is a tribal government?

A federally recognized tribe is an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation, and is eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Furthermore, federally recognized tribes are recognized as possessing certain inherent rights of self-government (i.e., tribal sovereignty) and are entitled to receive certain federal benefits, services, and protections because of their special relationship with the United States. At present, there are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages.

(Indian Affairs, n.d.-b)

Tribal governments represent the interests of their communities in government-to-government relations, and many of them have ratified and/or unratified treaties with specific rights or jurisdictions. Tribes may have overlapping homelands, such as areas of historic trade, including tribes who were removed from ancestral land and placed upon land within another tribes' homeland. Some tribal governments were set up separately by the federal government but are made up of individuals who came from the same ancestral communities, or ancestral communities that were spread between multiple reservations. Many tribal governments represent multiple tribes who were consolidated (confederated) into one tribal government. Tribal governments work to protect the rights of their tribes, are accountable to their tribal citizens, and work to improve the health and wellbeing of their communities.

Terminology:

Tribal government and federally recognized tribes will be used interchangeably.

574 sovereign tribal nations (variously called tribes, nations, bands, pueblos, rancherias, communities, and Native villages) have a formal nation-to-nation relationship with the US government. These tribal governments are legally defined as “federally recognized tribes” (National Congress of American Indians, n.d.-a).

Why focus on funding for tribal governments?

Tribal governments are unique governments with broad responsibilities and funding needs

Since the civil rights era, tribal governments have made hard-earned strides in asserting tribal sovereignty to improve health, education and economic development. Government agencies are tasked with important public needs like reducing poverty, increasing food security, combating public health challenges, and protecting the environment. Various government agencies spread aid and financial assistance down through tribes, as well as states, counties, cities, and other municipalities. Tribal reservations and

homelands overlap and span across state and county lines, and tribal governments provide a broad range of services often delegated to state and local governments, all while engaging in nation-to-nation intergovernmental interaction and ensuring treaties are upheld. These are large and heavy responsibilities on the shoulders of tribal governments.

Tribal communities and economies have suffered enormous loss of First Foods availability due to compounding factors (including colonization, climate change, loss of rights, etc.), and tribal governments are leading the efforts to heal ecosystems, restore endangered species and hold the US government accountable to fulfill obligations made in treaties. Tribal governments have a government-to-government relationship with the United States, which sometimes causes confusion on where they fit in the trickle-down effect of government funding. Systemic racism and exclusion are deeply entrenched in funding systems (Hipp, 2017) and government agencies need direction from tribal governments and First Foods leaders on what their tribes need and where the funding is failing to reach them. Many different government departments and agencies provide funding to tribes which directly or indirectly are applicable to First Foods. In Figure 2, see how many different departments funnel funding to tribal governments through various agencies.

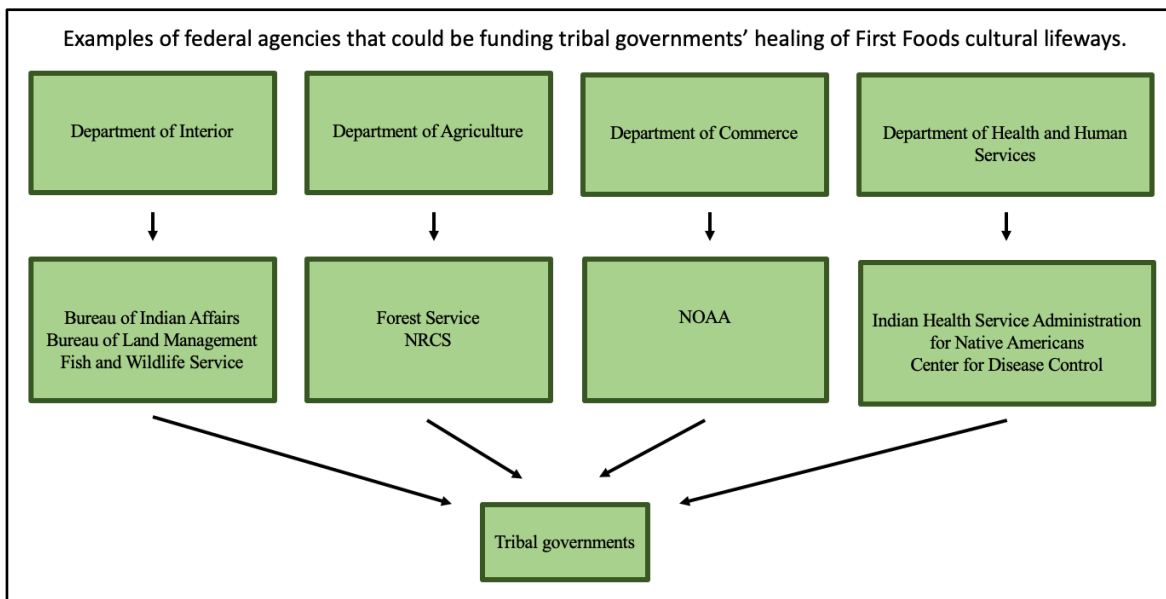


Figure 2: Examples of funding agencies which impact First Foods funding for tribal governments.

A budgetary analysis of tribal governments' expenditures would benefit this report, but is not within the scope of this research. Such an analysis would be especially difficult for First Foods as there is a lack of publicly available data focused on this topic. In the absence of data on tribal government budgets, the author is analyzing funding opportunities, their applicability to First Foods, and following where funding is institutionalized (for example, tribal governments need First Foods education in their local communities, but tribes are ineligible for NIFA Tribal Programs funding which is mostly directed to Land-Grant institutions. To learn more, see the NIFA section starting on p. 80).

This report is part of an important discussion on funding inequity. Tribal governments are governments but they have historically been excluded from funding structures that support federal, state and local

agriculture and food production. Funding from the USDA provides funding to tribal governments as if they were businesses or individual citizens, but they are governments. What tribal governments need is base funding for their tribal administrations to address their First Foods' food system needs. This report is a call to tribal governments to consider what they need in order to restore abundance in their First Foods culture. It also calls on government agencies to make funding applicable and available for what tribes need to protect and continue First Food cultures. Because there is no clear funding dedicated specifically for First Foods, this report explores how the USDA might design funding that fits the needs of tribal governments to uphold the USDA's trust responsibility to tribes.

The difference between Pacific Northwest First Foods culture and conventional farming agriculture

Modern conventional farming agriculture is very different from First Foods' food systems (see Table 1). For Tribes in the Pacific Northwest, First Foods are not planted like crops, they occur in areas naturally and tribes use cultural land-management techniques including cultural fire, rotational site use, selective pruning and cultural protocols, which enhance the health and productivity of the area. First Foods are managed as an entire landscape, rather than planted in row crops or monoculture. First Foods landscapes provide food for all wildlife, including humans, and wildlife are viewed as a part of the whole food system, rather than wildlife being considered as pests, as is often the case in conventional agriculture.

Tribes have self-sufficiency and trade regionally with neighboring tribes when they have enough to share. The First Foods food system is relational in keeping positive relationships with neighboring tribes, for example tribes sharing management of fisheries, rather than modern commerce-based systems where business interests aim to out-compete each other. Today, the conventional food system is driven by commerce with robust government financial support, while the economics of First Foods' food systems are volunteer-based, grant funded, contract funded, philanthropy funded, or self-funded by individuals or tribal governments.

In farming-agriculture, corn is moved to a more desirable location and planted by the hand of the farmer. Wild foods reproduce on their own, but fare far better with cultural land management. In this way, PNW tribes seasonally follow First Foods across large landscapes where they occur naturally and manage those areas. In contrast, farming-agriculture alters the landscape to create plots, domesticating crops and animals, and using fencing to separate between crops and other farmers. Great diversity of First Foods, like camas, is possible when it is left and managed within its watershed, rather than collecting seeds from one area and spreading it across the entire PNW region.

In general, if you were to ask PNW tribal people from First Foods cultures, who gather, fish, or hunt, if they are farmers, they would say no. Farming came into the PNW with colonization and many tribes were forced to farm by Indian Agents on reservations, even in climates and geography not suited for foreign crops. Foreign agriculture has caused devastating harm to tribes in the PNW, tilling under diverse native vegetation (wild First Food places) and replacing them with monoculture foreign crops. Other issues include diverting water for irrigation and polluting water quality with siltation, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, causing fish kills and increased public health concerns.

With this history in mind, there are Native American farmers and gardeners who have adopted modern agriculture and are contributing to their community’s economy and food security. Pre-contact, Native American communities in other parts of the continent had traditional farming practices like seasonal dry land farming and cultivating rare landrace varieties of corn, beans, squash, and other crops. Domesticated sheep are traditional for tribes in the Southwest and are a staple food and cultural material. Farming was and is a traditional and cultural practice for tribes of the Southwest, Midwest and East, but this was not the case for tribes in the Northwest. It should also be noted that all tribes across the United States practice some form of cultural land management and all tribes practice some form of “wild” food gathering, fishing and/or hunting.

Economic activity is difficult for many tribes, mostly due to reservations being located far from urban centers. Therefore, farming is providing subsistence and economic growth for many tribal communities with a large land base. And with this said, farming and gardening has been adopted by tribal communities in the Northwest who face similar challenges of rural isolation and food insecurity.

Lastly, the researcher is hesitant to call Northwest First Foods “agriculture”, in part, because of the association with conventional agriculture, but also because seed saving, moving plants to new areas, selective breeding, row crops, etc. are not common traditional practices for Pacific Northwest Tribes.

Table 1: Comparing mainstream conventional food system and First Foods’ food system.

What makes First Foods’ food systems different from mainstream conventional food systems?

Mainstream Conventional Food System	First Foods Food System
The Mainstream Conventional Food System is supported by <u>for-profit economy</u> .	Northwest Tribal First Foods System is supported by <u>communal use and caretaking</u> .
<u>Federal funding supports</u> production of staple crops and supports conventional agriculture financial viability and stability.	<u>No systemic funding support</u> is available for First Food staple-foods or ecosystems (NW First Food examples: acorn, camas, salmon, lamprey, deer, elk.)
Food system stability provided by government economic support systems for individual and family farmers, education, viability (e.g. price stability, crop insurance), farm and crop sustainability.	Food system sustained by individuals committed to cultural practice and sharing with community. First Food access relies on family and communal volunteering. Government economic support systems available to Tribal Governments do not fit or meet all needs.
Employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abundant employment opportunities with job growth. Primary economic activity is in private industry Stable employment for government employees is supported by baseline sustainable funding (USDA, and other agencies) which contributes to stability and productivity. 	Employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities are rare for full-time work in First Foods (local jobs). Primary economic activity is within tribal governments. Less stable tribal government employment is dependent on grant funding (one-time grants common, renewable grants needed) leading to employment instability and turnover.
The US government <u>does not have treaty obligations</u> to US farmers, corporations or industries.	The US government <u>has treaty obligations</u> to tribal governments, and tribal governments serve the collective needs of tribal citizens.
Funding is structured around individuals and businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventional Food Systems require trade (exporting food away from community). Funding systems are designed for individuals on a farm-by-farm basis without need to coordinate between farms or consider ecosystem impacts. The current US government’s food system funding structure prioritizes limited-duration project funding or start-up loans. Food System funding and policy provide protection for Conventional Agriculture production, but development and climate change are increasing concerns. Conventional Food systems do not require food to be produced locally and farmers may choose to move or change their crop regardless of cultural suitability. Because the funding structure is designed for commercial, for-profit businesses, many of the funding opportunities offered by the USDA require a 50% match. 	Funding structure needed at community scale for cultural continuity and ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many First Foods are non-commercial, are considered sacred with cultural value. Funding systems must enable tribal governments to work across jurisdictional boundaries at a landscape or ecosystem scale with neighboring tribal governments. Food system policy and economic systems are needed that uphold Treaties by enabling tribal governments to ensure the abundance of First Foods in perpetuity. Historic and ongoing damage to ecosystems make First Foods increasingly rare or threatened by development, climate change, and lack of systemic protections. First Foods are local foods that are specific to areas and ecosystems within the ancestral homelands. Tribal cultural continuity are dependent on Food Systems. Match requirements prevent tribal governments from applying for funding and economic development is an ongoing challenge for rural tribal governments.
Government agencies receive <u>ongoing funding</u> for baseline needs and functions to support the food system needs for Mainstream Conventional Food Systems.	Tribal governments need <u>funding stability and sustainability</u> in order to carryout baseline First Foods work within their communities.

To see a larger version of Table 1, see Appendix H.

Commercialization of First Foods

There are First Foods that have been enveloped in conventional commercial food systems, such as salmon or corn.

Corn is not a First Food for tribes of the Pacific Northwest because pre-contact ancestors did not grow corn agriculturally. Any corn would have been obtained via trade with other tribes. Corn is an ancestral crop for many tribes across the United States, as its use spread north from Mexico thousands of years ago. The traditional dryland farming techniques of many tribes continue today and rely on seasonal rain, strategic floodplain land use, limited and locally obtained fertilizer, and diverse seed varieties. Today's commercial agriculture produces massive quantities of corn with efficiency, but the corn and the environment are negatively impacted by over-exploitation, monoculture, GMO seed, and conventional agriculture practices. Some corn is no longer edible/digestible and is used for other purposes like ethanol. Commercialization of corn has not led to the preservation of ancient varieties of corn, in fact, it has made landrace corn cultivation dependent on personal commitment to cultural foods and ancestral varieties, and landrace corn has become even more expensive to produce. (Thompson, 2017).

Like corn, salmon are another sacred food in Native American culture. To some people, referring to salmon as simply a *food* or as a *resource* would be insulting, because it degrades the sacred relationship of salmon and humans. Many tribes' creation stories, traditions and religious practices are directly tied to First Foods. The reciprocal relationship and responsibility that humans have to live in good relation, is central to many tribes' worldview and carried out in cultural protocols to this day.

In the 1800s in the Pacific Northwest, after gold mining extraction—came fish canneries. Canneries extracted and exported salmon from West Coast coastal rivers until the fishery collapsed due to low fish returns (Allen, 2006). Commercialization, government policy, non-recognition or un-adjudicated rights, and sometimes violence have prevented Tribes from being able to fulfill their cultural responsibilities and to maintain their relationship with salmon and other important aspects of culture as recently as the 1970s Fishing Wars (KCET, 2016).

Salmon are an example of a First Food that is shared between tribes and has been negatively impacted by over-exploitation, pollution, dams and other infrastructure. Some tribes who traditionally fished can no longer access salmon due to dams, high-toxins or die-offs. Today, salmon are negatively impacted by conventional agriculture through water loss due to irrigation, fertilizer and nutrient run-off from agriculture, forestry, erosion and dams.

Some Native people may sell First Foods as a way of supporting their work with First Foods, while some Native people may think that it is taboo to sell First Foods (Tahoma Peak Solutions, 2022). When selling First Foods is taboo, commercialization is not an option for supporting First Foods work in tribal communities. For tribes who have been able to maintain access to First Foods, in abundance, engaging in commerce could be a way for a tribe to generate funds or their Tribal Members to support their cultural lifestyle. However, it is important to acknowledge that an economic choice that is viable for one community, may not be a viable choice for another community. The abundant economy and lifeways that supported First Foods cultures has been disrupted in the wake of colonization, with all tribes experiencing

massive loss of First Foods populations. And this is not to say that tribes should not also be able to sell (or trade) First Foods, as they have done for millennia. And regardless of whether a tribe decides or is able to sell First Foods, there remains a government role in First Foods and there remains a trust responsibility that the federal government has to tribes' and to their First Foods. This paper seeks to call attention to systems-gaps where tribal governments and First Foods fall outside existing food and agriculture funding-structures. Tribes should not have to engage in commerce for their First Foods' food systems to exist and tribes should not have to compromise their cultural values to financially support their First Foods work.

Policy Inspiration

Native-led organizations are leading policy change efforts and providing technical assistance to American Indian agriculture producers and tribal governments. The most notable is the Native Farm Bill Coalition who has been advocating for provisions in the Farm Bill. The Native Farm Bill Coalition is made up of policy leaders from various tribally-led organizations, tribal governments and Indigenous foods advocates.

In recent years, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, the Native Farm Bill Coalition, and the Indigenous Food & Agriculture Initiative have been producing outstanding policy recommendations and advocacy for Farm Bill provisions for bolstering agriculture in Indian Country. The impact of this advocacy is bringing more grants and investments to Native producers than ever before. For example, the 2018 Farm Bill authorized funding for P.L. 93-638 Tribal Self-Governance contracts for forestry management demonstration projects and authorized FDPIR "638" demonstration projects for food procurement, which supports local agriculture and tribal farmers.¹

For tribes with historic domesticated crop-style agriculture, large land bases and climates suited for modern agriculture, production of agricultural products and foods is a boon to local economies and farmers. Some tribes in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) have also adopted modern farming as a way to increase fresh food availability and build food security. Some Tribal Members are taking it upon themselves to feed their communities and contribute to local food systems. This work is needed and necessary for strengthening Native nations.

With this being said, **the needs of First Foods differ from that of modern agriculture and policy is needed to address those gaps.** Much of the inspiration for this paper is based on the incredible policy recommendations developed by the above institutions, and they have laid a path for Food Policy and Food Systems advocates to dig deeper into the unique needs for diverse tribal communities.

¹ To learn more about the Farm Bill provisions achieved by the Native Farm Bill Coalition, see their publication [Gaining Ground: A Report on the 2018 Farm Bill Successes for Indian Country and Opportunities for 2023](#) (Parker et al., 2022).

International Indigenous Food System Issues and Policy Influence

First Foods needs are mirrored in the international Indigenous food system needs. In 2021, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations published a report “The White/Wiphala Paper on Indigenous Peoples’ food systems,” where the FAO outlines “drivers” affecting Indigenous Peoples’ food systems, some of which include:

- Lack of recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ traditional institutions
 - Lack of participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes
 - Insecurity surrounding access to land, territories and natural resources
 - Forced displacement and land grabs
 - Educational system without interculturality
 - Changing of consumption habits of traditional foods
 - Loss of Indigenous Peoples’ traditional knowledge and indigenous languages
 - Extensive degradation of ecosystems by land clearing, deforestation and extractive industries
 - Lack of protection for Indigenous Peoples’ plant genetic resources
 - Climate change impacts on food systems
 - Environmental pollution and environmental contaminants bioaccumulating in food systems
- (FAO, 2021)

As a leader in international policy, the US government has an opportunity to address drivers impacting First Foods cultures by addressing tribal government funding disparities. And the US government, as an international policy leader has an opportunity to develop food system policy models that impact Indigenous peoples around the world.

Methodology

This study does not claim to represent any tribal government or speak for Native American people broadly. Tribal government employees who participated in interviews were given time to review and comment prior to publication. Any opinions expressed herein should be attributed to the researcher and any quotes or statements misrepresented or out of context should not reflect negatively on any interviewee.

Project Scope

Outreach to tribal governments

The researcher limited the outreach to tribal governments due to the complex nature of research with tribes and the need to obtain research permits and agreements which is an important, but lengthy process. The researcher's tribe is located in Oregon, so outreach was made to the researcher's tribal government as well as 7 additional tribal governments in proximity to the researcher's tribe. The researcher was able to obtain research permits or agreements with a total of 4 tribal governments.

Focus on PNW First Foods

Tribes throughout the Pacific Northwest (PNW) do have similar First Foods, but large differences between climates going north to south, from coastal climates, valley climates, mountain climates and east of the Cascade Mountain range there are diverse high-desert climates. First Foods can range between these climates or have a limited range, for example First Foods that may only occur in a wet or dry climate. With this in mind, trade is traditional for tribes everywhere, making foods available through interpersonal distribution networks.

Data collection

Most data will focus on tribes within the United States, with a focus on Oregon, California, and Washington. Data presented in this report is selected from publicly available databases and publications.

Research Design and Framework

IRB Process

The author submitted an application to the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) which outlined specific interview and confidentiality protocols for the study. Research Permits and Research Agreements obtained from the tribal governments also passed the Tribal Review as a part of the ASU IRB process. The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 10/31/2023. The IRB number for this project is STUDY00017948: Funding of Native American cultural foodways.

Permission for research, Tribal Review and data sovereignty

Arizona State University has a Tribal Review process within their Institutional Review Board process, which is unique from other universities. The Tribal Review protects tribal governments, tribal citizens and the university from potentially harmful research and fosters positive research consultation and collaborations between the universities and tribes.

What is data sovereignty²?

The University of Arizona's Native Nations Institute defines Indigenous data sovereignty as "the right of a nation to govern the collection, ownership, and application of its own data. It derives from tribes' inherent right to govern their peoples, lands, and resources" (Native Nations Institute, n.d.). Each tribal government had their own unique research approval process and the researcher agreed that the tribal governments would retain rights to the interview data and could withdraw from the project at any time. The researcher also agreed to interview data sharing for tribes to retain their own data.

Example of tribal government research policy

The Karuk Tribe has an outstanding research request process and policy that was unique from other tribes in this study. The Tribe has created a living document called Practicing Píkyav: Policy for Collaborative Research with the Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources (Karuk Tribe, 2021).

The Practicing Píkyav policy outlines protection of the Karuk Tribe's cultural resources, history, language, and specifically seeks to limit the expropriation of Traditional Knowledge and prevent biocolonialism. Researchers seeking to conduct research on the Karuk Tribes are required to read the policy as a part of the application process. The research application that the researcher fills out then also reflects the values within the policy. For example, in their research request, a researcher must describe how their research is of benefit to the Karuk Tribe. This process of managing research requests stands out because the policy and application leads researchers to reflect on the concept of reciprocity in research.

Practicing Píkyav research policy

The Practicing Píkyav policy is a living document, so researchers should contact the Karuk Tribe to receive an updated policy. The most recent version available online can be found at:

https://nature.berkeley.edu/karuk-collaborative/?page_id=165

To submit a research request to the Karuk Tribe's Department of Natural Resources, apply through their online research proposal form:

<https://airtable.com/appCVg3MoUj7ogQQC/shrXaEG4I7un0Y6sj>

² For more on Data Sovereignty, visit:
<https://nni.arizona.edu/our-work/research-policy-analysis/indigenous-data-sovereignty-governance>

Research Data Framework

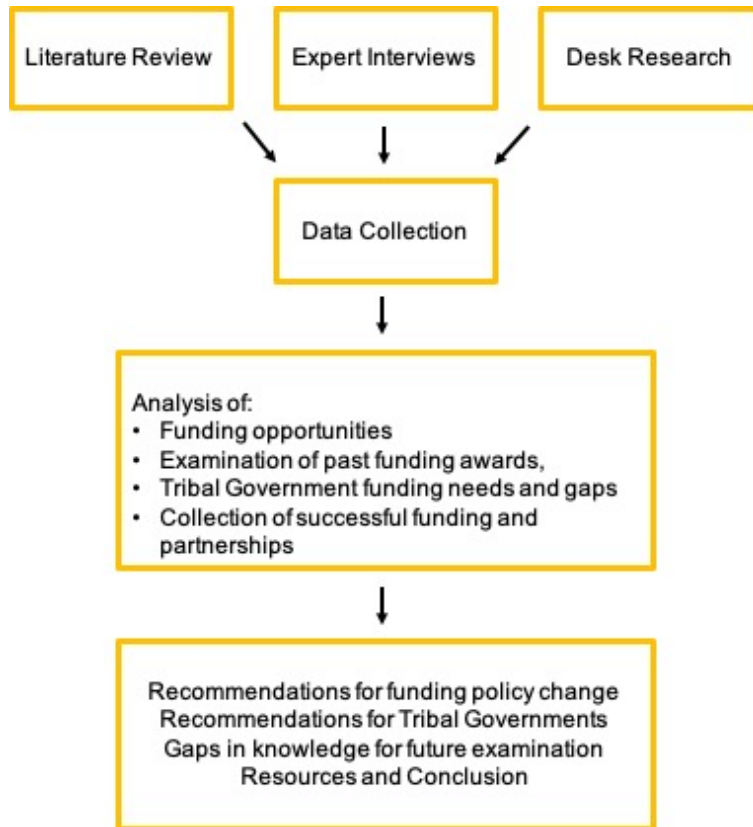


Figure 3: Research data framework

Literature Review

The researcher conducted desk research on a broad range of topics to understand how tribal governments are funded, but less research was available on funding for First Foods. The Intertribal Agriculture Council, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative at the University of Arkansas, Native Farm Bill Coalition, and the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) have the most published data on Indigenous foods and agriculture. Policy priorities from these organizations have influenced the researcher's focus on USDA funding and this paper seeks to add to the policy discourse around PNW First Foods culture.

The subject area intersection of USDA funding, tribal governments and First Foods is lacking. Often the literature is focused on environmental issues, but not specifically referencing the funding issues or funding systems that impact those environmental issues.

Primary Data

The primary data source for this study was interviews with tribal governments employees and representatives and USDA staff that serve or work with tribes. Zoom video conferencing software was used to conduct virtual interviews and each interview was scheduled for approximately one hour. Second interviews were scheduled if interviewees wished to share more information.

The 31 interviews were conducted utilizing question templates for general themes and allowing for the interviewee to share what was important to them related to the topic. For interviews with USDA representatives, questions were curated based on the programs and funding that fell under their positions. The author was the sole researcher and interviewer for this project.

Interviews were conducted with USDA staff based in Oregon, California and Washington to discuss potential funding opportunities for First Foods. Interviews were conducted with 4 tribal government staff, past-staff, leaders, and representatives.

This interviewee list does not capture the extensive efforts that went into scheduling interviews, especially with tribal governments.

Interviewee list

This study had a total of 31 interviews, included 22 interviews with tribal government staff, 6 with USDA staff, and 3 with Non-profit organization staff.

Table 2: Interview list

Tribal staff and representative interviews:	# of interviews
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	7
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	5
Karuk Tribe	4
Klamath Tribes	6

USDA/government staff interviews:	# of interviews
NRCS District Conservationist	1
NRCS RCPP Coordinator	1
NRCS State Conservationist (WA)	1
Forest Service Tribal Relations Specialists (OR/WA and CA)	2
State Soil and Water Conservation District	1

Nonprofit interviews:	# of interviews
Intertribal Agriculture Council	1
Conservation-focused non-profit organizations	2

Declined:	# of interviews
USDA staff declined, did not want to be quoted	1
NRCS Tribal Relations (CA) - on extended leave	1

Tribal government participation in interviews

The researcher is enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI) and chose to expand the scope of this study to include other tribes who are leading food sovereignty efforts in the region and are geographically near and/or have cultural similarities to CTSI. The researcher contacted 8 tribes (4 in Northern California and 4 in Oregon) to request research participation, and was able to secure research permits or agreements with a total of 4 tribes. All tribal governments are located in Oregon, except for the Karuk Tribe, which is located in Northern California northwest of Redding, CA.

Tribal Governments	Tribal Government Headquarters Location
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	OR
Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indians	OR
Karuk Tribe	CA
Klamath Tribes	OR

For more about tribal governments in this study and maps, see Appendix A.

Interviews with tribes provided context and analysis on why current USDA funding systems and funding opportunities do not adequately translate to the needs of tribal governments and the work needed to restore First Foods abundance.

- Identify how tribes are funding their First Foods programs
- Identify funding that could be used for First Foods
- Identify barriers or gaps in funding needs
- Identify systemic barriers that may prevent tribal governments from accessing funding, such as match, cost-share, low maximum award amounts, funding inconsistency, competition, and more.

This research did not include quantitative analysis or comparison data because of the limited scope of this project and with mindfulness not to compare or contrast tribes. Data presented in this report is selected from existing publications or publicly available databases. This report is not a full accounting of financial inequity between conventional food systems and Indigenous food systems, however data was selected to demonstrate the inequity to the extent that data was easily accessible and publicly available. This report includes highlights of work being done in tribal communities and the innovative use of funding. This may include partnerships, grant collaborations, or the impact of policy change on funding for tribal communities.

This report is also guided by the researcher's personal experience as an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, a past employee of the CTSI tribal government, a First Foods gatherer, and a community educator.

This report would not be possible without the participation of the tribal government staff who have agreed to be interviewed for this project. In the process of this study, the researcher has welcomed the tribal governments to influence the scope and direction of this project. The guidance of tribal councils, staff and tribal members has been invaluable and sparked conversations, built relationships and generated ideas for changes we all want to see in the future.

Half of the tribes contacted by the researcher are participating in this study. The researcher extended the project timeline to accommodate the time necessary to obtain permission for research and to give staff more time to participate. Possible reasons that tribes did not participate include:

- There was a limited timeframe for tribal governments to respond.
- The researcher was not able to connect with a person authorized to approve research.
- As a graduate student project, this research may have been a low priority for tribes.
- Tribal government staff may have had low interest in the study topic.
- Tribal government staff may have felt uncomfortable speaking on this topic.
- Tribal government staff have limited time to address all research inquiries.
- Tribal government may not have a formal research permit process.
- Historic mistrust of academia and other institutions of power due to past exploitation

Secondary Data

Funding sources were identified and selected to be included in this research project using:

- desk research of USDA funding opportunities,
- data on past USDA awards,
- recommendations from interviewees,
- and recommendations from leading food policy organizations.

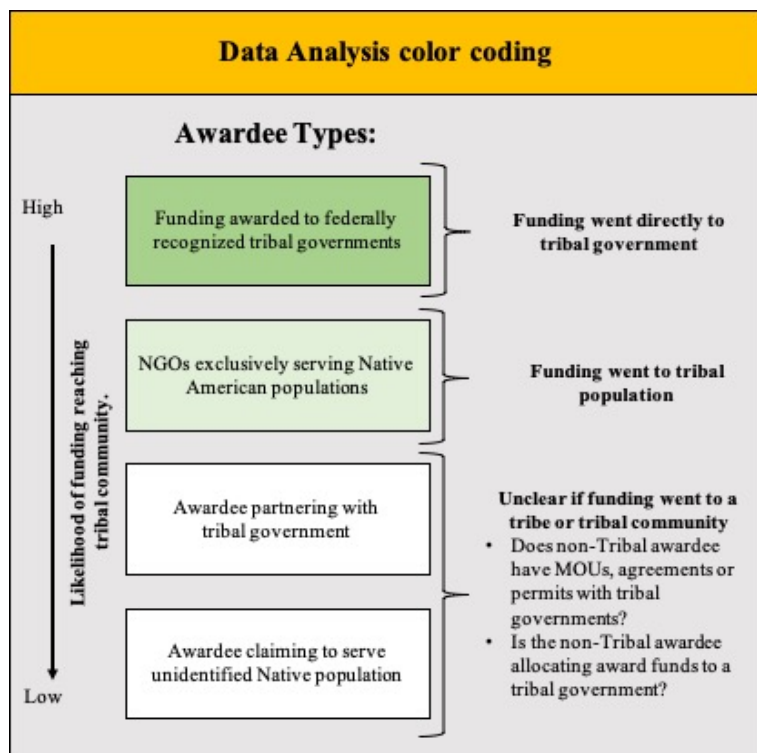
This research project gleaned data from publicly available websites, such as United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and Grants.gov.

Data analysis of funding available to tribal governments

The researcher conducted desk research on funding opportunities from the USDA. Funding opportunities were selected based on recommendations from interviews or based on the researcher’s assessment of their applicability to First Foods.

Throughout the report, award data is presented to indicate funding that was either awarded to tribal governments, tribal organizations or awardees claiming to serve or partner with tribes. Table 3 demonstrates color coding that will be used throughout the report. Note that the dark green color indicates

Table 3: Data analysis color coding indicates the likelihood of funding going to a tribal community.



funding that went directly to tribal governments. The light green color indicates funding that likely went to a tribal population. The white colors indicate that an awarded project claimed to serve Indigenous people, but it is unclear if funding went to tribes or a tribal population. These projects may claim affiliation or partnership with “Tribes”, “Tribal lands”, “BIPOC”, “Indigenous”, “Native people”, “Native Hawaiian”, “Indigenous Food System”, “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”, “Alaska Native landowners”, but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Chapter 1 - Tribal Government Funding

Economic Context

The sustainable food practices and thriving food economies that tribes have enjoyed for millennia, came to a sudden and forced halt during colonization, forced removal and environmental degradation. The impoverishment and hunger that tribes face today is due directly to the prejudice that has kept Native American people and tribal governments from access and control of their food systems. As this paper discusses the funding needs of tribal governments, it is important that readers are aware of the wealth-transfer that continues to take place on the ancestral homelands of tribes across the US. Tribal lands, economies and First Foods did not disappear, they have been transferred out of the hands of tribes to the wealth and economies of non-Native people.

In order to understand funding gaps for First Foods, it is essential to understand that the US government is still currently in a long process of revising systems that have long excluded Native American people and tribal governments. Many federal agencies are still in their infancy of integrating tribal governments into their funding structures. Tribal governments are not dependent on the US government, they have been deprived of their wealth and now the US government has a trust responsibility to tribal governments. This chapter provides an overview on the US government's relationship with tribal governments and the funding mechanisms that have been created in the past few decades to honor that relationship and obligation.

US Trust Responsibility to Tribes

The US government has a trust responsibility to tribal governments which includes a fiduciary responsibility to tribes regarding their cultural resources and First Foods. The federal Indian trust responsibility is a legal obligation under which the United States “has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust” toward Indian tribes (*Seminole Nation v. United States*, 1942)” (Indian Affairs, 2017).

Trust responsibility is established in treaties, statutes and historical relations with the obligation to protect and support Native nations. “Treaties between the federal government and American Indian tribes set out the duties and responsibilities that the federal government owes to a particular tribe. Treaties can cover issues such as land boundaries, hunting and fishing rights, and guarantees of peace” (Library of Congress, n.d.). Whether a tribe has a treaty, unratified treaty, or no treaty, the US government's trust responsibility is to all federally recognized tribes.

The Federal Government as a whole has trust, treaty and other obligations to Tribes

Often leaders and staff at federal agencies assume that tribal governments receive adequate and sustained funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and assume that it is solely the BIA that is responsible for all issues relating to tribes. However, the “Federal Government as a whole carries out trust, treaty and other obligations to Tribes. Over 20 Federal departments and agencies collectively provide a full range of Federal programs to American Indians and Alaska Natives similar to those provided to the general public, but with a recognition of the special relationship between Indian Tribes and the Federal Government, which is expressed in terms of legal duties and moral obligations” (BIA 2023).

In the book *The State of Native Nations: Conditions Under U.S. Policies of Self-Determination, the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development* describes how during the initial century of moving tribes to reservations, the federal government essentially ran reservations and the affairs of tribes. Funding and services were managed “First through the War Department and eventually through agents [appointed through] the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Department of Health and Human Services' Indian Health Service (IHS), the federal government ran schools, provided health care, provided the law enforcement, administered all manner of welfare programs, leased lands, and managed resources on reservations. Tribal governments and tribal citizens had little, if any, input into the design of these programs” (Kalt et al., 2008, p. 20).

Since the 1960s, funding mechanisms for tribal governments have changed dramatically with assertion of rights, court decisions and explicit legislation by the federal government in a long road to tribal self-determination (Kalt et al, 2008). During the 1970s and into the 1990s, legislation directing funding to tribal governments has increased health and economic stability in tribal communities.

Tribal Government funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Compacting and Contracting

Today, the primary mission of “Indian Affairs”, meaning the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Indian Education, the Bureau of Trust Fund Administration, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, is to honor the Nation’s trust, treaty, and other responsibilities to American Indians and Alaska Natives and improve the quality of life in Indian Country (BIA, 2023).

“Indian Affairs plays a primary role in fulfilling the Administration’s commitments to Tribal Nations by carrying out Federal trust, treaty, and other responsibilities serving 574 federally recognized Tribes with a service population of nearly 2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives in Tribal and native communities nationwide. Indian Affairs provides direct services and funding to Tribes through the contracting and self-governance compacting processes authorized under **Public Law 93-638, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975**, as amended, for Tribes to manage a wide range of activities. Programs address community services, restore Tribal

homelands, fulfill commitments related to water and other resource rights, execute fiduciary trust responsibilities, support the stewardship of energy and other natural resources, and create economic opportunity” (BIA, 2023).

Today, in tribal governments Public Law 93-638 is often referred to as simply “638”. Operating much like an ordinary contract for service provision in fulfillment of a federal mandate or policy, tribal governments are able to agree to administer a particular program and the associated federal funds are transferred to the tribal government, via a “638 contract.” (Kalt et al., 2008). While PL 93-638 is of great benefit to tribes being able to have control of federal government services and resources, it does have limitations because it imposes the federal government’s spending priorities on tribes, burdens tribal administration with federal program compliance, guidelines and reporting requirements.

In response to shortcomings of PL 93-638, the federal government enacted the Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Project Act in 1988, followed by the Tribal Self-Governance Act in 1994 “that allowed tribes to ‘compact’ with the federal government under a flexible arrangement similar to block grants distributed in other areas of federal allocations. In contrast to 638 contracts, which occur on a program-by-program basis, compacts allow a tribe to receive a lump sum payment from the federal government for all services that a tribe chooses to manage, which can range from just one program to a combination of several programs. Tribal governments can then reallocate funds across the range of compacted services that they administer. In this way, Native nations are better able to adapt the provision of services in response to tribal priorities, needs, and changing conditions” (Kalt et al., 2008, p.21).

Contracting and compacting have become popular funding mechanisms for tribal governments and tools in which they can expand the scope of their sovereignty and increase their ability to respond to the needs of their citizens. “Tribes that have contracts and compacts with the federal government have found that success in administering and managing programs is a result, in part, of tribal governments’ inherently closer ties and, hence, responsiveness to local conditions. Tribal leaders and officials are more familiar with the needs of their communities and more attuned to changes within these communities than Federal administrators. Tribal governments are also better able than the federal government to deliver culturally appropriate services, or to deliver services in more culturally appropriate ways, to their citizens” (Kalt et al., 2008, p.21-22).

Underfunding of trust responsibilities

According to the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, underfunding is an undercurrent that prevents the federal government from addressing its trust responsibilities. With the transfer of service and program control to tribal governments, the authority of funding still rests with the federal government, meaning that self-determination and self-governance contracting and compacting mechanisms continue to fall short of meeting the federal government’s trust responsibility to tribes. Severe funding restrictions and shortfalls limit the scale and types of services that tribes can offer. “Since the mid-1970s, the shift in federal policy toward tribal self-determination and self-government has improved the intergovernmental relationship between tribes and the federal government. However, Indian nations remain concerned that federal programs that support tribes are chronically underfunded by Congress” (Kalt et al., 2008, p.53).

While the US government as a whole has a trust responsibility to tribes, “The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is the primary federal agency charged with carrying out the United States’ trust responsibility to American Indian and Alaska Native people, maintaining the federal government-to-government relationship with the federally recognized Indian tribes, and promoting and supporting tribal self-determination. The bureau implements federal laws and policies and administers programs established for American Indians and Alaska Natives under the trust responsibility and the government-to-government relationship” (BIA, n.d. FAQ). Because the BIA is identified as the leader in trust responsibilities, other federal agencies have overlooked trust responsibilities from their scope of work and budgets. Increasingly, other federal agencies are realizing their obligation to tribes and creating funding opportunities directed to tribal governments, often in the form of short-term grants.

Inadequate base-funding limits tribal government grant capacity

Tribal governments are known to be generally underfunded and therefore have fewer staff to address the needs of their communities. Tribal governments do their best to meet the needs of their communities and need additional funding to increase their staffing and capacity. Some tribal governments have limited organizational capacity, such as accounting staff or evaluation staff needed to administer grants that have high levels of complexity or funding restrictions. Tribal governments require increased staffing due to the high demands of government administration, including human resources, contracts, expending grant funds, tracking budgets, carrying out reporting requirements, outreach, planning, communication, partnerships, and planning and hosting community educational events and programs. These staff need to be skilled and long-term employees who have the trust of the tribal community, capable of building partnerships, able to navigate tribal bureaucracy and federal policies.

Below is an example of how the lack of base administrative funding for tribal governments limits a tribe’s capacity to manage grants. In this case, the grant was funding First Foods staff.

Funding is a boon, but can be a burden when tribal governments are underfunded

The researcher had identified Administration for Native Americans (ANA) funding as being a potential resource for one of the tribal governments, but during interviews with Natural Resources staff, they shared that they received an ANA grant only to realize that their accounting department was not going to be able to administer the grant due to the high level of requirements set by ANA. The department staff had to absorb the labor to meet the level of reporting required by ANA, which took staff away from other important work.

The underfunding of baseline tribal administrations, reduces the overall capacity of tribal governments to bring in additional funding resources, especially if those funding sources are highly restrictive or require high levels of reporting. The taxing experience of administering the ANA funding led the department to choose not to reapply for the funding. Having funding available does not make it a viable solution on the ground for all tribes.

Ironically, ANA funding is specifically for tribes, so this funding should be easier for tribes to access and administrative barriers should be reduced.

First Foods Funding Gap

The US government has an obligation to uphold treaty access to First Foods and tribal governments are the heirs of those treaties. Treaty Rights are held by tribal governments, not by individual citizens of tribes. The tribal government is the holder and protector of those Treaty Rights; and tribal members obtain those rights through their enrollment as a tribal member at the discretion of how the tribal government manages the use of those rights.

USDA Funding Gap: Tribal Governments

While tribal governments are the best placed governments to lead food system resiliency for their communities, the USDA has historically excluded Native American citizens from access to funding and has segregated tribal governments from funding that funnels to other state and regional governments. The US government needs tribal governments to be integrated into USDA and other federal agency funding systems to ensure that tribes have First Foods for future generations. Tribal governments need funding to improve landscape-scale ecosystems, restore First Foods abundance, increase economic stability and wellbeing, improve health outcomes, and ensure cultural continuity.

The argument could be made that cultural continuity is not the function of government, that it is the responsibility of families and individuals to care to learn about their culture, religion, ceremonies, language, etc. It is true that there is a responsibility on families and especially individuals to keep traditions and learn culture. However, the trust responsibility that the US government has to federally recognized tribes is forever. Tribal governments do have a role in upholding Treaty Rights of citizens, representing citizens' interests in government-to-government consultation, managing cultural resources, and seeking restitution from environmental harm to cultural resources and First Foods—all which impact cultural continuity and food sovereignty.

Examples of issues of concern for tribal governments:

- Research on First Foods
- Seed sovereignty - seeks to address is the ownership of seeds as a larger majority of seeds are becoming property of several major agricultural/seed corporations (FNNDI, n.d.).
- Mapping of cultural resources (archeological, food, basketry materials, etc.)
- Data sovereignty and protection of cultural resources
- Environmental pollution
- Preventing over-harvesting and exploitation
- and much more.

Funding for First Foods is rare

Some tribal governments may receive some limited funding from the BIA for Natural Resources, Agriculture and Range, Forestry, Water, Fisheries, etc. However, not all tribal governments receive the same access to funding and the tribal governments who do have access, often are still underfunded. Tribal

governments are not the same, they have different Treaties and have different legal standings, with different access to funding.

Through intergovernmental agreements, some tribal governments have been successful at receiving funding that they can put toward Natural Resource, Cultural Resource, First Foods, however this funding may be very limited and specific on how it may be used. The intergovernmental agreements or mitigation funds never meet the damages inflicted on First Foods cultures and ecosystems, so the work that tribes have ahead of them is greater than mitigation can repair.

First Foods is not an area that receives BIA self-governance funding, so tribal governments must make tough decisions on how to divide the funding between vital services. Tribal governments and tribal citizens have to get creative when it comes to funding work around First Foods. Many tribal citizens are self-funded, entrepreneurs, sometimes teaching and working free of charge for the benefit of their communities. Many First Foods leaders are elders.

Currently, there is limited consistent funding available specifically for First Foods that tribal governments can rely on. Often the funding amount is limited and grants are short-term, competitive, require extensive applications and reporting, or don't apply to the needs of First Foods. Cheryl Shippentower from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) talked about how funding was needed for everything related to restoring First Foods. "Funding projects that are important for cultural plants, culturally important plant resources... There's not much [funding] out there for that, and if there is, it's super competitive. We've unsuccessfully applied in the past to expand First Food work, but there's a limited amount of funding for First Food work. **I just think there needs to be more funding available for First Foods, the cultural plant work, whether it's restoration or it's monitoring. In the future, I hope to see more available funding for Tribes that's specifically directed for First Food work**" (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024).

Chapter 2 - Tribal Government

Interview Data

This study seeks to identify specific needs that tribal governments have for funding work to support First Foods and how those needs may be different from conventional funding. As governments, tribal governments will have perpetual funding needs for First Foods land management, monitoring, research, cultural resources, cultural education, nutrition, outreach and consultation.

During the interviews conducted with tribal governments, the major themes discussed include:

- Tribal Government Capacity
- Cultural Resources and NEPA
- Outreach, Education and Workforce Development
- Access to First Foods
- and Other Needs.

With self-governance funding, tribal governments can customize how they allocate funding to address needs that are specific to their cultural and community needs. However, because self-governance funding is limited, there is little room for customization or expansion beyond basic department functions. Self-governance funding is extremely limited because of low appropriations that have not kept up with inflation.

In the absence of adequate self-governance funding, tribal governments must look to grants, foundations, and tribal businesses to supplement and bridge the funding gap. Tribal businesses, such as casinos or healthcare facilities, provide much needed flexible funding to address the unique funding needs such as Cultural Resources and First Foods. However, the largest revenue sources for tribes often are grants. And how funding agencies choose to allocate funding, greatly impacts tribal government capacity, impacts the protection of Cultural Resources, Treaty Rights, and impacts cultural continuity. The Biden administration is making important investments in rural, underserved, and tribal communities, but this project seeks to examine funding as a system that impacts tribal government stability beyond the current administration.

Funding impacts Organizational Charts

Each tribal government who participated in this study organized their tribal administrations differently around First Foods.

- The CTUIR organized their entire Department of Natural Resources (DNR) around their cultural protocols and First Food order.
- The CTSI housed their Healthy Traditions program within their tribal clinic and other staff from the Education, Culture and Natural Resources Departments also contributed to First Foods education.

- The Klamath Tribes do not have a First Foods program within the tribal government, however, they have a volunteer committee working on community organizing around First Foods and agriculture.
- The Karuk Tribe’s Food Sovereignty program is housed within their Department of Natural Resources (DNR), but has an additional Food Security role.

Funding sources greatly impact how First Foods work is being organized. For example, the Karuk Tribe has experienced growth in the past two decades which has enabled the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to start the Píkyav Field Institute within their Department of Natural Resources. The Píkyav Field Institute (Píkyav) states their overarching goal is “to expand Tribal capacity within the department and build upon our partnerships with collaborating academic institutions to address identified program needs for a dedicated environmental education program, supporting traditional and western scientific knowledge to inform and augment long-term co-management within Karuk ancestral homelands” (Karuk Tribe, n.d.). Píkyav is interdisciplinary and includes work with First Foods, which within the Karuk Tribe, is also referred to as Food Sovereignty. The work in Food Sovereignty is also interdisciplinary and as the workload has expanded, Food Sovereignty is splitting off into its own program. However, strict funding restrictions and reporting requirements impact the DNR's ability to organize their workload and staffing.

Numerous funding sources are supporting work within the Department of Natural Resources, Píkyav Field Institute and Food Sovereignty. Meeting grant deliverables has been challenging when the department is growing and funding is being shared across multiple positions. One of the largest grants they received has had such large reporting requirements, that it has made the staff decide that the funding is not worth the intense reporting labor that has been absorbed by the Department.

Funding agencies dedicated to Native American communities can also have funding restrictions or overburden tribal governments with reporting requirements, making grant facilitation a challenge. Deputy Director Neva Gibbens (Karuk Tribe) explained how the increased workload within the Department of Natural Resources meant that they needed to split programs to hire more staff to accomplish the work. Neva Gibbens explained how funding sources that required strict, detailed tracking of expenses and workload made the work on the ground more challenging. “I think this [redacted] grant, covering things that are both in Food Sovereignty and in Píkyav, has made the split of the two programs a lot more challenging. Because as it became unsustainable for the Program Manager to do it all, we realized things needed to split, and we needed to make it two programs. Because [the staff] were all under one funding source, with matching deliverables, and that has made it really challenging to figure out where those clear lines are, and how to continue meeting those deliverables, with different ideas of what the staffing should look like. And for a lot of our development right now, we are looking at these organizational charts, and figuring out how to map things out to meet the growth that we're having, and how to flex funding and split up funding to cover different positions, so that we can actually do all the work” (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

First Foods are interdisciplinary and require the consolidation of multiple funding sources.

Many programs expressed that their work is interdisciplinary and that means that they need staff to coordinate across different departments and programs.

The Karuk Tribe said that they need more staff to focus on Food Sovereignty specifically. Currently, their Food Sovereignty program staff are split between Food Security (Hunger) and Food Sovereignty (First Foods work), which are two different goals. “There are such closely tied programs, like Intergenerational Learning and Food Sovereignty, which are so tied together. But it's too big to be one program, so they need to separate out. But they're all still within the Píkyav Field Institute and the overarching goals of that. Yes, so just figuring out how it works, to break things out, but still be connected, and [assessing] what's going to be sustainable and not like overloading anybody [on staff with too much workload]” (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

Funding that requires strict tracking and restricts cross-departmental collaboration makes interdisciplinary or collaborative programs more difficult to organize. Strict funding forces programs to follow a funding agency’s model and constricts programs from being responsive to developing community needs or exploring growth opportunities.

Tribes need base funding for First Foods management

There is a general absence of base funding available to tribal governments for First Foods programs. Much of that funding is focused on ecological issues and short-term grant-based. There was differing organizational capacity for each tribal government, however base funding is a need for every tribe who participated in this study.

“Now it takes a lot of work on our part as a tribe, you know—How do you follow the money?... And one of the things I've seen is that the tribes that are pretty savvy have actually established positions, entities that really follow the money well. You know, they've been able to tap into those. **But the problem, as I see it, with grant funding is it's not base. What I call base funding. And we get a program, we start it, and our ability to sustain that over a period of time usually goes away quickly. The funding runs out.** And if you haven't figured out during that period you did have funding, a way of using that money to create a longer revenue stream—What happens? The people you hired are unemployed and they're out looking for another job. And **it's hard for our tribes to attract the kind of talent we want, when somebody knows that they're going to be working off of grant funding.** Anybody that has any knowledge or any smarts will know that, well, the likelihood that a year, 2, maybe 3 years, this grant is gone. Then what am I going to do at that point? You know, is this program even going to be in existence at that point?” (Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

First Foods Funding Need:

Better funding mechanisms for First Foods

Tribal governments are governments, they are not businesses or nonprofits, but often they are in competition with these other groups who have revenue or charitable donations to supplement their funding. Some tribes have protected Treaty Rights to First Foods, however, a tribe having Treaty Rights does not guarantee funding for the enforcement or protection of Treaty Rights. And tribes have also been forced to litigate to protect Treaty Rights and prevent extinction of treaty resources.

The USDA has been expanding the definition of agriculture to extend to First Foods, however, the USDA funding systems are built around domesticated crop agriculture, and are not built for tribal governments or First Foods. Several interviewees expressed that they do not see First Foods as agriculture and that the needs of First Foods are very different from agricultural systems. Funders who misunderstand project proposals for First Foods may under-rate the innovation or importance of a project proposal, leading to projects potentially being overlooked and not being awarded. First Foods base funding for tribal governments is not currently available through the USDA.

Funding Need Theme: Capacity

The most common funding need expressed by participants was capacity funding or capacity building funding. Funding inconsistency, inflexibility, restrictions and low levels of funding are barriers that limit the capacity for all tribal governments in this study. Funding for staffing, including higher level management positions were common needs. Funding stability and longevity would support every tribal government's ability to make progress toward First Foods goals.

It was recommended by several interviewees that identifying new sources of funding would be better than advocating within the tribal government to redirect self-governance or tribal funds to First Foods. There were interviewees who expressed that they do not have staff capacity to seek additional funding at this time, but they hope to be able to do that in the future.

Consistent Funding

Consistent, sustainable funding is needed for tribal governments to be able to address long-term environmental issues impacting First Foods, ongoing threats to First Foods such as the Climate Crisis, and restore subsistence populations to species on the brink of extinction. Much of the work being done by tribes in this study is funded with short-term grants that are inadequate to meet the workload and leave tribal communities jumping from one funding agency grant to another funding agency grant to maintain staffing within their programs.

Restoring species that have been extirpated from the region for over 100 years.

Klamath Tribes' Natural Resources Specialist Don Gentry: "We're trying to get salmon restored up here again... But it's just again, this comes down to how we're going to fund this. Who's going to do it? Where is the funding going to be sustainable? What have we taken on? And just to even explore the opportunity takes quite a bit of commitment and resources. So yeah, lots of opportunity. But you know, the capacity to take it full advantage of it is just--I feel like we've missed opportunity because we haven't had the capacity to just really take it on"

(Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Capacity Need:

Long-term funding structure, rather than grant-to-grant funding.

Several tribal government interviewees described the “boom-and-bust-cycle” of funding and how tribal governments have difficulty accessing the boom funding. Overall, tribal governments have limited capacity to search for new funding opportunities, evaluate funding opportunities, or apply to new funding opportunities. Tribal government staff who write grants are often grant funded themselves and have limited capacity to contribute to additional fundraising or grant writing.

“We're in such a grant system to where we have to keep our focus on what's in front of us, instead of really trying to look into the future... And that's kind of the way the government has us structured is that we're so focused on administration and how to do this and that. But we don't think about 5 years from now, you know... Yeah, funding is a big part of that. It has to be something [that] gets us to a point that it's sustainable.

There's not very much funding that gets us to sustainability.”

(Les Anderson, personal communication, March 6, 2023).

Consistent funding was described as being formula-based, passthrough or tribal set-aside structures. When funding was directed specifically for their tribe, it reduced the labor of applications and reduced the risk of investing staff time on competitive grant funding that may not get awarded.

First Foods Capacity Need:

Larger funding amounts to reduce piecemeal funding for programs and projects.

When asked about primary funding sources that are supporting their Food Sovereignty program, Colleen Rossier, Senior Research and Policy Advisor for the Karuk Tribe, discussed a need for ongoing funding: “When you say primary [funding sources], the thing is it's very piecemeal. I mean, what we're talking about now, just like sustainable funding and having to go after all these competitive grants, and having to apply for them, manage them all, having different requirements and cycles is a huge, huge challenge. There are a number of grants we haven't even talked about that we are also utilizing... ARPA funding, that's definitely another big source of funding for some of the infrastructure on the farm this year. It's not going to be again, like an ongoing [funding source]. But getting ongoing funding for the program is definitely challenging.” (Colleen Rossier, personal communication, December 13, 2023).

Mike Kennedy, CTSI Director of Natural Resources Department:

“The EPA funding is probably the only one that I've ever seen that is more geared towards... what they call it is capacity building, but it's gone beyond that. It supports that program, you know. **We would not have that program if it wasn't for that funding and it's pretty much guaranteed every year.** They tell you how much is available for your tribe, and you just need to put in the budget, and file paperwork for it. Most other grants are very specifically project funded. They want to know, what are you going to do with this money? How long will it take to complete it? And then, once it's done, it's done. That's the end of that grant.”

(Mike Kennedy, personal communication, October 23, 2023).

First Foods Capacity Need:

Grant writing.

In this study, none of the tribal government departments working on First Foods had grant writers in their departments. The department staff wrote grants to support their own positions and the positions on their teams. Two of the tribes used contractual grant writing, which they said had been successful.

To even begin working on First Foods issues, tribal governments need increased capacity to even apply for new funding and that is a major limitation for at least 2 of the tribes in the study.

Don Gentry, the Klamath Tribes' Natural Resources Specialist, described that the tribal government is seeking "funding that's flexible to provide sustainable infrastructure for what we need and to fulfill our goals with the least red tape, and obstacles, and administrative hurdles that we have to go through. And I mean, that's a job just trying to figure out how to navigate one particular Federal Agency on funding. And then they're different, you know? And so I mean, it takes specialists to kind of work through that. Even to develop the master stewardship agreement (with the Forest Service), that's a pretty complex agreement. There's a lot of things that have to be considered, a lot of back and forth between us and the Forest Service" (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Capacity Need:

Equitable tribal-capacity in new legislation.

Chris Marks, CTUIR Water Policy Analyst, described how states can make a big difference in tribal government capacity, "For instance, the States sometimes gets a big influx of cash... Well, **it's really hard [for Tribes] to take advantage of it, because it doesn't come with a lot of capacity funding** for anybody to build up, to provide meaningful engagement and actually be able to use that funding. We struggle sometimes and so there's a lot of money left on the table. There's a lot of money that could go further" (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

Marks continued with an example from Washington State, "Every time you see some State agencies or Federal agencies really staff up, you almost need to see that same thing with the tribal governments. Because **we can't be good partners, we can't monitor their work, we can't inform their work, unless we have that same capacity.** ...With Washington's Climate Commitment Act, they were identifying lots of funding going out the door for renewable projects, renewable energy projects, and whatnot. Tribes, especially the Puget Sound Tribes, immediately went in and said, 'Hey, if you're going to go down this path and if you want the tribes to be meaningfully engaged and support this process, you're going to have to help us staff up as well.' And they did. **They built in a tribal-capacity component within that legislation.** And so we were able to get some funding to build capacity within the CTUIR to engage in the Washington process. That's a standard I would love to see more" (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

Funding consistency is an issue for all tribes

Tribes have different capacity depending on how their treaties were negotiated, if their tribe was targeted by Termination, and their history with how the U.S. **settlement funding supplements grant funding, however it is not an option for all tribes.**

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation has the largest Natural Resources department of all the tribal governments interviewed are roughly equally funded by grants and contracts, with staff writing their own grants. Their staff have to manage multiple grants and contracts to fund their work. And staff still have funding needs, because grant funding often does not cover the full scope of work needed

for supporting First Foods. Audie Huber, CTUIR Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator, shared, “Umatilla has more [funding] resources than most Tribes to fund these projects, in part, because of our grants and contracts, as well as work with BPA (Bonneville Power Administration). Funding from BPA, funding from various other entities, and we have a long track record of doing this work well. And many other Tribes just don't have the funding really to do this. I mean, take our work for Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act work, that's something the Tribe has to dedicate its own money for, because the grants for it are very limited and focused. But in order to stay involved in the entire process, it takes a lot of effort and funding. Many tribes, I think, that could benefit most, don't have this dedicated staff due to the nature of the grants available. And really **getting that funding to the tribes for that dedicated staff is an important step that could be provided by agencies such as NRCS, Forest Service, BLM, and other land managing agencies that have been impacting these First Foods for a long time.**” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024)

Tribes entering into intergovernmental agreements, like CTUIR and BPA, is one example of a funding route that tribes could pursue through their Tribal Councils. However, it should be noted that mitigation funding in general, whatever the source, is never adequate to fully repair harm. Funding to repair environmental and cultural harm is important for tribes to be able to heal their ecosystems, but integrating tribal governments in funding systems is the best route for creating funding stability and sustainability.

Litigation is also not always the best way for tribal governments to get justice or compensation. The Klamath Tribes have had multiple setbacks including the Dawes Act and Termination (see Appendix A for more detail about these federal policies), which led to the loss of the Klamath Reservation. The Klamath Tribes were able to win a legal case re-affirming their Treaty Rights. However, legal barriers in place prevent the Klamath Tribes from being able to receive any compensation or mitigation funding from dam construction which extirpated salmon from their homelands (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024). Today, Tribal Members who are volunteering on an ad hoc First Foods and Agriculture Committee are seeking to organize the Klamath Tribes around First Foods and address the needs of their membership. The committee currently does not receive any funding or administrative support and is volunteer only.

Staffing Funding

Each of the tribal governments who participated in this study described how their work on First Foods was limited by a lack of sustained funding for staff. Many interviewees said that they were accomplishing a large workload with existing funding, but they could do more if they had more funding.

First Foods Staffing Need:

Funding for consistent staffing levels, employee retention and advancement.

Many of the positions that are required in programs require high levels of experience and education, but the pay scale is comparatively low compared to the cost of living. Tribes in rural areas also have a lack of housing and this was mentioned specifically by 2 tribes in the study. Attracting staff to rural areas was also a barrier, since many young workers build their careers away from tribal communities and swaying experienced workers to relocate away from cities is a challenge. “Yeah, there's a long-term trend [of

difficulty retaining staff]. We had a couple of big retirements recently, and staff that had been here for a really long time, but left some really key positions and have not been able to fill them successfully. And a part of it is because of where we're at, we are so rural, there is no housing. And so trying to bring people in for these positions that really require, like a lot of background, experience or education—we don't have enough of a draw. And honestly, our pay scales need to improve” (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

Funding needs to scale with the size of ancestral homelands

Tribal headquarters are central organizing points, but tribal governments need to be able to serve tribal families throughout their ancestral territories and conduct work on land throughout their ancestral territories. Some tribal communities may be located hour(s) distance from each other, making program delivery challenging if staff are only located near a tribal headquarters.

The Karuk Tribe’s ancestral lands extend over 1 million acres, so they are seeking to grow their Department of Natural Resources to be able to manage land across a large area that extends into two National Forests. “The DNR is located in Orleans, which is the smallest of our 3 main communities. We're on the most southern edge of our aboriginal territory. So the majority of our work does happen here, because this is where our office is, this is where it started. We are working to expand into the other areas. And there is some work happening, especially in Happy Camp. But just because we haven't had the capacity to grow our staff or to secure office space in those areas, it's hard for us to expand up there. And like, especially with the food program in particular, we keep getting pushed to start doing more things in Happy Camp and Yreka. But Yreka is two and a half hours away. So it's not an easy drive for someone to just go up there, and work on a farm or do a workshop or anything. So we need to be able to have staff that lives there. And then we would need to be able to have supervision for that staff that lives there. And then how that all ties back down to the programs that are based here in Orleans, that's a whole other thing that we haven't figured out yet. So we are able to do workshops here and there, up in those areas. Our programs like the forestry program and our fire and fuels program, they do a fair amount of work up in Happy Camp in particular” (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

First Foods Staffing Need:

Funding for First Foods traditional educators, knowledge-keepers and elders.

Oftentimes, the people in tribal communities with the most knowledge of First Foods are elders and people who grew up in tribal communities who may not have had the opportunity to attain higher education. These Tribal Members have knowledge of cultural places, plants, weather, language, and cultural protocols that has been gained through experience with culture, multiple elders, and time on landscapes. These Tribal Members are the people who are looked by researchers for what is called Traditional Ecological Knowledge, but they are often expected to provide their consultation for free or small honorariums. The knowledge that they carry is invaluable to tribes and tribal governments and they deserve to be compensated as the professionals and consultants that they are. They are the experts in their field.

First Foods Staffing Need:

Long-term funding is needed to support the growth of tribal government staffing.

Short-term grant funding is not an option for tribal governments who do not want to offer a short-term program that could disappear in a few years. Some tribes may choose not to apply for funding that is short-term because they need long-term staff who will be able to maintain services to tribal communities. Capacity-building-funding needs to be followed with sustained-capacity-funding. Funding sources that expire and are nonrenewable cause programs to close down, staff loss and frustration within the community who expect consistency from their tribal government, if not increased capacity.

Alissa Lane-Keene, CTSI Education & Cultural Programs Director:

“Things that I go for in funding are the things that I believe to have longevity. So when you have this short grant or something that's just kind of being offered, but doesn't have any hope for it to be renewed—those are difficult to want to go for. Where they leave the Tribe with having received funding brought on a staff person, maybe that person has done a dynamic job, and then the funding just goes away, and it's not available for tribes anymore. What I really appreciate that the State [Oregon] does again, is that set-aside funds, so funds that are for the 9 Tribes [of Oregon]. There's still an application process, you follow all of the same procurement. But they're intended more for growth, not just to get you started and then it goes away. **So when I'm looking for funding, I'm looking for that longevity and looking for something that is going to grow with us.** So in years 1 and 2, it's the building blocks. In years 3 and 4, they want to see the program or the position progress. Those are the things that I look for as a Director, because it provides us stability, not just with the staff and the department, but also the community we serve. **It's really hard to offer something to folks and then take it away**”

(Alissa Lane-Keene, personal communication, December 11, 2023).

First Foods Staffing Need:

Staffing at all levels is needed for First Foods work, from education, to workforce development, to project managers, to higher-level leadership positions.

Funding for restoration activities is available, however, the staffing to help plan and lead programs and projects is limited. Alta Harris, Klamath Tribes' Environmental Coordinator, “I think that there is a lot of funding right now for actual restoration activities and even for First Food development, those [funds] are available. One of the things that we are really challenged with, in building out capacity in these programs, is **funding for higher-level positions** and also filling those. I think that moving forward with programs with universities to make sure that Tribal Members are pointed at the right kind of education, that could help them to prepare to fill these positions would be good. But also just **having the long term funding to fill higher-level program-building positions is a challenge. I think that there is money, but it is short term and it doesn't really attract folks to come and stay and build new programs.** That's a challenge, right now” (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

“One of our biggest bottlenecks right now is administrative support and higher-level Project Managers. We recently applied for some funding with NOAA for capacity building for tribes, and what we requested was 4 or 5 new positions for just project managers to kind of oversee restoration efforts, or any kind of an enclosed project... We need a project manager to follow it through any large scale restoration projects. So more kind of higher-level management, project-design is probably our biggest challenge right now to fund and to fill. And then that administrative side of things again, is just a real challenge. And I think especially in Natural Resources it's a challenge, because we don't always necessarily need regular grant administrators or regular finance type positions. I mean, for this Master Stewardship Agreement that we're working on, that's a really complex funding mechanism. It involves agreements, and then there's supplemental agreements that fund individual projects. So to actually follow that through and make sure that it is fully benefiting the tribe is really important, and it would require someone dedicated to that and those kind of positions are very difficult to fill”
(Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Staffing Need:

Positions within the tribal government to gather for the community.

Garin Riddle, Klamath Tribes' NAGPRA Specialist (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act), had recently attended a Tribal Food Sovereignty Summit in the Pacific Northwest and shared his experience, "And I think one of the ideas that came up when I was at the summit was talking about **being able to hire our own people to go out and to gather.** I mean, we hire people to go out and cut wood for our elders. We hire people to go out and to get deer, elk for our elders. Of course, the elders don't pay for that. That's some kind of stipend that comes from our people. But what if we were to have a crew that went out and gather traditional foods to be able to give to the commodities program" (Garin Riddle, personal communication, March 12, 2024).

First Foods Staffing Needs:

Tribal land staffing equivalency to other government agencies, like rangers or enforcement staff.

Mike Kennedy, CTSI Director of Natural Resources Department, talked about the need for funding for tribal lands protection and said, "I'd love to have somebody that could be out there on all our timber lands just patrolling. We have all the usual stuff. You know, garbage dumping and gate vandalism and people trespassing stuff like that. It would be great to have a person like that" (Mike Kennedy, personal communication, October 23, 2023).

First Foods Staffing Need:

Coordinators for Funding Planning

Staffing is a capacity issue that reduces productivity when funding coordination takes staff away from day to day responsibilities. Tribes need administrative staff to coordinate funding planning, budgets and

meetings. Chris Marks shared, “Oftentimes it's the managers, the project implementers, the folks that literally have a full-time job already, that are the ones going after more money, and writing the reports, and trying to huddle everybody together, so we can have an informed, meaningful conversation before we go out and get that money. And so I think that that is a big need” (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

Funding Flexibility

First Foods Flexibility Need:

Simplified application process, reduce reporting requirements, and eliminate match/in-kind tracking.

Complex grant administration requirements can make funding inaccessible to tribal governments because they already have unmet administrative needs. Funding agencies could reduce application complexity, reduce reporting requirements to annual reporting and eliminating match or in-kind tracking would alleviate administrative burden and allow tribal government staff to spend more time to carry out projects.

First Foods Flexibility Need:

Tribes need the ability to customize and design programs to fit their own circumstances and needs.

Nearly every tribal government interviewee discussed a need for funding flexibility and many talked about funding intricacies that limited the scope of work that was possible. Funding administration is a burden on tribal governments, making Foundation funding easier to administer. Colleen Rosier described how foundation funding made it possible to access federal funding for their Department, “I think we have switched to as much Foundation funding as possible, because those are a lot easier to manage than Federal or State sources. Just in terms of the number of requirements, the application process, the reporting process. And also, because we currently through [another grant] we have a match requirement, that we need to do 25 percent match, and so we can't do other federal to match that, it needs to be non-federal sources. So I would say that developing relationships with foundations is definitely a strategy” (Colleen Rossier, personal communication, December 13, 2023).

First Foods Flexibility Need:

Make application periods longer for tribal governments.

Many tribal governments have to get Tribal Council approval for grant applications to be submitted and any discussion or revisions takes time. When a Tribe has low administrative capacity to complete grant planning and writing quickly, they miss out on funding. Don Gentry (Klamath Tribes) shared a common frustration expressed by other interviewees that tribal government staff are often stressed that the tribal government is not moving fast enough to take advantage of funding opportunities. Staff see “all this opportunity there and we're just not moving fast enough and then the funding is going to go away. We'll probably get everything in order to start taking advantage of it and the funding may or may not be there” (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

One USDA tribal liaison also shared that applications due during summer or certain times of year are difficult for tribes who practice subsistence fishing, hunting and gathering.

Foundation funding is helping fill gaps where government funding sources are falling short

Tribal governments are switching to Foundation funding because the funding is flexible and is filling funding gaps for labor or projects that are beyond the scope of funding restrictions. Examples of this would include Meyer Memorial funding that is paying for an outreach position with the CTUIR for 1 year.

Self-governance funding provides important flexibility for tribal governments

Increased BIA self-governance funding would help the Tribes administratively to be able to take better advantage of grants and other federal funds. Don Gentry said, “Being a self-governance Tribe, if we had the base funding that we could use and kind of direct where needed. You know, **base funding for ecological restoration**. And it could help us provide the funding that our Culture and Heritage Department needs to do the cultural surveys, that they have a difficult time funding. And just funding that is flexible, that the tribes have the ability to determine where best to use those funds at the time” (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

Funding directly impacts tribal government sovereignty. Some funding agencies have discretion to design funding specifically for tribal governments that allow for flexibility and greater autonomy. Tribal governments take funding very seriously because they are accountable to the funding agencies and to their tribal membership. Many tribes have robust accounting policies that ensure compliance. Gentry continued, “You know, folks [in funding agencies] would have to trust the tribes to do the right thing, but we've proven ourselves. We have very few findings in our audits, and usually a finding is just an error that could be remedied very easily. We have been told by our auditors that we're really conservative. We have very little debt compared to other tribes. And we've just kind of managed ourselves that way. So we've got good credit, not very much debt, and we've proven ourselves to be good managers of the federal funds that we have” (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

Tribal Leadership Funding

While funding for tribal government staff is limited, there is also limited funding for tribal leadership (Tribal Councils), which limits the number of hours that leaders can serve in their official capacities. Many Tribal Council members are either retired or also hold a different full-time job. Elected leaders' capacity to engage in consultation is low because they are not paid full-time positions. Tribal funding is limited and is often directed to critical tribal membership needs, rather than increasing Tribal Council member pay.

First Foods Leadership Need:

Compensation for Tribal Consultation.

The labor of consultation is budgeted for other government entities, so consultations should also be allocated for tribal government consultation labor. Consultation policies are being updated, but currently

inconsistencies in policies for every department at the State and Federal levels has created more work for tribal governments.

First Foods Leadership Need:

Tribes need capacity in order to engage in Partnerships

As a part of the White House Justice40 Initiative, the federal government has made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution (The White House, n.d.).

One strategy being used by funding agencies is requiring that applicants demonstrate that they have conducted outreach to underserved populations, like tribal governments. With the Administration requirement to work with underprivileged communities and report on their engagement, Tribes are getting overloaded on requests from private industry and NGOs. They cannot respond to all the requests, even if partnerships would be beneficial to their communities. Capacity needs to be increased at the tribal government to be able to take advantage of opportunities, but also, funding could just be directed to tribal governments directly, instead of funding other groups to 'work with Tribes' which doesn't actually mean that the Tribes will get any funding directed to them.

“I'm getting calls as a woodwork. asking, you know, how can we engage with tribes? How can we collaborate with tribes? And that's the same money that's going to the States that comes back through grants. And those grants have criteria that so much of their money has to go to tribes as well. So I've been getting a lot of calls on. How can we collaborate with tribes? How do we engage with them? They don't know tribal relations 101. And they say, Can you give us your contact list? And so we don't give out a contact list. The tribes get bothered enough, just from the agencies that alone, [the tribes] get so much emails. Everybody's asking them for things. Everybody wants input on stuff. Now, where 25 years ago they didn't ask their input on anything. And now they're wanting their input on everything. So I said, if you have something that you have available to tribes, I can put it out for you”
(Rowena Yeahquo, personal communication, November 1, 2023).

Funding Need Theme: Cultural Resources and NEPA

Cultural resources are commonly thought of as historic buildings and artifact objects and Native American cultural and sacred site preservation fall within this scope. But what is less known is that cultural resources for Indigenous people also include plants, wildlife, water, rocks, soil, landscapes, and more. Tribal governments may be able to allocate some discretionary self-governance funding toward cultural resources; however, this funding is limited and must be balanced with the other needs a tribal government may have. For Native American people to continue their cultural practices today and into the future, protection of cultural resources is a necessity for cultural continuity. Cultural resources require protection, sustainable management, accessibility, monitoring, education, and other human services.

Cultural Resources was a recurring theme in interviews and tribal employees said that there is a general lack of funding opportunities for cultural resource protection. Cultural Resources is a term that can apply to any pre-contact or historical archeological sites, structures, objects, artifacts, rock inscriptions, and earthworks. Tribal governments may also consider First Foods and cultural plant materials to be cultural resources as they are essential to cultural continuity for future generations.

There are several important laws and regulations related to Cultural Resources, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act and Section 106, which requires government-to-government consultation with federally recognized tribes. Within tribal governments, Cultural Resources staff are who respond to NEPA, environmental assessments and environmental impact statements. Federal agencies, states, and businesses can incorporate NEPA expenses into their cost of doing business, however cultural resources funding is extremely rare for tribal governments. Most often, archeology and cultural resource monitoring is conducted at the tribal governments expense without compensation. This study did not examine how the government agencies afford NEPA environmental assessments or environmental impact statements, however due to the broad impacts on archeological and cultural resources, tribal governments are in great need of funding equivalency to address the scale of NEPA requests.

Cultural loss continues unchecked when tribal governments lack sufficient funding to protect their cultural sites and resources. “When an agency approaches a Tribe and says, Hey, we're going to go do this project and blast away this side of the mountain to mine lithium. What are your concerns?’ If [the Tribes] don't have the staff and resources to identify where the traditional plants are, or don't have a Culture Resource Program to go out and survey, or don't have just the basic staff that can look at the application, to develop the questions that need to be answered prior to the project going forward, **you just end up with continuing destruction of these resources without any, I mean any, meaningful tribal involvement.**” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

There are consequences for tribal governments not having adequate staffing to address NEPA, Cultural Resources and research. Unfortunately, when tribal governments do not have adequate staffing, Huber said, “the resources are just not considered. I mean, the Forest Service won't come up with ‘We need to

protect this root, in this area' by itself. And the tribes are expected to identify all their resources, all their traditional resources, all their archaeological resources, all their cultural resources, whenever they get a NEPA notice. 'Hey, we're doing this project here. What are your maps of cultural sites? What are your traditional foods?' And the tribes are like 'we haven't mapped our traditional territory for all these foods.' We cannot survey the Tribal Members that gather all them out there. We cannot go out and do an entire Cultural Resource survey, identifying all the archaeology, all the traditional place names, all that information without funding. I mean we can't, we don't have that information in a way that's easily distributable to an agency. Nor would we want to. I mean, the **tribes have a history of releasing that information and then having the sites dug up and looted, or resources extracted.** Let's just say the strategy of 'trust-us' for the tribes hasn't worked out so well in the last couple of 100 years" (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

Tribes are not businesses that use revenue to offset the cost of environmental surveys. And although tribal governments are governments, they do not have funding allocated like federal agencies, which means tribes often have to use their own limited funds to conduct Cultural Resources surveys to protect First Foods, if they have funding to do them at all. "**There's not a whole bunch of funding for the cultural resource survey, the report writing, the THPO concurrence,** and all that--that all comes out of project dollars. That again, the government's not big on paying for monitoring and those types of activities. They want to see a fence on the ground if we're proposing a fence, at the end of the day they want a fence. They don't care about--did you comply with NHPA, ESA, NEPA, and all that stuff--that's kind of supposed to be woven in" (Gordy Schumacher, personal communication, December 6, 2024).

First Foods Cultural Resources Need:

Base funding for Cultural Resources

For decades, Tribes have been reaching out to federal and state agencies to make sure that Tribes are not overlooked in Cultural Resources consultation. In recent years, agencies are suddenly increasing their consultation requests to tribal governments, which is a good thing. However, funding is needed to balance the demand with the capacity of tribal governments to respond to requests. "So these positions are funded with the primary base funding through self governance, and then the majority of the other funding is grant funding, which is not particularly secure. We are pushing forward with our master stewardship agreement to have more secure long-term funding through the Forest Service. In a kind of a co-management position or contract with treatments on the forest that will last for 20 years that we are preparing to sign now. Other than that, is grant funding, and, as I mentioned, that is sometimes difficult with **departments like Culture and Heritage that aren't eligible for the amount of grants that the Restoration crews are**" (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Cultural Resources Need:

Longer timelines for NEPA to allow time for Tribes to measure impacts on cultural foods.

Funding for Cultural Resource Research and Tracking

"One of the ongoing problems we have is our planning efforts are typically like a year out. So we develop an annual work plan and implement that. And then if we want to do something, we have to plan it for next year. And if it's a multi-year effort, we have to plan it for multiple years down the pipe. And typically,

when these restoration projects will come up, like ‘Hey, we need to finish NEPA by July of this year. What can we do for First Foods?’ And it just doesn't work that way. I mean, when it comes to sampling and identifying First Foods, you have the growing season, you have the dormant season. I mean, there are times you go out there to survey--you're not going to find anything because they're just not on the surface” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

First Foods Cultural Resources Need:

Systems improvement for agencies and Tribes on NEPA timeline and funding timelines

“NEPA is the one tool that that the Government has for determining the impacts of their actions. But it tends to be a very short timeline. Many agencies because they're funding cycle, they're funded annually. And in the last half decade they're funding on continuing resolutions that are sometimes not certain from week to week. So that really makes it problematic for them to do long-term planning. And studying First Foods is not something you can do in a 6-12 week window, even a 9 month window, because you have the entire growing cycle of the plant or root, or wildlife, big game. And just the nature of the resource's life cycle is inconsistent with some of the planning efforts, the timeframes that they use for doing these projects. It's like, ‘Hey, we've got to get this money on the ground right now, what can we do for First Foods?’ And it's like, not a lot in this timeframe” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

First Foods Cultural Resources Need:

NEPA should require impacts on Treaty Rights in EIS.

“Well, the National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] was enacted in the 60s to require the government take a hard look at their decisions and the environmental consequences of those decisions. It doesn't require protection of the environment, but it requires balancing of the costs and the benefits of really looking at what are the broad environmental consequences of actions taken by the Federal Government. And it is kind of a bureaucratic process in each Agency, and some Agencies do it better than others and look at more detail. Some are just looking for clearance in their projects. But it is really one of the few mechanisms where Federal Agencies take to look broadly at the impacts of their actions, from climate change, to Treaty Rights, to recreational tourism impacts. I mean, really take a hard look at why they're doing it and what the effects are of what they're doing. And what we found is there's no law that says, you will look at what your impacts of what you're doing on Treaty Rights. I mean, the treaty itself is a law under the Constitution that they should be reviewing. But **it's in the NEPA process that they really are required to consider those impacts on the resources that were preserved in the Treaty. And we try to get EISs [Environmental Impact Statements] to recognize that one of the authorities that the document is being developed under, is the treaty of 1855 itself**” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

First Foods Cultural Resources Need:

Funding for Cultural Resources and NEPA would help other departments within the tribal government complete their projects and meet deadlines.

The ability for tribes to use funding that is available for restoration or construction is slowed and impeded when Cultural Resources does not have adequate staffing to address all of the various NEPA requests, but internal for other tribal government departments and for external agencies or developers. “There is funding for restoration on the ground. One of the challenges that we have right now is for our Culture and Heritage Department to have the capacity to do the archeological surveys before the other Departments do their work. To provide that support, that Culture and Heritage should provide knowledge of the First Foods and plants that we want, to getting Tribal Members out there to use them, all of those things. That department really struggles, because there isn't as much explicit funding for them... We need to do archaeological surveys out there before they can get to work, and that that particular department is not funded near as well as the others are able to with these restoration dollars. So to go out there and catalog the history of the Tribes in that area, or the cultural plants that are already available, to do any kind of inventories like that, **that money is not near as available, and it comes in much smaller bites that are more difficult to administer** than the larger restoration funding does” (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

Funding Need Theme: Outreach, Education and Workforce Development

Outreach is needed inside the tribal community to serve tribal membership and needed externally from the tribal government to provide presentations and communication with outside entities. Outreach professionals can act as Liaisons between the tribe and tribal community members, or Liaisons between tribes and outside organizations.

Outreach in a tribal community context can be carried out by many different types of staff and with many different purposes within the tribal government. For example, Community Health workers play an important role in connecting tribal communities with health education and healthcare access. Community Health staff with tribal health departments may assist or lead First Foods education, like they do with one of the tribal governments in this study.

In mainstream agriculture, outreach and community organizing efforts are funded by commercial profits and organized by industries to promote specific agricultural crops. Outreach is also conducted by the nonprofit sector who have fundraising systems that fuel their community organizing for local foods, school lunch, etc. Tribal governments are governments, but have historically been excluded from funding systems that go to states, local governments or NGOs, and do not have easy funding mechanisms for outreach and community organizing.

In mainstream government culture, outreach is considered hosting a community meeting and relying on interested parties to have the resources and capacity to attend and provide feedback. Increasingly, funders are requiring a demonstration of community input on plans, but this is limited if a department is not also afforded resources to conduct true community engagement. One interviewee in the study described their past experience with outreach being a tool to ensure the community was satisfied with their program and was aware of any unmet needs. Outreach funding ensures that communities are informed and are able to engage in decision making.

Communication and Community-Responsive Planning

CTUIR was the one tribal government in this study that has a single long-term Outreach staff member within their Department of Natural Resources and they recently added one new short-term Outreach assistant. Their Outreach staff provide education and presentations to the tribal community, to outside agencies and organizations, to schools, funders, etc. Outreach to the tribal community is a priority for the Department of Natural Resources and Cultural Resources because those staff help bridge communication with the tribal community and tribal government staff. Outreach professionals work with the community to get information about First Foods and collect feedback on the plans and actions of the department. Chris Marks emphasized the importance of CTUIR's Outreach staff and the important role they carry out on behalf of the tribal government and community. "One of the things that we share a lot of around the governance center is outreach professionals. [They are the people] that can get out there and really educate the tribal public, get information [into the department] about the First Foods, and different

actions, different plans, what people think about them.” (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

For First Foods, Cultural Resources and Natural Resources departments could use evaluation, outreach and communication funding to improve their response to community needs and ensure that cultural resources are being protected. Outreach professionals can facilitate culturally-sensitive communication with the tribal community as a part of planning, decision making and evaluation.

In tribal communities, community outreach is best done by Tribal Members (from that same Tribe) who have existing familiarity with the culture, language and communication methods, and existing network/connections within the population. Other staff may be able to build those networks and trust, but it takes significant effort and time to attain.

First Foods Outreach Need:

Outreach professionals to provide cultural education for cultural continuity.

The CTUIR DNR has an Education Outreach Specialist who provides many important functions, including community education on First Foods. Chris Marks said, “Wenix Red Elk, the Cultural Resources Outreach professional, we spread her thin, unfortunately. But she does such a good job out there. So she's been doing these First Food excursions. She sets it up to where she's got a crew of folks that know what they're doing and where they're going, and all that kind of stuff. And they just bring in the community and offering these opportunities to get back up there and to learn about the foods, and to learn about the harvesting, and the ceremonies, and the celebration and the use of those foods” (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

First Foods Outreach Need:

Tribal Councils need feedback from tribal communities in First Foods decision making.

Because First Foods are specific to Native American communities, tribal governments have special community responsibilities of rights protection and community organizing. Tribal governments are accountable to protect the rights and cultural preservation for their citizens, and Don Gentry (Klamath Tribes) talked about how communication with the tribal community was essential “because some of these things are that significant, but probably need a vote of our whole [tribal] membership. So it's just really a difficult process, you know, for us to take some of these things on there, good things.” (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024)

First Foods Outreach Need:

Evaluation that is tribal-community-focused.

Funders require evaluation and surveys from the community, but it is based on measures set by the funder. Reporting takes staff time and community member time and is used by funders as an enforcement tool to ensure compliance with funding and enforce results from awardees. It is well-known that there are large gaps in Native American data and evaluation funding going directly to tribal governments could enhance their data sovereignty and their ability to better serve the unique needs of their communities.

Rather than funders dictating reporting requirements, tribal governments could be using program evaluation funding to improve communication with their communities and generate data in culturally appropriate ways like appearing at TC meetings or community meetings.

Outreach is important to evaluation because many tribal communities have directly been impacted by theft of cultural knowledge or data being collected/used in ways that harm tribal communities. Funding agencies should consider how evaluation could empower tribes to develop evaluation that works best for their goals and reduce the burden and labor of evaluation that is not valuable to tribal governments.

First Foods Outreach Need:

Funding for tribal government consultation with elders on research and historic preservation

Tribal governments rely on their elders for historic preservation and elders are often called on as consultants to provide information and advice. One tribe had a historic preservation department who interviewed elders and provided limited honorariums for participation. It would be helpful for tribal governments to have adequate funding to compensate elders for their time, travel, and contributions to research on behalf of their tribe. “We should provide honorarium, because we're always seeking info, outreaching to the public or to the community, and asking elders to share their knowledge. Some CTUIR tribal departments compensate elders for their time. But I think that would be good to have something in place so elders are better compensated to continue to contribute to our mission to restore First Foods” (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024).

Education

Tribal governments have a role in cultural preservation through historical research, ongoing documentation of tribal elders’ knowledge, preserving artifacts, and also protecting cultural resources. Tribal governments also take an active role in providing community events and youth programs which can include cultural education, health education, and academic education. The capacity of tribal governments to provide cultural education around First Foods is greatly impacted by funding. All tribal governments in this study expressed a need for more funding for cultural education funding.

Like other education systems, tribal communities also need annual and ongoing cultural education to continue First Foods culture, especially in the wake of policies that have suppressed cultural practices. Community education funding provides tribal governments with the flexibility to address cultural education needs in a format that works best for their communities.

“I mean policy impacted Tribes in so many ways and mostly through losses of family and a lot of that traditional knowledge was interrupted that normally would have been handed down in our families” (Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

Cultural erasure has been well-funded by the US government in the past and in order to restore cultural lifeways, tribal governments need funding that supports cultural continuity. Tribal Council Member Les Anderson estimated that within the Klamath Tribes government, currently about 95% of the funding and effort around First Foods is going toward environmental restoration, rather than efforts to revitalize

culture within the community (Les Anderson, personal communication, March 6, 2023). Caring for First Foods is central to many tribal identities and when those foods have been rare, it makes passing on First Foods knowledge more difficult. Restoring First Foods habitats is critical to First Foods culture and First Foods culture is how tribes care for and maintain First Food abundance. Cultural education is a unique funding need for tribal governments, because tribes have been targeted with policies of cultural erasure. To this day, continuity of cultural practices can be challenging for individuals and tribes to integrate into modern lifestyle, educational structures and economic systems which do not integrate traditional lifestyles, cultural knowledge or communal ways of educating with all age groups. There are also systemic challenges with integrating cultural education into mainstream educational institutions when weather impact scheduling and the Climate Crisis limits First Food availability.

First Food Cultural Education Need:

Funding for Tribes to help pass First Foods and Traditional Ecological Knowledge down through generations.

- Tribes need funding to support cultural preservation of traditional knowledge.
- Cultural continuity is a shared responsibility of the community and is facilitated through community education: funding is needed for all ages, elders, youth, families, and community.
 - Community outreach
 - Community education

“We're needing to reteach our people how to identify and gather these foods, because there's been generational gaps where people haven't had those traditions passed on to them for whatever reason in their family. And so it's kind of like we're trying to change that and start a new generation of people gathering that can then teach their kids and continue that tradition on.

And so, even though it's the Tribe as a government doing the work, there's been some resistance of people being like ‘well, why is the Tribe doing that? That should be the families doing that.’ And I'm like, but there's a lot of things that have happened through different generations where those traditions weren't passed down, so they don't know. And so it's a real learning. It's a preservation. And that's how I look at it is we're preserving the culture and preserving those teachings and passing them on down.

And we have different people that know different things. So we have what I call cultural advisors that we can use to help teach those things that even we [as the Cultural Resources Protection Program] don't know. And ideally, the end goal is to create these small videos of how to identify a food, how to harvest it, how to procure it. And then, if needed, we could do other videos of how do you cook it, and things like that" (Teara Farrow Ferman, personal communication, April 19, 2024).

Workforce Development

Tribal governments need funding for workforce development, including educational support in order to increase the number of Tribal Members to be able to lead within the tribal government, whether within the Department of Natural Resources or other departments focused on First Foods. Career development and succession planning are areas that many tribes would like to increase capacity, especially help

advance Tribal Members in their careers within the tribal government. Two interviewees mentioned that educated or skilled Tribal Members are likely to be recruited to positions outside of their tribal government and it is a challenge for tribal governments to fill and retain staff. If tribal governments lack the funding capacity to provide advancement opportunities, staff may leave to advance their careers. One interviewee talked about how it is hard to attract Tribal Members back home to their communities once they start building their careers and personal lives away from their tribe. Several interviewees talked about how staff who have worked for the tribe for a long time have institutional knowledge that is valuable and that replacing staff when they retire can be a challenge because it is difficult to attract experienced and qualified staff to rural areas, far from cities. Natural Resources scientist and archeologist positions were mentioned, but there are likely other positions that are needed too.

Outreach helps with Workforce Development and consistent funding for outreach and education would also help expand Workforce Development. CTUIR is the one tribal government in this study with Outreach staff and they have been doing Workforce Development for years targeting young students and getting them interested in Natural Resources, science, and also educating youth to value the environment. Sparking academic interest in youth from a young age, helps prepare them for science careers and helps build buy-in within local communities to value environmental health and tribal culture. "We are seeing some of that in our neighboring basins where she's been going to those elementary schools for 10-15 years and so these folks are now graduating and getting into the workforce and bringing some of those learned values that they weren't getting necessarily into their work zones and into their personal lives. And so that is helping" (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

First Food Education Need:

Funding for tribal governments to support Tribal Member students from elementary through higher education, including non-college job training.

Tribal governments need funding to:

- support Tribal Member youth in elementary through high school to prepare them for higher education that they will need to fulfill leadership roles in the tribal government.
- support Tribal Members while they are in college with the social support and resources their families may not be able to provide.
- support for non-college bound Tribal Member learners who require learning opportunities within their tribal community or tribal government. Tribal Members who stay living near or within their reservations also need job training and abilities to advance in their careers.

Funding Need Theme: Access to First Foods

First Foods funding needs are unique

As the US government agencies are increasingly making intentional changes to uphold treaties, agencies will need to integrate tribal governments into management systems which previously excluded tribal government roles. Funding from agencies will be directed to tribal government staffing due to increased workload on tribal governments as they carry out responsibilities in land management.

Elements that make First Foods funding unique include that the funding is for tribal governments (not businesses), Treaty Rights, cultural intellectual property, historically excluded and underserved communities, subsistence food system, community and multi-family focused, land-scape scale, cultural protocol management system, associated with cultural resources, cultural education, central to ceremonies and religious freedom, cultural burning of landscapes, disproportionately impacted by the Climate Crisis, and more. The Klamath Tribes Planning Director Jared Hall said, “A lot of things you do, just like food sovereignty, you have to commit funding to it, and you just have to. **If you don't commit funding to a particular program or department, it's really hard for them to grow in the right ways**” (Jared Hall, personal communication, November 20, 2024). Multiple interviewees shared this sentiment and said that it was better if First Foods advocates found new funding because tribal governments had little to no capacity to fund food sovereignty or First Foods work with existing tribally controlled funding.

First Foods Access Need:

Tribal staff to gather, hunt, fish to provide food for the community.

Currently, it is rare for tribal governments to have funding to pay staff to provide food for their membership. Often, First Foods are only accessible to families who are privileged to have resources such as vehicles to travel to areas with First Foods, time to take off work during hunting season/gathering season, and they do this labor voluntarily on their personal time. As a community that has been deprived of First Foods, staff are needed to at least provide community opportunity to gather, hunt and fish.

“But in the context of carrying on our traditions, if there's funding that we could even store traditional foods and serve those you know in a community gathering. Whether it's during the ceremony, or general council meeting, or wedding, or some kind of a celebration. That'd be a wonderful thing to do. And I know people would voluntarily take deer, elk, fish, foods that they gather and store in there... I hope we have a place like [Umatilla Tribes] that we can gather and store those foods, and if there's funding to. **Because our whole economic system changed, we would like to rely solely on our native foods—gathering and collecting them, store, and prepare them. And now that people have to have jobs, you know, why don't we pay people to do those kind of things?** To maintain those traditions, the culture, and teach people how to do what we've kind of lost. It's kind of certain families know where to go and how to do certain things. And it's not a whole collective knowledge that we have in one place. And we're trying to do some things about that, too. By trying to put some documents together, that from interviews of Tribal Members, what our practices were, how we use fire, those kind of things. We're trying to do that. But I would like to see that a program, where we can do that, whether it's casting a cultural enhancement program. And I just think we need to get back to serving our traditional foods” (Don Gentry, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Research Need:

Funding is needed for tribes to conduct research, restoration and monitoring of First Foods.

There is limited research on many First Foods because they can be rare or non-commercial crops.

Examples of the unique funding need include:

- Pollinator research funding - commercial crops often rely on foreign pollinators, whereas native pollinators can be specific to First Foods and research is needed to ensure native pollinators are healthy.
- Wildlife funding - tribal governments need equitable funding to other governments in order to adequately manage Treaty Rights.
- Cultural plant funding - tribal governments need capacity to collect baseline data on cultural plants.
- Funding for restoration - restoring ecosystems is at a larger scale for tribes than it is for agricultural operations.
- Monitoring funding - several interviewees talked about how it was difficult to find monitoring funding.
- Funding to combat invasive species - invasive species impact biodiversity and can impact entire ecosystems by disrupting food webs.

Cheryl Shippentower from CTUIR shared, “So within our First Food Order [cultural protocol], my program is focused on the women's foods (roots and berries). Part of my work is going out and conducting ethnobotanical surveys. I determine if culturally important plants are present and if proposed projects will negatively impact them. I also do non-project related cultural plant surveys, where I'll document culturally important plants when I see them. This will provide an opportunity for understanding of the distribution of our food plants and provides opportunities for us to share with other Tribal Members, if they're not familiar with the area. Tribal people have their own places they go, but they're always looking for new places to gather foods. And I think that's what this survey work will contribute to providing additional gathering locations. **There's not much information known about our plants beyond traditional cultural knowledge.** If you look up our food plants, there's not much information out there. Standard [conventional scientific] monitoring that occurs, it's later in the season, and it misses all our First Foods. We don't know if our land management practices are negatively impacting our food plants. We've collaborated with Oregon State University and developed this protocol to monitor the abundance of culturally significant plant resources. We're just doing the baseline collection and will resample following treatment. We are monitoring about 17 species identified by tribal gatherers and staff. The protocol measures density and frequency that provides information on conditions and trends of these species. On the reservation, we've got multiple grazing and forestry projects that occur. This protocol will inform us on whether our land practices are benefiting or decreasing our First Foods. The Tribes are addressing invasive annual grasses, it's a big issue for us here on the reservation and [off-reservation] in the Western States. That's a huge impact to a lot of our resources.

CTUIR also conducts a little bit of restoration work of uplands. It's been a sensitive issue to restore, you know, actually grow our plants in the nursery. Even though we own a Tribal Native Plant Nursery, I just think **our elders were concerned about our First Foods being exploited, sold, or commercialized.** But I think we've got to that point where people feel more comfortable with the CTUIR nursery and understand the need for restoring First Foods. The goal of the native plant nursery is getting food plants back on the landscape. I think we're starting to move in that direction. The CTUIR nursery is going to do some native seed collections for cultural plants for restoring the uplands. The CTUIR nursery has incorporated cultural shrubs in CTUIR restoration for riparian habitat. There are many trees and shrubs that are culturally important to the Tribe being planted back along the rivers and streams” (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Funding for tribal governments to manage lands at a landscape-scale and at an ancestral homelands scale.

Tribal governments need large landscapes and multiple areas to have sustainable access to First Foods. Tribes need to be able to harvest sustainably across ancestral homelands and manage multiple sites to rotate harvesting and allow time for rejuvenation.

Tribes manage First Foods at landscape scale, but the funding systems available to tribal governments do not allocate funding in that way. The current government system has created systems of classifying jurisdictions into Forest Service, BLM, State, private fee, and tribal land. Tribal governments need funding that can be utilized across these new jurisdictions, but all fall within ancestral territories. Today, land where a tribe has protected Treaty Rights might be assessed as private land, potentially preventing Tribal Members from maintaining Treaty-Right-protected access to First Foods. So lastly, tribal governments also need funding to address First Foods needs on private land.

Land Back

Every tribe in the United States has experienced land loss due to forced removal, coercion, fraud and policy. The loss of land has led to a loss of First Foods as ecosystems have been transformed into other land uses. In order for tribes to continue their First Food cultures, access to First Foods, access to land, and tribes carrying out their cultural land management practices are essential. Within areas where tribes practice their Treaty Rights, policies such as conservation easements conflict with tribes' access to First Foods. A constant growing threat to First Foods is the ongoing development on farmland, range land and wetlands, which destroys gathering areas forever. Policy is needed to protect areas with First Foods and mitigate destruction of First Foods areas.

Land Back is a movement across the United States of returning land to the federally recognized tribes or tribal communities. Land Back is a complex topic, sometimes with multiple tribes having ties to the same area.

Tribal governments need funding to facilitate Land Back:

- Restoration of former reservation land to tribal governments
- Restoration of ancestral land to tribal governments
- Land donations to tribal governments
- Land purchases by tribal governments
- Land management funding for tribal governments
- Access to ancestral food places via easement, agreement, etc.
- Reconnaissance, monitoring, and evaluation
- Treaty Rights protection, policy and enforcement

All 4 of the tribal governments in this study have experienced significant Land Loss and loss of access to First Foods (See Appendix A). Land has been taken using policies such as reductions to reservations, the Dawes Act, and Termination. Some former reservation land is today National Forest land, BLM land, or other public land. Jeff Mitchell, Chair of Klamath Tribes Agriculture and First Foods Committee (KTAF)

Committee) said, **“Now most of our homelands, the former Klamath Tribes reservation, most of it now is a National Forest.** It's the only National Forest in the whole U.S. Forest Service system that was entirely created out of a former Indian reservation. The Winema National Forest was created 1962 out of the Klamath Indian reservation. And so from that standpoint, you know, most of our homelands are part of a public agency today. But we also had around 250,000 acres allotted. And the changes that occurred in the allotment process and with Termination... And unfortunately, out of that 250,000 acres that was allotted, over a 100,000 at Termination in 1954 had already gone into non-tribal ownership. And then it didn't take long for most of it to transfer to non-Indian ownership today. **Out of that 250,000 [acres allotted by the Dawes Act], I estimate there's about maybe 4,500 acres left in tribal ownership, tribal people. So the majority of that now is transferred to my new neighbors”** (Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

Since the 1970s, tribal governments have had increasing capacity to address the needs of their people, including economic development. Land Back is a goal for many tribes, but they most often have had to buy land back that was stolen. Jeff Mitchell shared how land is needed for many different purposes for the health and wellbeing of the Klamath Tribes. "Practically every river and stream and lake was gobbled up in the allotment process. There's very little of it that's on public lands. And very little of it we've been able to acquire back. On our Land Back program, **today, we're forced to buy land back, if we have the resources to do that.** Then you have to prioritize what it is you want your land for. Do you want a for economic development? Do you want it for housing?... **Our people have all kinds of need, tremendous amount of need. You can't look in any direction without seeing need"** (Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Funding for staff to facilitate access to areas with First Foods.

“Well, that's one of the **shortfalls on most federal programs is monitoring and evaluation.** And one of the things that we've really ventured into is this concept of access. You know, it's one thing to restore, or maintain, or enhance First Foods. But if Tribal Members can't access it, we're really not making progress. Most of that work has been done in the Cultural Resources program in the forms of mitigation agreements. But I know there's a push [by CTUIR leadership], that when we see or hear of opportunities to get Tribal Members onto new and different properties or lands that have First Foods, that we reach out and try to work out some kind of a deal. And you know, for us, there's no money for that, for those types of activities. Whether it be some kind of access agreement that has funding with it, or time to go sit down with large landowners to work out some kind of an agreement” (Gordy Schumacher, personal communication, December 6, 2024)

First Foods Access Need:

Funding for tribes to be able to restore First Foods within their reservation and within their ancestral territories.

“So I would say, one of the primary challenges is just capacity again, right? I mean, we have only so many crews and so many abilities to do everything. And in the reserve treaty area, we end up focusing [there]. So we are not able to reach out as far as would actually even benefit the reserve treaty areas, but

that would also benefit the ancestral territories, because we only have limited capacity to work in the areas that will most affect Tribal Members now in the near time. So **there is work that could affect sucker populations, that could affect return of salmon, that could affect mule deer populations within the reservation, that we just don't have the capacity to do at this time. And we would be able to do that with more funding and more staffing**" (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Funding for tribal governments to protect historic gathering sites and manage First Foods for future generations.

"I think it's really important that it's recognized that we're out on the landscape gathering these foods and we're tending to them. Whatever method that we're using, whether it's just gathering or whether it's burning to maintain the health of natural resources. **A lot of [non-CTUIR] people want to kind of convert how we gather our foods, for us to grow them in a community garden, and I just don't think that's the right way to maintain our culture. I think it's important to restore gathering areas, so we can gather as we have always done.** We can collect seeds or propagate cultural plants, and get them back on the landscape. We need to maintain that connection with the landscape. With climate change or with any kind of land management, having that connection, tribal people can see what kind of changes are going on. And I would just hate to see traditional food gathering converted to agriculture. Which I don't think will happen. But [non-CTUIR] people think it would be easier if we just had a garden for tribal people. But that takes away from cultural learning opportunities to just get out there on the landscape and **knowing the areas that our ancestors went to, so that we can maintain access to those areas. And so I think that's something that we emphasize is maintaining access to all the ceded aboriginal territory**" (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Tribal governments need funding support to address First Food losses across the reservation and ancestral lands (First Food reconnaissance and mitigation).

Not all tribes have access to mitigation funding, but Teara Farrow Ferman shared that CTUIR is using part of their mitigation funding to do First Foods reconnaissance where they search for areas that have harvestable abundance of First Foods, so that they can reconnect Tribal Members to those places (Teara Farrow Ferman, personal communication, April 19, 2024). They also need to find new places so that the same areas do not become overharvested by the community. Farrow Ferman said that staff actively look for First Foods, where CTUIR can legally gather them to protect that access for future community use. These efforts also involve working with private landowners on access agreements within Treaty Rights protected areas and ancestral territories. None of the other tribal governments described having the staffing capacity to be able to do reconnaissance work.

First Foods Access Need:

Agencies need to uphold trust responsibility to tribal governments.

“I think the biggest thing we all see in a lot of tribes, especially landless tribes, that we see is politics. These big governments in charge of most the public lands, which is most the land across America. There's quite a bit of private land too, but these big government structures are in charge of it. And they seem to manage the land instead of cultural, natural, where everybody benefits. It's good for the land, good for the people, good food.

I think that politics behind managing land is geared towards interest. Whether it's big timber, whether it's mineral rights, whether it's water for agriculture, or water for anything, water for ranching. It seems our natural resources and the lands that surround it get managed, for whoever gets the loudest in that political arena and puts the pressure on these Agencies. And **we even see here at these local Agencies, they just fold when they get a little bit of pressure from some outside interest. They fold, and they kind of forget who the people who were here first, who we are. And sometimes they don't even bring us to the table to discuss these decisions. They just try to go around us,** because that's kind of how they operate, is in a political blender. And that's what they do. And that's the bummer part about it.

And I think that's why you're seeing so many Tribes stepping up now, realizing **we need our land returned, we need to be in control of the land.** Because we could implement something like that. We may not be perfect ourselves. But we would probably think like that, before we did something with the land. **We would think like that as Tribal people, we would think about the resources, the wildlife, and our own lives in our community before we made decisions to manage the land”** (Jared Hall, personal communication, November 20, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Funding for tribal governments to coordinate with the Forest Service, BLM, and other agencies, rather than agencies relegating Treaty Rights to local forests who may be ill equipped to address trust responsibility.

Some National Forests have proactive staff who have taken it upon themselves to create land access for tribal governments, but that is not always the case, especially in areas with large agriculture experiencing severe drought. One example is the Karuk Tribe, who controls about 1% of their ancestral territory and much of the rest is controlled by National Forests. The largest part of Karuk's ancestral lands are within one National Forest who has not been a proactive collaborator with the Tribe due to differing priorities. Staff at National Forests have a direct impact on cultural practices and ability for tribal government staff to complete projects. “With our TFPA funding, we had approved TFPA proposals for both the Six Rivers and the Klamath National Forest, because our traditional territory covers both forests. So most of the work that we do is with the Six Rivers National Forest, because they're much easier to work with. The main guy we work with is Hoopa, you know, a native guy that wants to work with us. The Klamath National Forest is not so easy to work with. And we get a lot of pushback up there. And so, despite the fact that the majority of our traditional territory is now under the jurisdiction of the Klamath National Forest, that's another barrier to being able to go up and do work in that region. I'm sure we've mentioned,

like **our tribal aboriginal territories over a million acres, of that, about 1% is actually tribal trust land or Fee land. So very little of it actually is under our control, where we can do what we want with it.** The rest of it, we have to have these like co-stewardship agreements with the Forest Service. Or work with individuals who own parcels of land, to do work on their properties. Which is also one of the main things that we do, since our tribal trust and fee land is so little. We also work with the community members who want to see restoration happening on their properties and to be able to implement that. And then, as much as we can with the Forest Service, even with funding coming in to work with Klamath National Forest, it's still a challenge to get anything done up there. And that just has to do with who the people who work there and the county that they're mostly in is very much about agriculture and ranchers” (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Land for Community Centers, cultural structures, and other land-use needs.

Land Back also includes areas for tribal communities to be able to come to together, like Community Centers, seasonal use lodges, etc. Indigenous people are used to living within their ancestral lands and in seasonal gathering areas, but have been forcibly removed and prevented from accessing areas.

First Food Policymaking Need:

Funding for tribal government labor associated with policy and legal expenses to address policy inconsistencies where Treaty Rights and access to First Foods are being impacted by land use, conservation easements, etc.

“And the other policy matter that I would just like to touch on is grazing. The Klamath Tribes have their reserved treaty area, which is the former reservation and there's land ownership within there, but it's not large. The majority of the lands we help to manage are the Fremont National Forest, and there are grazing allotments in there, and it's really frustrating sometimes to think that there is this obligation by the Forest Service to secure treaty resources for Tribal Members, but outside businesses, entities are allowed to graze on those lands. So in some cases [the cattle] are directly consuming the plants, they're competing with wildlife for habitat and it's really frustrating that right for grazing is not included in the rights to hunt, fish, trap and gather within that area” (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

First Foods Access Need:

Policy substitution where tribal governments develop their own tribal conservation easements to replace easements restricting land use and access to First Foods.

In recent years, conservation organizations have been looking to either return land to tribes or to provide tribes with access to land. Many conservation organizations share a common value of *wilderness*, a concept that idealizes natural landscapes void of humans. Indigenous people view themselves as a part of the landscape and in relationship and responsibilities to the land, fish, etc. This worldview is reflected by the unique creation stories, teachings on how to live responsibly with the land, and history of sustainably living on the landscapes for millennia. When tribes are returning to the landscape, they may wish to establish camps, structures or facilities that make it possible for Tribal Members to use sites. Conservation organizations have made it their mission to protect land from development, which is an

important cause. However, all conservation organizations are operating on ancestral homelands and operate as an extension of colonialism when they dictate the terms of land use. Conservation organizations should examine how they can support tribal government autonomy and sovereignty by opting to transfer land to tribal governments without strings attached.

Conservation organizations, such as land trusts and others, are contacting tribes to inquire about potential for Land Back by transferring properties to tribal governments. However, the conservation easements on these properties impedes or prohibits First Food access. Policy development is needed to facilitate work with land conservation groups. One idea is for tribal governments to create their own tribal conservation easement policy that would apply when the Tribe acquires property from a Land Trust or Conservation Organization.

Conservation easements encroach on Treaty Rights when they create policy which restricts Tribal Member access to First Foods.

"And then, a couple of things that came to mind while we were talking that I just wanted to bring up, was there's more policy things honestly now, that are kind of getting in the way of what we're doing. One of the struggles we have is with conservation easements, and the Tribes are very supportive of restoration activities within their ceded territories and within the former reservation. But **there is a problem when sometimes those lands have restrictions, including the harvest of plants that grow in those riparian areas, such as [redacted First Food] and practicing other traditional activities...those are all excluded from the conservation easement.** So navigating something that we feel really good about [like restoration or conservation], but that is limiting Tribal Members, especially if that land comes into Tribal ownership is a concern" (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

Klamath Tribal Council Member and KTAF Committee Member Les Anderson shared, "One thing too, when you deal with someone like the NRCS—say, we're going into a land conservation district, or something of that nature, sometimes the easements are encumbrances on that piece of property or what we want to do. Because their guidelines won't allow you to practice your traditional things or do what you want to do. And when you go under partnership or take over a project that they're doing because of the easements, or like I said, the encumbrances on the property. [NRCS says:] 'We can't do it. But here's this piece of land, you guys try to do it. But we're going to tell you how to do it. And we're going to put all these restrictions or all these things that you have to go by.' And it's like, well, but why do we want it? I guess, in in short, it's hard to accept a gift if there's strings attached to it that restrict you from using it. You can only ride the bike to the end of the street. You can't ride the school" (Les Anderson, personal communication, March 6, 2023).

Policymaking

First Food Policy Need:

Tribal governments need funding to engage in policy making.

Tribal governments need funding for policy and legal staff who can help with a myriad of topics central to Treaty Rights and First Foods. Examples of topics of importance:

- Co-management negotiations and agreements.
- Protecting foods and basketry materials from being sprayed with pesticides.
- Tribes need a viable way to be able to secure First Food subsistence protection, beyond litigation.
- Funding to restore subsistence populations of threatened and endangered species.
- Policy that guarantees Tribes subsistence rights to First Food populations.

"Hell, we may end up losing an entire fishery before we get out of the court system, because it's taken so long. You know, we may have species go extinct. [The Endangered Species Act] ESA was never meant to really address the Tribe's needs. That Act was only put together to protect species from going totally extinct. **Our people depend on those resources for subsistence needs, but ESA doesn't promise to meet the subsistence needs of the Klamath Tribes... It's only meant to keep something barely alive and on life support"**

(Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

In California Region 5, the Forest Service has a traditional gathering policy, which is an important step, however, Forest Service employees are not getting trained in the policy and interfere with Tribal Members practicing their culture and gathering (Isha Goodwin, Colleen Rossier, personal communication, December 13, 2024). So with new policy, education and training of new agency staff is needed to ensure that Tribal Members are protected from harassment.

First Food Policy Need:

Policy development to address land use damage, for example ongoing cattle grazing that impacts First Foods.

"What I do know though, is that as things happened over time like the dams and the re-plumbing of this area down here, it created an enormous amount of change. And that had a change on our diets, that had a change on practically every facet of our life. When the BIA Indian Service tried to make farmers out of us here [on the Klamath Indian reservation] it didn't work very well. But they built dams, they created a reclamation project on the Klamath reservation, and they found out that our elevation here was too high to support most food crops. And so then they realized that we had a lot of pasture land in and around our forest, and that it was great cattle country. And so the next thing we had this period where and they pushed my people into ranching. And people, we really took the ranching. Every family in this Tribe, if you go back in that family, you're going to find they had a ranch and they had a cattle operation. Today, we're living with the impacts of all that, too. Because cattle cause a lot of damage to the ecosystem, the way they graze and the way they use the land. I mean, they were imported here. And you know the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Service immediately started changing our watershed to accommodate cattle and cattle grazing... And unfortunately, the common practice by the Indian Service was telling my people 'Just keep those cows grazing. Keep them grazing.' And then they started diverting water to keep

the pastures more green throughout the summer. All of this, that I'm sharing with you is the impacts that we had here had a lot of different impacts, had a lot of food sources that were severely impacted by losses of water and water diversion and things like that. And **today, water quality is maybe one of our biggest issues** we have, is lack of good water quality. Now, we have a lot of nutrient loading in our rivers and streams. And temperature issues associated with water, and that exacerbates a lot of other problems” (Jeff Mitchell).

Land Management and Research

Alongside Land Back, tribal governments need capacity for land management. Land management is what keeps land productive and healthy. Some land requires more management than others. For example, grasslands can be managed through grazing, whether elk or deer or domesticated animal grazing, which requires minimal staffing. However, in the Pacific Northwest, other land may have trees, shrubs or invasive weeds that require thinning, removal, or fire treatments. Land management also prevents harm to First Foods or cultural materials, such as basketry materials. Alissa Lane from CTSI shared, “I think that being able to harvest our own food is a priority of the Tribe, being able to care for it in the right way. So making sure that there's not sprays, even on our basket materials, because those go in our mouths even when we're weaving and things. Our little kids are helping peel sticks, we don't want that kind of stuff on our food sources or our basket material. So having land that we control how it's cared for is also important to the Tribe. And so I feel like those land acquisitions, the purchasing of land, solely for [protecting land with First Foods and basketry materials]. This would be good for hazel, this is a good area to grow food—is already the path that we're on. It does come with the responsibility of having people manage that land. But it's a good responsibility” (Alissa Lane-Keene, personal communication, December 11, 2023).

First Food Research Need:

Funding is needed for tribal governments to conduct cultural preservation and research.

Due to data sovereignty issues and the need to protect intellectual property, tribal governments need to be enabled to direct research on their culture. Historically, tribes have been subjects of research with little control over data or how it is used.

“I lean on the side of any source of funding is good. Just so long as you can get it to the Tribes with a focus on letting the Tribe itself manage the resources that are most important to them. Because I mean, we're losing a lot of the history as the elders pass—the traditional place, names, the traditional practices, the plants, the animals—over time. And getting that money on the ground for doing oral histories, getting Tribal Members to tell their stories about what resources they relied upon. And I mean, I don't care if it comes from USDA, NRCS, or FERC. It's just a matter of making sure that the Tribe is the one that makes the decision on how to gather information and what to do with the information once it's gathered. Because I don't like the idea of having the Forest Service doing a study on Umatilla Tribes' gathering of [redacted cultural information]” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

First Foods Research Need:

Funding is needed for data collection and tracking of First Food abundance. One-time funding can establish baseline data, but ongoing funding is needed for monitoring due to environmental threats, such as the Climate Crisis.

Audie Huber, who works for the CTUIR, described how funding opportunities can be of great benefit, but long-term funding is needed to meet the scale of work. “Over the decades we've gotten a lot of support, but still are pushing up against some really entrained systems of management that don't react well to change. And I think we've been doing whatever we can in order to gather data on First Foods. I think we did a project in 2008 with a Bureau of Land Management, where they funded us. I think it was like \$100,000 to develop a model to identify habitat for First Foods and then refine that model based on individual sampling efforts, developing plots in areas where we think that the habitat would be suitable for First Foods, going out there and testing it. I think we did it over 3 or 4 years in order to further refine the model. I mean, it was a very geographic and habitat specific model. Like it was only applied to the Burnt River base. You couldn't try to transpose that onto the Umatilla River Basin, or Cottonwood Creek or anything. It's just very habitat specific. But it was a great idea. And I'm sad we haven't done more efforts like that. But it was like a one-time funding opportunity” (Audie Huber, personal communication, March 14, 2024).

First Foods Management Need:

Funding for tribal governments to carry out co-management on Federal and State land.

First Foods are a leading priority in co-management and Tribes need to be able to manage according to their values, not being forced to manage land under another entity's values, which is often commercial or recreational. True co-management has not come to pass yet, but funding mechanisms for co-management is an important part of negotiations. Jeff Mitchell shared, “I've been to Washington more than I ever want to think about and lobby Congress... And you know I don't want to let them off the hook. I'm going to hold them to everything that I can. But I'm not going to rely upon them either, because my people need more and deserve more. And you know I have to work hard to try to figure out how to do that—meet those needs. And First Foods, they're really, really important. But to get to where we want to be, we're going to have to really reach deep into those tool boxes that each of us have and build new tools for the future. And some that may be agreements like I was referring to where we actually do co-management, real honest co-management. and that might be a way of moving us down the road a little further. Maybe it's developing opportunities where we can find lands that are very, very important to us and acquire them back. You know, we've seen Tribes get back some land. Most of the time we have to purchase it back, but we've had opportunities” (Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

“Even when we did get back land, most of that land didn't come back to us in a manner where we can make the decisions of how we want to use that land to meet our needs today.

Most of those land returns had strings attached to them that says you got to manage it under State regulation, or you got to manage under federal regulation. Very few of them, if any of them say ‘yeah, you guys can manage under whatever regulations that you want to create as a Tribe. So we're forced to have to accept something and manage it under other people's values”

(Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

Climate Crisis funding

Tribes are place-based communities with place-based cultures that cannot move to a more suitable climate. Much of the current funding for the Climate Crisis is related to infrastructure and energy, but tribal governments have First Foods and Cultural Resources that may be devastated by the impacts of the Climate Crisis. Like other governments who develop climate action plans, tribal governments need funding resources to implement plans. Much of the funding for Climate Change is focused on infrastructure, transportation, energy and technology. Tribal governments require unique funding for First Food climate planning, First Food restoration, and in the worst circumstances reparations for damage to or loss of First Foods. First Foods are increasingly impacted by the Climate Crisis as heat, drought, disease and devastating weather and wildfire events devastate ecosystems or increasingly threaten species survival. While short-term funding works for infrastructure type Climate goals, tribal governments require long-term funding to address the damage from the Climate Crisis on First Foods.

The Climate Crisis is leading to extinctions and extirpations of First Foods, impacting cultural resources and Treaty Rights. Encroaching invasive plants and Climate Crisis impacts mean that degradation of First Foods is not slowing down. Tribes need to be compensated for loss and the resources to heal landscapes to preserve their culture. Healing First Food environments and habitats requires long-term funding. The USDA could create long-term funding to tribal governments to address cultural and environmental harms that are caused by the Climate Crisis. Once the climate is able to heal and First Foods abundance is at desired and sustainable abundance levels, then funding for tribal governments could be reduced.

First Food Climate Crisis Funding:

Tribal governments need funding for Climate Change remediation and to prevent extinctions and extirpations of First Foods.

Tribal governments need ongoing funding to ensure First Food cultural continuity. Chris Marks from the CTUIR shared, “Our climate adaptation planner has been all grant [funded], and so she has to find money every 2 years. When that program continues to expand, I think the CTUIR is definitely looking for more permanent, more certain funding as we start implementing our climate adaptation plan and some of the sources that we've looked up for projects and all that kind of stuff. Those will continue to be looked at for those climate implementation projects” (Chris Marks, personal communication, November 20th, 2023).

First Food Funding Need:

Consistent funding for First Foods and Climate Change.

There is no agency dedicated to providing First Foods funding every year. First Foods funding needs to be institutionalized to ensure compliance with Treaty Rights. Cheryl Shippentower from CTUIR shared, “I don't think the funding is out there that's specific for First Foods and Climate Change work. There are organizations like the First Nations Development Institute, but there's not many organizations like it” (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024). First Nations Development Institute is a great philanthropic organization that is providing resources to tribal governments and tribal organizations, however, this funding is again short-term and does not provide the funding stability that tribal governments need to make a real impact on First Foods goals.

Cheryl Shippentower continued, “And I think that there also needs to be more funding for natural resource restoration. **There's some funding out there, but I think it's hard to find that's specific to Tribes and cultural plants.** It's pretty limited, it'll be like a one-time funding, for example USDA programs conservation plans, they'll have different practices they fund, and then it changes every Farm Bill. **We just need that consistent funding.** Tribes need consistent funding to do our work, whether policy, on-the-ground work, and the monitoring as well” (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024).

Other Funding Needs

Health

PNW tribes have enjoyed a healthy diet by managing and consuming First Foods for millennia, which was interrupted due to colonial depletion of First Foods abundance and mismanagement of ecosystems. With the loss of First Foods access, tribes have seen a decline in health.

When Tribal Members do not have access to First Foods, their health is negatively impacted. Jeff Mitchell shared how the loss of access to land meant the loss of health. “When we signed our treaty, we ceded 22 million acres of land, to retain 2.2 million. It took 22 million acres of land to feed this entire nation of 3 tribes, of 3 nations here, the Klamath, the Modoc and Yahooskin. 22 million acres. Now you force them onto a small reservation, 2.2 million acre reservation that was quickly reduced to 1.2 because of faulty surveys. And you know the way they fed themselves before, they couldn't even begin to feed themselves with the limitations that were placed on them, being forced to stay on this reservation. So a lot of things happened. The introduction of new types of food source foods, and the impacts that that had on us. Our diets changed so rapidly, the impacts that that had on us” (Jeff Mitchell, personal communication, March 18, 2024).

First Food Health Need:

Funding for Tribal Member staffing to provide the tribal community with First Food access throughout ancestral lands.

First Foods access involves physical labor and travel, which requires dedicated time from Tribal Members. As tribes are working to restore access and abundance of First Foods, it is integral that tribal community management and use of First Foods is built alongside those environmental recovery efforts. First Foods occur across large areas and sometimes in different elevations or climates, such as oceans, valleys, or mountains. Cheryl Shippentower from the CTUIR described how First Foods contribute to physical and mental health for Tribal Members, “We need to maintain access to First Foods across our ancestral territory. And it's not just that, the First Foods are healthy for us, but **it benefits our wellbeing and cultural identity for us to be out there on that landscape gathering our foods.** There are many benefits from being out there on a landscape, whether it's gathering our food plants, or hunting and fishing. It's helping us maintain health, as well as our tribal culture, by having that connection to the land” (Cheryl Shippentower, personal communication, March 5, 2024).

First Food Health Need:

Prevention and public health funding for First Foods.

CTSI was the only Tribe in this study who had health funding directed to First Foods. Their First Foods program, called Healthy Traditions, was started with a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) type-2 diabetes prevention grant in 2009. This program was popular with the tribal community and the tribally-managed Siletz Community Health Clinic (SCHC) began using clinic revenue to support a single staff person to run the program. The Healthy Traditions program continues to be popular within the community and has

facilitated ongoing successful collaboration with other health departments/programs and other tribal government departments to leverage staff and funding. Not all tribes have the funding capacity to self-fund staff specifically for First Foods and are highly dependent on charitable/foundation funding or grants, but the SCHC also dedicates some limited funding towards Natural Resources to bridge funding gaps (Miranda Williams, personal communication, November 28, 2023). The SCHC is seeking new ways to fund First Foods work. One of the challenges is that First Foods and community health workers are not billable services, even if they are serving diabetic patients, elders, youth, etc.

First Food Health Need:

Increased and ongoing funding for cultural health staff positions, who contribute to public health, nutrition, food security, prevention and mental health.

The current Clinic Director, Miranda Williams, discussed how IHS self-governance funding was limited to cover all health needs and that public health issues tend to be funded with grants. “As I’m looking at Community Health and Diabetes [programs], they’re funded fully by grants and 3rd party revenue. And so I know that can be kind of scary, and I know that’s something that’s been expressed to me. Because there’s that term ‘hard funding’, like there’s always that scare of losing your job and stuff, and I totally get it. But **there’s only so much Indian Health Service, Self Governance funding and it’s been unchanged for years.** So how can we expand? How can we offer the services that we’re offering now, but continue to expand on that, and the only way we can do that is really by applying for grant funding... At this time, **I do see gaps for spending like in these places that are really critical to prevention...** With our other programs like Community Health and Diabetes—the reporting pieces—I think they do an excellent job coordinating all of that. But it’s a lot of reports to do and turn those in, but they make it happen. But everybody makes activities and services happen out in the field and I just think it’s so amazing how people make it work. And they make it work with the little funding that they receive.” (Miranda Williams, personal communication, November 28, 2023).

First Food Health Need:

Funding for First Foods as public health.

Public health initiatives or grants may dedicate some funding to First Foods, but it is rarely the goal of health funding opportunities. Judy Muschamp who was the Director of the Siletz Community Health Clinic for many years has seen changes in government funding that have been of great benefit to the Siletz Tribe (Judy Muschamp, personal communication, January 16, 2024). She highlighted Diabetes and Tobacco Prevention funding as examples, which CTSI received to address long-term health issues and require long-term investment to change health outcomes. What makes these preventative health funding opportunities unique from other grants is that these funds were specifically directed to tribal governments and they have been coming to tribes for over 20 years. Public health funding could increase Tribal Member staffing for First Foods programs to increase access and abundance of First Foods while also addressing health education, nutrition education and cultural education.

Teara Farrow Ferman's vision for a First Foods program:

"So ideally, my dream is that we have a program year-round. We have tribal members, they're out gathering foods and other types of resources year-round. They're taking Tribal Members out to teach them, so that we're doing that cultural continuity. And throughout the entire year they're creating a food bank or food cache, because I like to use our traditional terms, it was a food cache back then, not a food bank. A food cache, so that working with our Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center, that we can do a pilot program, I'm thinking with people that may be diabetic or people that have maybe high blood pressure or something like that. That they're prescribed traditional foods and medicines for a year, and they're monitored super closely. Maybe they have to eat traditional foods 3 times a week. Something like that. We'll set some parameters, I'm not really sure what it is. And see how that affects their health, if it improves it, if it stays the same, anything like that. But part of the program is that they physically have to go out with the cultural practitioners or cultural advisors to get the exercise for one, but also get the traditional knowledge too. And then ideally, that food cache could also be used with the tribal community so they could put a request in. Let's say they're going to have a naming, somebody's going to get their Indian name, they could put a request in for traditional foods to be served at their traditional meal. Not saying that we're trying to tell people. You know, this is the only way to get it. We want to encourage tribal members through the whole year to come and participate in the program. And it, you know, it could be anything from learning how to tan hides, learning how to make tule mats, how to go gather tule, how to fish, how to hunt, how to skin a deer, how to butcher. You know, everything that we can think of, that's tied to the First Food, but also the medicines. So the medicines get forgotten so much that very few people know how to use some of our traditional medicines anymore. So I want to revitalize that as well. And so ideally, to be a program that funds Tribal Members, several Tribal Members full-time throughout the entire year, and that's their job. They just are gathering year round."

(Teara Farrow Ferman, personal communication, April 19, 2024).

Putting funding into First Foods, means less funding spent on healthcare. Garin Riddle said, "Ultimately, you put money into the First Foods, you're going to be able to take money out of Tribal Health because less people will be in there with diabetes, inflammation, you know..." (Garin Riddle, personal communication, March 12, 2024).

First Foods are interdependent on tribes, because Tribal Members are the First Food caretakers and the First Foods are healthy for Tribal Members. This is also expressed in cultural protocols and religious beliefs. Managing and using First Foods was the "job" of tribal ancestors, and today, First Foods need tribal members to do their "job" of managing them for future generations.

Infrastructure

Alta Harris with the Klamath Tribes talked about the challenge of finding funding opportunities that matches the needs of the Tribe. "There's a lot of opportunities out there, but sometimes there's limitations in things like facilities. **We're struggling to find the funding to do facilities.** Sometimes it's just kind of what that funding is earmarked for. We're working on a seed strategy that would involve a nursery and also kind of creating refuge on the landscape that would be seed storages. And you've got to really work at your language to make sure it fits the appropriate funding mechanism that we're going to create plans for fire, restoration, or other things. And the truth is that it's a more holistic view of having plants available for Tribal Members to gather, of habitat for wildlife that Tribal Members can also harvest, but that are an important part of the ecosystem, and for restoration activities. So to **just incorporate that more holistic view into the seeking of funding is difficult sometimes**" (Alta Harris, personal communication, February 21, 2024).

The Klamath Tribes being terminated and losing their reservation, has impacted their ability to build cohesive infrastructure for their tribes' Administration, Health, Cultural Resource, Planning, all being separated in different buildings around Chiloquin, OR. Les Anderson described how the lack of a unified land base has made it difficult for the tribal government to build infrastructure for the community to come together. "We're fractionated in the sense, for our elders to gather, we have lost that cultural community of gathering together for certain things: making baskets, tanning, processing our foods. You know, it's got to be a community event that sparks it. That way, if it's a community event, it's elders teaching the young. And one thing about food security or sovereignty is being able to store it or have it, and then be able to use it later. But if you first have that culture community. **Because of Termination, we don't have that culture community as we used to have back in the day.** We have more Tribal Members that live elsewhere than we do here within our own county. And so that's very hard to deal with... And I guess that's kind of what the (U.S.) government wanted to do anyway, was fractionate us. But bringing us back together and establishing that culture relationship with our foods, our traditions, our ceremonies. And just gathering together for lunch or dinner, just that time to gather, other than just a senior meal. **But just to come together, because when people come together—things happen**" (Les Anderson, personal communication, March 6, 2023).

First Food Infrastructure Need:

Funding for Community Centers with community food storage for First Foods.

Les Anderson described how the Klamath Tribes need "Cultural Infrastructure" that would include community centers where people can be together and that funding was also needed for "a larger facility for processing and storage, cold storage and dry storage. That would be an area that would help to restore that cultural component of becoming a cultural community" (Les Anderson, personal communication, March 6, 2023). It is easy to see how architecture, city and regional planning, kitchens, smokehouses, food processing and storage all have impacts on cultural practices and the ability to be able to physically carry out cultural practices as a tribal community.

Les Anderson continued, "Right now, we're about ready to have c'waam ceremony in March. We usually have c'waam ceremony for fish coming back. And so usually, you know, to have a traditional dinner, we would have had to have gathered all these foods, traditional foods, the previous year in order to have them

in the middle of the winter, you know. Do we do that? Some people do. Some people have storage. The average Indian family probably doesn't do that. I mean, we have maybe salmon or something in the freezer, or a little deer meet or elk meat in the freezer, but as far as having any [redacted First Foods], or anything like that. The average person just doesn't have that. And in order to achieve that **it takes a small army to go out, during that time, to gather that. You bring it in, process it and store it. That's what our people did, and that's how they survived**" (Les Anderson, personal communication, March 6, 2023).

First Food Infrastructure Need:

Infrastructure for program staff to be stationed near work sites and workforce housing in rural areas.

Neva Gibbens described long term goals that they need funding for: "the goal is to have it be combined eventually, have the entire food program perhaps stationed down there if we can get facilities. And you know, a place for people to actually be. But that is like a way, long term goal. But now it's just the farm that's down there" (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, December 13, 2023). They also have 2 more community population centers which are located over an hour drive away, making it difficult to serve their membership throughout their ancestral lands.

Chapter 3 - The state of USDA funding for First Foods

The Department of Agriculture's vision is–

“to provide economic opportunity through innovation, helping rural America to thrive; to promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while also helping feed others throughout the world; and to preserve our Nation's natural resources through conservation, restored forests, improved watersheds, and healthy private working lands.”

The USDA’s vision can be adapted for First Foods because:

- Conservation of First Foods ecosystems and landscapes is economic development for tribes.
- Tribes have traditional subsistence economies for First Foods to feed themselves and share with other tribes.
- Non-commercial First Food landscapes are also working lands.

The conventional funding structures that the USDA and other agencies have historically offered to tribal governments do not meet the needs of First Foods’ food systems, but they are improving. The origin of the funding gap between what First Foods need and how the USDA delivers services is somewhat values-based. The US domestic food system goal is to maximize profit, stabilize food pricing, and export to *feed the world*. These values are institutionalized into the USDA funding structure in the form of subsidies, incentives, crop insurance, loans and more. The funding structures available for conventional agriculture are based in commerce. The USDA does provide important financial support to keep farmers working, however, farmers have other reliable funding to keep their operations afloat–profit.

Tribal governments may have businesses, but they are governments serving a public function. While the USDA has a large workforce from the federal to local level, tribal governments have not been integrated into the government food system workforce. Tribal governments need equitable government funding for food systems, but the USDA does not currently have a base funding mechanism directed to tribes.

First Foods’ food systems also need value-based funding structures that ensure cultural preservation, support the continuation of First Foods culture, and restore ecosystems and thriving First Foods economies. Existing USDA funding structures do not take into consideration non-commercially viable, rare or endangered foods. To attain anything close to subsistence levels of access to and abundance of First Foods, Tribes need to have increased access to conservation funding, environmental hazard funding, restoration funding, endangered species funding, community outreach and engagement funding, workforce development funding, education funding, and more. Tribes want First Foods to be abundant and to be able to eat their cultural diet on a regular basis. Tribes must first be able to feed themselves and tribes need a funding-infrastructure that supports the tribal governments’ capacity to restore First Food abundance.

Funding Opportunities developed with the assumption of financial capacity

Mainstream food systems are managed as a business, so individual and business profits form a base assumption that funding exists to make the individual farm or business venture continue to function. USDA funding opportunities are designed for conventional agriculture, which are businesses with presumed financial capacity.

The USDA itself has administrative financial capacity built into every agency and staffed offices at State and Local levels. Land-Grant universities and colleges also receive base funding, capacity building funding. Funding Opportunities that work for other entities, do not work for tribal governments. Tribal governments currently do not receive base funding through the USDA. But if they did, the current funding opportunities are not designed for First Foods, subsistence, ecological restoration or conservation at the scale that tribal governments need. Tribal governments perform a public service, so they are not generating income like a business. Tribes need USDA funding opportunities that are designed for public service and are flexible for each unique Tribal Government.

How Funding Opportunities were selected

Within this chapter on USDA Funding, the researcher chose select funding opportunities based on their applicability to First Foods and the First Foods needs of tribal governments. Funding opportunities were identified based on recommendations during interviews with USDA staff or funding opportunities promoted by the Native Farm Bill Coalition or the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative at the University of Arkansas. Funding opportunities were also included which could apply to First Foods, but which tribal governments are not eligible to apply.

Some funding recommended during interviews was not selected to be included in this report. For example, the researcher chose not to include the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) because the program is focused on hunger (not First Foods), First Foods are generally not commercial and can be rare or depleted, not every tribe has FDPIR, and FDPIR is limited in the ability to serve a whole population because it is income-based.

Award Data

The researcher used award data from past grant award announcements to assess the rate that tribal governments are accessing funding and to assess the funding applicability to First Foods. The largest charts on award data are located in the Appendix. The award charts also include project descriptions, which can help indicate the applicability of the award to First Foods, wildlife, fish or native plants. The analysis of this funding opportunity is based only on successful applications and funding that has been awarded to tribal governments. Data on tribal government applications that were not awarded are not publicly available.

Some projects include mention of tribal governments specifically or tribal lands generally, but more research would be needed to determine if any award funding went to tribal governments for their labor in participating in collaborative projects or if a Tribe/Indigenous group(s) consent was obtained to be included in the application. Name dropping or referring to tribes generally can be misleading or confusing

when reviewing descriptions of project proposals, so it is possible that consent and funding was directed to tribes, but this also demonstrates the possibility of funding being awarded to “indigenous” or “BIPOC” groups, without any formal consent or tracking that funding is actually going to intended communities. Because federally recognized tribes are verifiable entities and populations, data tracking could be built into grant application and awarding systems.

NRCS Funding

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides conservation solutions, so agricultural producers can protect natural resources.

NRCS Funding Opportunity 1: Conservation Technical Assistance

Conservation Technical Assistance³ is administered by NRCS technicians stationed across each state and provides farmers, ranchers and forestland owners with the knowledge and tools they need to conserve, maintain and restore the natural resources on their lands and improve the health of their operations for the future (NRCS, n.d.-a).

Financial Incentives are available to private landowners to cost-share environmental improvements or compensate landowners for conservation. These financial incentives do not cover the costs of projects, rather they support efforts landowners wish to make to reduce their environmental impact. Funding may come from:

- Organic Certification Cost Share Programs
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA)
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

One of the overarching assumptions in the design of these programs is that each farm or parcel of land assumes that the landowner has the capacity to fund the work happening on the property and the program is designed as an incentive or cost support to completing a conservation project.

For tribes with a large land base, NRCS can provide some limited funding to allottees or tribal governments. NRCS can also help with forestry, for example, CTSI Natural Resources Director Mike Kennedy said, “We do get Natural Resources Conservation Service money for a variety of projects we've been using for probably about 5 years now. Getting funding essentially a contract with NRCS for pre-commercial thinning in our forest stands and that has made a difference. There's a lot of pre-commercial thinning we could not afford to do, if it hadn't been for that contract money” (Mike Kennedy, personal

³ For more information on Conservation Technical Assistance, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/conservation-technical-assistance>

communication, October 23, 2023). Note that thinning of forestry is not directly tied to First Foods, but maintaining landscapes and forestland is connected to First Food habitat and ecosystems.

NRCS offers many beneficial programs to improve environmental conditions on farmland, however, not all of these offerings apply to projects that are needed to support First Foods, or doing projects in a culturally appropriate manner. For example, First Foods that grow in wetland habitats have been impacted by runoff from neighboring land, roadways, businesses and industrial sites. Tribes may want to access and use First Foods from the same places that their families historically harvested for thousands of years, are faced with food safety concerns due to environmental contaminants. NRCS offers Wetland Creation (Code 658) for the “establishment of a wetland on a site that was historically not a wetland”, which means funding will only be directed to “sites where no natural wetland occurred historically.” Wetlands are important to many First Foods, so providing funding to restore and maintain wetlands is more culturally-appropriate than to build an artificial wetland. Currently, only artificial wetlands are funded.

Advice for tribes considering NRCS

NRCS has staff stationed in districts throughout states to provide conservation information and funding resources to farmers, ranchers, and forest owners. One district conservationist, Annie Marion, was interviewed and recommended that tribes interested in NRCS should visit their local office to meet their soil conservationist or district conservationist to talk about their plans, concerns and what they want to accomplish (Annie Marion, personal communication, March 15, 2024). NRCS conservationists then are creative about how to best meet a client’s needs within the specific rules of the different NRCS program. In working with a local tribe, Marion reported mostly using EQIP funding to meet the tribe’s goals. They did report that they had heard of tribes with a large land-base to be able to use CSP to obtain some funding to maintain their current level of conservation or they can use CSP enhancement funding for specific projects.

Roylene Comes At Night, State Conservationist with NRCS in WA, spoke about limitations with CRP that may work for some tribes or some land, but have restrictions when it comes to First Foods access. “The problem with CRP is, you won't be able to harvest every year. It has limitations on how, when you can manage it. So, for example, we have been able to get the tribal collection of plants [recognized] as a part of a management practice [for Native American peoples]... **Yet with CRP you can't go collect [First Foods or cultural plants] every year. You can only collect every 3 years, 3 to 5 years.**” (Roylene Comes At Night).

Similarly, conservation easements are too restrictive for tribes. Annie Marion observed, “In my experience, the tribes I've worked with and what I've heard is that, usually tribes are not interested in our conservation easement programs, because they don't want to have the restrictions that come with the conservation easements. So that hasn't been an avenue that I've pursued with anybody” (Annie Marion, personal communication, March 15, 2024).

First Food NRCS Need:

Tribes need a funding mechanism for trust and public lands within their original reservations and for areas within their ancestral territories.

Tribal governments need funding mechanisms for treaty resource conservation funding. One example of how tribes are left out of funding structures is that public land is within ancestral territories and tribes have Treaty Rights within those jurisdictions. This discrepancy occurred to the researcher while in conversation with NRCS conservationist Annie Marion, who said, “We generally only put funding towards private land, but there are cases where an operator has some kind of a lease on public land, and we can still fund those activities. Often that's grazing rights on BLM, or Forest Service land, or something like that. But there's some wiggle room there” (Annie Marion, personal communication, March 15, 2024). For tribes who have Treaty Rights on land within BLM and/or Forest Service jurisdiction, a funding mechanism is needed for conservation funding to be directed to tribes who have great need for conservation funding.

First Food NRCS Need:

Funding mechanism for tribal government staffing.

Roylene Comes At Night made clear that NRCS grants may be able to provide funding for tribal government staffing, but Farm Bill funding only pays for conservation practices. Comes At Night explained, “We won't pay for people. We won't pay for staffing. We pay for the conservation practices, to get them on the ground. Farm Service Agency has money for Tribes to buy land at a low interest rate. There's actually a specialized land purchasing program for Tribes through the Farm Service Agency, they would help them. The Rural Development may be the agency that could help you with staffing and with a marketing plan and that kind of stuff, more so than us. We don't pay for people, unless it's a grant program.” (Roylene Comes At Night, personal communication, October 25, 2023). Tribal governments are governments, not businesses. So funding for conservation staffing equivalency for tribal governments is an unmet need without an identified funding mechanism.

NRCS Funding Opportunity 2: Urban Agriculture Innovation Grants

Farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools, and other stakeholders can initiate or expand First Foods efforts with an Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production (UAIP) grant⁴. These are competitive grants and projects may target areas of food access; education; business and start-up costs for new farmers; and development of policies related to zoning and other needs of urban production.

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

An example of how the USDA is getting creative in opening opportunities to tribes is the Urban Agriculture Innovation Grants. Roylene Comes At Night recommended that tribes not be deterred by the names of funding opportunities and instead inquire as to the flexibility of grants to see if there are allowances for tribes (Roylene Comes At Night, personal communication, October 25, 2023). Many Tribes may believe they are considered to be located in “rural” areas and may think they are not eligible for grants for urban areas. However, Roylene Comes At Night explained, “So what we did as part of this program, is **we designated tribal headquarters or tribal centers as their [the Tribe’s] urban centers.** So it doesn't have to be Chicago. It doesn't have to be Los Angeles, it doesn't have to be Seattle. It actually could be the Tribal Headquarters-Center as also to be included, basically.” (Roylene Comes At Night, personal communication, October 25, 2023).

First Food NRCS Need:

Funding beyond startup costs.

First Food NRCS Need:

Funding beyond local community area, because tribes migrate to food areas far from their current-day residential communities, but areas that are still within their homelands.

⁴ For more information about Urban Agriculture Innovation Grants, visit: <https://www.usda.gov/topics/urban/grants>

NRCS Funding Opportunity 3: Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities

One of the NRCS funding sources that was suggested to the researcher was called Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities⁵. The funding was already awarded in 2023 at the time of the interview, but many of the awarded organizations who received the grant are looking for partnerships to help spend their award funds.

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

On first impression, the author was concerned regarding the following barriers for Tribes accessing this funding:

- Tribes may be insulted to have any First Foods referred to as a ‘commodity’. Historically and today, commodities are distributed to Tribal Communities who face hunger and culturally there can be a negative connotation with the term ‘commodity.’
- Tribes want to protect their First Foods, not incentivize them being taken and changed into domesticated crops or mass produced.
- Having Tribes go through another organization to receive funding puts the awardee in the position of power in the funding dynamic.
- Intellectual property and data sovereignty may be an issue with partnerships who may want to collect and use data on the Tribe’s activities or data on the First Foods.

First Food NRCS Need:

Make funding available to individual tribes, not partnerships.

First Food NRCS Need:

Change the name to something like: Tribal Climate Smart Staple Foods. Changing the name to Staple Foods would be more culturally appropriate.

Roylene Comes At Night from NRCS explained, “So with Tribes, NRCS does not look at tribal plants differently. Commodities is basically, you'll see in our policy that we actually can do conservation stuff... So one of the things that we pushed with tribes is that the food for tribes isn't so that they can market and sell it. It is to feed themselves. Like Alaska's a great example, it's a subsistence. So don't get caught with that thought on commodities. That's not exactly what it means. People think that ‘I've got to raise a million chickens and so on.’ That's not our concept. At this point we really do look from the gamut. Of the backyard conservation in less than an acre, all the way to, 100,000 acre farms. So we've tried to build our programs extremely flexible. And a lot of our programs, again, is inclusive of the tribes. We also have a Tribal Ecological Knowledge Committee right now, a national committee, making sure that our practice standards include Tribal Ecological Knowledge in them. And they're working on those kind of things, too at this point” (Roylene Comes At Night, personal communication, October 25, 2023).

⁵ For more information about Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities, visit: <https://www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities>

NRCS Funding Opportunity 4: RCPP - Regional Conservation Partnership Program Projects

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)⁶ is a partner-driven approach that utilizes public-private partnerships to support the adoption of climate smart agriculture practices and expand the reach of conservation efforts (NRCS, n.d.-c).

2 RCPP Categories:

RCPP Classic and RCPP Grants or Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA)

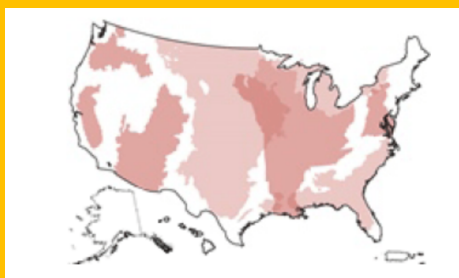
- **Classic** - projects are implemented using NRCS contracts and easements with producers, landowners and communities, in collaboration with project partners
- **Grants or AFA** - the lead partner must work directly with agricultural producers to support the development of new conservation structures and approaches that would not otherwise be available under RCPP Classic.

RCPP Conservation Activities:

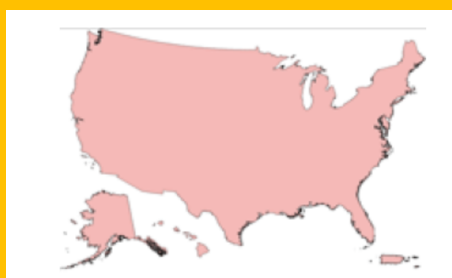
- Land management/land improvement/restoration practices
- Land rentals
- Entity-held easements
- United States-held easements
- Public works/watersheds

RCPP Funding Pools:

Funding is divided 50% and 50% between Critical Conservation Areas projects or State/Multistate projects.



Critical Conservation Areas



State/Multistate

Source: (NRCS, n.d.-c)

⁶ For more information about RCPP, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/rcpp-regional-conservation-partnership-program>

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

RCPP does offer Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA), however, over the past 3 years, tribal governments have shown to be awarded as Classic projects, rather than AFAs. It is difficult to assess why—this could indicate that collaborations with NRCS make projects easier for tribal governments or it could indicate that tribal governments are more likely to be approved if they apply as a Classic project. See Table 4 in Appendix D for a list of tribal governments or projects claiming affiliation with Indigenous people who received RCPP funding awards between 2020-2023. Between 2020-2023 no AFA projects were awarded to tribal governments, while **8 Classic projects were awarded to tribal governments.**

In its current form, RCPP has limited applicability to First Foods and the needs of tribes. Tribal governments would need staffing capacity similar to NRCS staffing in order to be able to realistically access this funding. This funding may be accessible to some wealthier tribes who are located closer to towns or urban centers who can attract more staff. It is possible that tribes with a larger land base could benefit from RCPP by using funding to enroll their land in programs. However, this funding is the same standard NRCS programs and would have the same restrictions which make it less compatible with what tribal governments need for First Foods.

David Ferguson is the current RCPP coordinator within Oregon and shared that, “Originally, when the Congress authorized [RCPP], innovation was a strong word. You know, how can the private sector be more innovative than NRCS to implement practices and meet some local, state, tribal resource concerns, but also more efficiently and less expensively. Well, since we started this program, the innovation has been kind of thrown out. And now it's just like, how can an entity do it more efficiently and less expensively than what our agency could do.” (David Ferguson, personal communication, March 21, 2024).

RCPP has essentially become a way for NRCS to outsource the on-the-ground labor to enroll farmland in standard conservation programs, which normally is carried out by NRCS conservationists. In some ways, it provides NRCS with an ability to use the network of NGOs to reach demographics who may not otherwise engage with NRCS. Again, if a tribe has a large land base, this could be of benefit, but is not useful to PNW tribes who have lost ownership of the majority of their land. RCPP is also another way to roll out the standard NRCS conservation programs with the same limited applicability to First Foods and the same limited applicability to the needs of tribal governments.

NRCS Funding Opportunity 5: Equity in Conservation Outreach Cooperative Agreements

In recent years, NRCS has created new funding opportunities to serve historically underserved producers and underserved communities like the Equity in Conservation Outreach Cooperative Agreements⁷. Tribal producers, tribal governments and tribal communities are all considered to be historically underserved. “The purpose of Equity in Conservation Outreach Cooperative Agreements is to leverage NRCS and partner resources by developing community-led conservation projects so that historically underserved producers and underserved communities will be able to access NRCS programs and services and learn of potential career opportunities in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences” (NRCS, 2023-b, p.4)

The Equity in Conservation Outreach Cooperative Agreements include projects that:

- Promote the benefits of NRCS programs through education or demonstration of conservation practices.
- Develop community conservation partnerships that engage underserved producers to plan and protect farmland ecosystems, watersheds and wildlife habitat in underserved communities.
- Inform small-scale or urban agriculture producers about opportunities to participate in conservation programs.
- Support education on, planning for and adoption of climate smart conservation practices.

Projects will reach underserved groups through a combination of program outreach and technical assistance in one or more of the following five NRCS priority areas:

- Addressing local natural resource issues.
- Promoting conservation career opportunities.
- Expanding adoption of climate-smart conservation.
- Encouraging conservation in small-scale and urban agriculture.
- Developing conservation leadership skills and opportunities.

(NRCS, 2023-a)

In Table 5, note that tribal governments are in green highlight and project descriptions include reference to traditional food systems, promoting educational degrees in conservation and natural resources, and restoring Indigenous ecological management practices. See the right column for suggestions on how this funding opportunity might be used by tribes or tribal organizations for First Foods.

⁷ For more information on Equity in Conservation Outreach, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/data-and-reports/equity-in-conservation-outreach-projects-2023>

Key:

	Awarded directly to a tribal government
	Awarded project identifies tribal government, but funding arrangement or sharing is unknown.
	Awarded project claiming affiliation or partnership with “Tribes”, “Tribal lands”, “BIPOC”, “Indigenous”, “Native people”, “Native Hawaiian”, “Indigenous Food System”, “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”, or “Alaska Native landowners”, but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Table 5: Awarded tribal government or Native community affiliated projects in FY 2023 for Equity in Conservation Outreach Projects

Award Recipient	Website	Amount	Project description	State	Ideas for NW Tribes
Cherokee Nation	https://www.cheroke.org/	\$594,232	Cherokee Nation (CN) is proposing to implement a needed internship program within the Cherokee Nation Natural Resources (CNNR) department to fill the existing gap of paid internship availability to Cherokee students. The goal for this program is to promote educational degrees in conservation and natural resources for Cherokee students through targeted internships that result in employment in related fields. CNNR is partnering with CN's Career Services (CNCS) and Education Services (CNES), as well as Northeastern State University (NSU) to achieve this goal and the objectives of this project. This project supports expanding conservation assistance to underserved communities and providing opportunities for students to pursue careers in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences through the proposed internship program.	OK	TRIBE AWARDED Partnership with Natural Resources, Career Services and Education to offer paid internships and education.
First Nations Development Institute	https://www.firstnations.org/	\$697,000	The goals of the project are to develop the conservation leadership skills of Native natural resource professionals in the Northern Great Plains, who are tribal employees. This will enable them to address local natural resource issues, community conservation priorities, restore Indigenous ecological management practices. Additionally, the project aims to improve and conserve tribal lands and waters. The project will also boost the capacity of Native American farmers to address conservation issues, improve soil health and water quality, achieve sustainable local food systems, and manage resources in line with Indigenous values.	CO	TRIBAL ORGANIZATION AWARDED Project is regionally focused. Could request FNDI to offer similar project focused on NW tribes.
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	https://greateryellowstone.org/	\$109,908	Greater Yellowstone Coalition will conduct outreach activities on the Wind River Indian Reservation. The goal is to encourage diverse and inclusive participation in NRCS programs and introduce conservation planning to protect wildlife habitat in Wyoming's underserved communities. Outreach to the Fort Washakie, Ethete, Arapahoe, and Crowheart communities will focus on agriculture, wildlife populations, buffalo restoration, and water rights. Open community meetings will be hosted to increase awareness of NRCS program availability to Tribal producers. Targeted one-on-one conversations will also be conducted with producers working in priority wildlife habitats. Additionally, enrollment sessions will be held for interested and eligible producers, featuring agency staff who can provide technical assistance and facilitate Tribal livestock producer enrollment in NRCS programs such as EQIP, ACEP, and RCPP.	WY	
Knik Tribe	http://kniktribe.org/	\$398,598	The project will focus on regional stakeholders from Alaska Native Corporations, Tribal Conservation Districts, Tribal Charter Schools, and other educational partners serving Alaska Native students. It will provide hands-on training experiences, agricultural curriculum, technical assistance field trips, farm tours, and competition kits for the Alaska FFA State Convention.	AK	

Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin	https://www.menominee-nsn.gov/	\$265,691	The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin's Department of Agriculture and Food Systems centers on food sovereignty and the return of traditional Menominee food systems, a direct reflection of tribal culture, values, and sovereignty. The tribe recognizes the threat of the climate crisis and is working to prepare for ecological shifts and prevent further damage. This includes adopting new, green alternatives for clean energy and implementing mitigation strategies for the potential of environmental disasters.	WI	TRIBE AWARDED Potential funding for First Foods or establishment of Department of Agriculture.
Northeastern State University	https://www.nsuok.edu/	\$258,978	Northeastern State University (NSU), a Minority Serving Institution (MSI) located within the Cherokee Nation, will educate 6th-12th grade youth on careers in natural resource conservation and other agricultural subjects. Outreach coordinators will also offer training workshops to underserved farmers in the area on conservation practices, how they can improve their operations, and applying for NRCS assistance.	OK	
Northern Arapaho Tribe	https://www.northernarapaho.com/	\$692,407	The Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribes of the Wind River Reservation are establishing an Office of Agricultural and Natural Resources (OANR) to implement their Agricultural Resources Management Plan. The OANR will focus on developing agriculture on the Reservation in an economically viable and sustainable manner while preserving natural resources and traditional ways. It will also encourage new farmers and ranchers. The OANR will assist in agriculture and natural resources management, including data-driven decision-making to support wildlife, livestock, natural habitat, rangeland, and economic development on the Reservation.	WY	TRIBE AWARDED Potential funding for First Foods or establishment of a Tribal Department of Agriculture.
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians	https://www.redcliff-nsn.gov/	\$272,579	This project will provide increased technical support to small-scale agriculture projects and land stewardship within the Red Cliff community. This will be achieved through three key focus areas: 1) Enhancing the capacity and expertise of the Farm's staff by providing funding and opportunities for professional development. 2) Providing additional technical support to the broader Red Cliff community and Red Cliff producers such as agriculture, natural resource management, and food sovereignty. 3) Conducting outreach initiative to promote youth leadership, interest, and skill development in the fields of natural resources, agriculture, and food sovereignty.	WI	TRIBE AWARDED Project focused on small-scale ag projects, land stewardship, technical assistance, outreach and food sovereignty.
The Learning Center at the Euchee Butterfly Farm Inc	https://www.nativebutterflies.org/	\$318,150	The Learning Center at the Euchee Butterfly Farm, a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded in 2013 by citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and a underserved legal entity, is requesting to support a two-year project entitled Tribal Alliance for Pollinators: Connecting Native American Producers with Conservation Resources. The purpose of this project is to remove identified barriers that prevent Native Americans from accessing NRCS resources and careers. It will provide training workshops, conferences, on-site technical support, and internships that are designed and led by Native American project staff in culturally appropriate venues.	OK	
Waianae Community Re-Development Corporation	https://maoorganicfarms.org	\$697,000	Kilohana Kaiulu is a community-based initiative that aims to engage and inspire all youth, especially those from unserved communities, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander traditions of alohaina (place-based resource stewardship). The project seeks to fosters diversity, equity and inclusivity while empowering leadership for a sustainable and resilient community farming, food and agriculture system. The initiative will provide education-to-workforce opportunities.	HI/PI A	NATIVE-CONTROLLED 501c3 NONPROFIT Youth focused project place-based stewardship.

Source: (NRCS, 2023-a).

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

Much of the language used in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) reads similar to the NRCS RCPP Classic and Alternative Funding Arrangements, where awardees are essentially performing the role of NRCS within the strict parameters of long-standing NRCS conservation programs. However, this cooperative agreement seems to be a better fit for tribal governments. As demonstrated in Table 5, projects were awarded directly to tribal governments to address a broad range of projects. The awarded projects allow for culturally-based education and outreach, enhancing capacity of departments within tribal governments and small-scale agriculture.

Additionally, within the Frequently Asked Questions, the work plan allows for funding of staff positions that are more outreach-focused, than technical-assistance-focused (NRCS, 2023-c, p.4). This flexibility is very important to tribal communities, where elders or other cultural knowledge holders are important employees and educators within the food system.

Excerpt from Frequently Asked Questions document regarding grant staffing:

Q. How much training would hired staff need? That is, is the expectation they would be delivering technical assistance for USDA programs (e.g., EQIP) and would need NRCS training? Or could the positions focus more on outreach activities and connecting farmers to resources be they state, federal or private?

A. It is the responsibility of the recipient organization to provide qualified staff to carry out the work plan they propose in their application. **It is not expected that all projects be highly technical in nature; they may be more focused on outreach, depending on the goals of the project.**

(NRCS, 2023-c, p.4)

Recommendation:

Continue funding for Equity in Conservation Outreach Projects.

Attention: Tribal Governments

The Equity in Conservation Outreach Projects is a new discretionary funding opportunity making future funding years uncertain, but NRCS is using feedback from previous funding cycles to improve potential funding opportunities in the future. NRCS is awarding projects directly to tribal governments that are serving a broad range of needs. **Tribes are very diverse and require flexible funding, which makes this a rare example of a funding opportunity that could fit the needs of many tribes.**

NRCS Funding Opportunity 6: Conservation Innovation Grants

“Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)⁸ are competitive grants that drive public and private sector innovation in resource conservation. CIG projects inspire creative problem-solving—boosting production on farms, ranches, and private forests through improvements in water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat.” (Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2019, p. 1)

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

The researcher identified 13 tribal governments who received CIG funding since 2007.

See Table 6 in Appendix E for a list of previously awarded tribal governments or tribal community affiliated projects. Much of this funding is used for science or restoration efforts including prescribed fire, research on combating invasive species, coordinating conservation for unique subsistence resource production issues, research on wildlife diet, as well as conventional agricultural production.

Recommendation:

Expand CIG funding to tribal governments (there are 574 federally recognized tribes in the U.S.).

This funding opportunity also has a 1:1 match requirement (cash or in-kind) and up to 10% of national CIG funds are set aside for applicants who are historically underserved (beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, military veteran farmers and ranchers, or American Indian tribes) or community-based organizations that include or represent these groups.” (Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2019, p. 2)

⁸ For more information on Conservation Innovation Grants, visit:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/cig-conservation-innovation-grants>

NRCS Funding Opportunity 7: Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership

During interviews with USDA staff, the researcher was encouraged to consider funding called “Joint Chiefs”⁹ where the Forest Service Chief and NRCS Chief join together on a project to treat a larger landscapes-scale problem.

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

The limitation of this funding is that it is just funding that the agencies use to carry out work on a conservation project, it is not funding for tribes to carry out conservation work. Tribal governments have to bring their own financial capacity to participate in a Joint Chiefs project. Ferguson described a successful Joint Chiefs project in collaboration with another tribe outside the scope of this research project. Ferguson shared, “So I was involved in helping set up that Joint Chiefs project lasted 3 years. [Redacted name of tribal government involved because the researcher did not have a research permit with that Tribe] ...they've got a lot quite a bit of capacity already. They have a forestry division staff. And so that was, I think, why they're able to get into this Joint management position with the Forest Service, because they do have staff, they do have capacity to help do that... So it depends on the Tribe, and where they're at now, and how they're already managing or securing funds to maintain their physical capacity and staff. So that is a big difference, I think, among tribes is tailoring what type of programs fit with a tribe, in their capacity.” (David Ferguson, personal communication, March 21, 2024).

Recommendation:

Change the name of this funding to something other than “Chiefs”.

Recommendation:

Increase funding available for Partnership projects and make planning a part of Tribal Consultation.

Recommendation:

In Oregon, outreach and communication regarding project planning could be increased via the State and tribal government Natural Resources Cluster Work Group.

⁹ For more information on Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/joint-chiefs-landscape-restoration-partnership>

NIFA Funding

The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) was established by the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill) to find innovative solutions to issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and communities.

NIFA offers 3 types of funding:

Competitive Grants: programs that enable NIFA, via a rigorous peer review process, to select the highest quality proposals from a large pool of institutions and organizations

Competitive Grants are the only types of grants that are currently available to tribal governments.

Capacity Grant: programs that ensure that the Land-Grant University System and other partners maintain the ability to conduct research and extension activities

Policy Change Recommendation:

Make Capacity Grants available to Tribal Governments' Education Departments. With funding support, tribal governments could institutionalize culturally-based extension programs to provide community education across their homelands.

Non-Competitive Grants: grants directed by Congress to support designated institutions for research, education, or extension on topics of importance to a state or region

Policy Change Recommendation:

Make Non-Competitive Grants available to Tribal Governments. With funding support, tribal governments would be better equipped to collaborate and conduct research with institutions. Funding for tribes to engage in tribal consultation would make it easier for tribal students to work with tribal governments and could also prevent extractive or harmful research.

NIFA past award data

The graph and data below was obtained from the NIFA Grant Funding Dashboard and only shows NIFA funding that went directly to federally recognized tribes. Since 2018, NIFA has **awarded funding to a total of 7 Federally Recognized Tribal Governments** through the following Federal Programs. Note that there are 574 federally recognized tribal governments in the US.

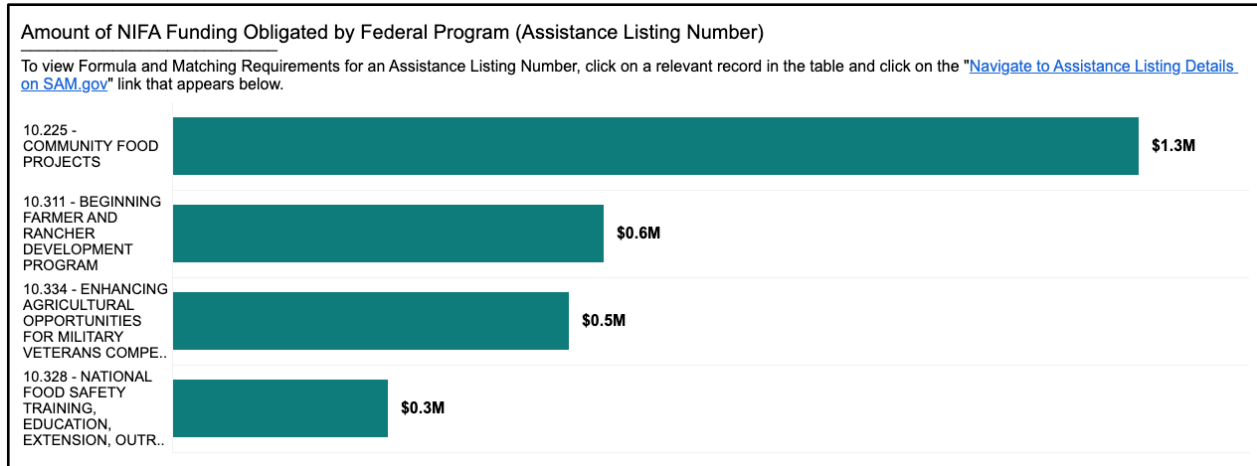


Figure 8: Overview of NIFA funding for grants started since FY 2018, data includes only Indian/Native American tribal governments (Federally Recognized) (NIFA, n.d.-a, retrieved on 3/13/2024).

NIFA Funding Opportunity 1: Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program

The Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program¹⁰ seeks to address food security and nutrition.

The minimum award is \$125,000 over 12 months and maximum award is \$400,000 over 48 months. The average award is approximately \$298,000 over 36 to 48 months. CFP has a dollar-for-dollar match requirement for all federal funds requested. The purpose of the CFP is to support the development of projects with a one-time infusion of federal dollars to make such projects self-sustaining.

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

Because this funding is only available one-time, tribal governments may use this as a start-up for community food projects which may or may not include First Foods. This funding is not accessible for tribal governments who cannot meet the match requirement or who need consistent long-term funding to support their First Foods.

As indicated in Figure 8, the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program was the NIFA most awarded funding opportunity to tribal governments between 2018-2023. Since 2018, **\$1,341,526 has been awarded between 4 tribal governments** (NIFA, n.d.-a).

An example of a PNW tribe that has been awarded is the Yurok Tribe who received a 4 year grant of \$374,020 for 2022-2026.

Yurok Tribe project description:

The Weitchpec Food Village Project will provide access to healthy, local produce to the rural, remote, under-employed, food desert that exists within the upriver region of the Yurok Indian Reservation. Community members and other stakeholders will identify priorities for food production and educational programs, while guiding the Yurok Tribe Environmental Program (YTEP) Food Sovereignty Division in the long-term planning for the development of the Food Village and its corresponding structures.

¹⁰ For more information on Community Food Projects Competitive Grants, visit: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/community-food-projects-competitive-grants-program>

NIFA Funding 2: Tribal Programs

NIFA Tribal Programs¹¹ funding promotes learning, opportunity and health in Indian Country (NIFA, n.d.-d). The agency has five grants that specifically target Indian Country. Four of the grants support learning at the 1994 Land-Grants, also known as federally recognized tribal colleges. In addition, the Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP) supports 1890 and 1862 Land-Grants who provide informal, community-based learning on reservations.

Analysis of Funding:

NIFA identifies funding as “Tribal Programs”, however tribes are not eligible for any of the funding opportunities (see Table 7). There are no 1994 Land-Grant institutions, also known as Tribal Colleges in Oregon. The closest Tribal College to CTSI and CTUIR is approximately a 6.5 hour drive away in Washington State, Northwest Indian College. The Karuk Tribe is located over 6 hour drive from D-Q University (tribal college), but the institution lost its accreditation in 2005.

Many tribal governments provide educational support to Tribal students and conduct research on First Foods and would benefit from access to NIFA research and education funding. NIFA and other funding agencies should consider how funding may not be reaching intended communities when they do not award funding directly to tribal governments.

Tribal governments are the institutions that are most appropriate for studying First Foods and by empowering tribal governments in research, NIFA can contribute to data sovereignty and ethical research with tribes. Tribal Members are the most culturally appropriate instructors for educating Tribal youth about First Foods, so funding going to tribal governments is a way of supporting culturally appropriate education.

Recommendation:

Make tribal governments eligible for Tribal Programs, because funding is needed by tribal governments to conduct research and education within their communities on First Foods.

¹¹ For more on NIFA Tribal Programs, visit:
<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/nifa-tribal-programs>

USDA NIFA Tribal Programs

Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible to apply for any of the following, however, institutions may be encouraged or required to partner with tribal governments or organizations that work with Tribal students.

Table 7: Funding available through NIFA’s Tribal Programs.

Assistance Listing Number	Funding Name	Program Area Priority Name	Limitations	Amount	Duration	Match	Indirect allowed	Renewable	Notes
10.500	Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program	The purpose and intent of this program is to establish an Extension presence and support Extension outreach on Federally Recognized Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions of Federally Recognized Tribes. This program seeks to continue the Land Grants mission of inclusion--providing education and research-based knowledge to those who might not otherwise receive it.	Only 1862, 1890, and 1994 Land-Grant Institutions are eligible to apply.	\$0 - \$360,000	5 years	0	No	Yes	Oregon State University or University of California can apply for this funding. The priority areas of the FRTEP Program: 1. Positive youth development programs, including 4-H for tribal youth 2. Native Farmer and Rancher Productivity and Management 3. Native Community Development: - Economic and Workforce Development - Food Systems, Farm and Community Markets, and Food Sovereignty - Natural Resource Conservation and Adaptation to Environmental Changes - Human Nutrition and Reduction of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity - Native Language and Culture Preservation - Traditional Ecological Knowledge sharing and learning, or knowledge held by indigenous cultures about the environment or cultural practices.
10.227	Tribal College Research Grant Program	Program Code Name: TCRGP Project Types: • New Discovery • Area of Expertise • Applied Faculty/Community • Conference Grants • Research Experience for Undergraduates	Only 1994 Land-Grant Institutions are eligible to apply.	\$150,000 - \$650,000	24-60 months	0	Indirect not to exceed 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded	Continuation Awards may be available, see criteria. (Dependent on appropriation.)	There are no tribal colleges in Oregon. The closest tribal college to Siletz and Umatilla is approximately a 6.5 hour drive away in Washington State, Northwest Indian College. The Karuk Tribe is located over 6 hour drive from D-Q University (tribal college), but lost its accreditation in 2005.

10.517	Tribal Colleges Extension Program : Special Emphases	Projects or Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-Function Extension Projects • Standard Grants 	Only 1994 Land-Grant Institutions are eligible to apply.	\$60,000 - \$200,000	24-36 Months	0	No	Continuation Awards may be available, see criteria. (Dependent on appropriation.)	Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 supports pilot projects in extension at the 1994 Land Grant institutions. A pilot project allows Extension offices to be responsive to community needs through two-year projects that address youth, agriculture, economic development, or other issues important to stakeholders.
10.221	Tribal Equity Grants Program	Program priorities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally relevant curricula design and materials development • Culturally responsive faculty development and teacher preparation • Student experiential learning • Equipment and instrumentation for teaching Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math • Student recruitment and retention • Instruction delivery systems and strategic partnerships 	Only 1994 Land-Grant Institutions are eligible to apply.	\$0 - \$130,000	48 months	0	Indirect not to exceed 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded	Continuation Awards may be available, see criteria. (Dependent on appropriation.)	The Tribal Colleges Education Equity Grants (TCEG) program (assistance listing 10.221) is designed to help build Tribal education capacity in the food and agricultural sciences for Native Alaskan/American Indian students.
10.527	New Beginning for Tribal Students Program	Grant Types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Grant Type • Collaborative Grant Type 1 (CG1) (Applicant + Another Collaborator, for example, a 1994 land-grant institution or non-land-grant Tribal college, high school, Tribal Government, community college, another land-grant institution, a technical school, or an organization that works with Tribal students) • Collaborative Grant Type 2 (CG2) (Applicant + Two or more Partners, with one or more of those partners being a 1994 land-grant institution) 	Only land-grant colleges and universities are eligible to apply, but are encouraged to partner with high schools, Tribal Governments, community colleges, technical institutions, and other organizations that work with Tribal students.	\$250,000 - \$500,000	Up to 4 Years	100 %	Yes	TBD	The purpose of the NBTS grant program, Assistance Listing 10.527, is to increase the retention and graduation rate of Tribal students attending 1994, 1862, and 1890 land-grant universities. The primary goals and objectives of the program are for land-grant colleges or universities to use NBTS funding to support tribal students through all of the following, but not limited to: recruiting; tuition and related fees; experiential learning; student services, including tutoring; counseling; academic advising; and other student services that would increase the retention and graduation rate of Tribal students enrolled at land-grant colleges or universities.

Source: (NIFA, n.d.-d).¹²

¹² For the most updated information on NIFA Tribal Programs, visit <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/nifa-tribal-programs>

Example of funding ineligibility: Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP)

The purpose of this program is to establish an Extension presence and support Extension outreach on Federally Recognized Indian Reservations and Tribal jurisdictions of Federally-Recognized Tribes. This program seeks to continue the Land Grants mission of inclusion - providing education and research-based knowledge to those who might not otherwise receive it. (NIFA, n.d.-b)

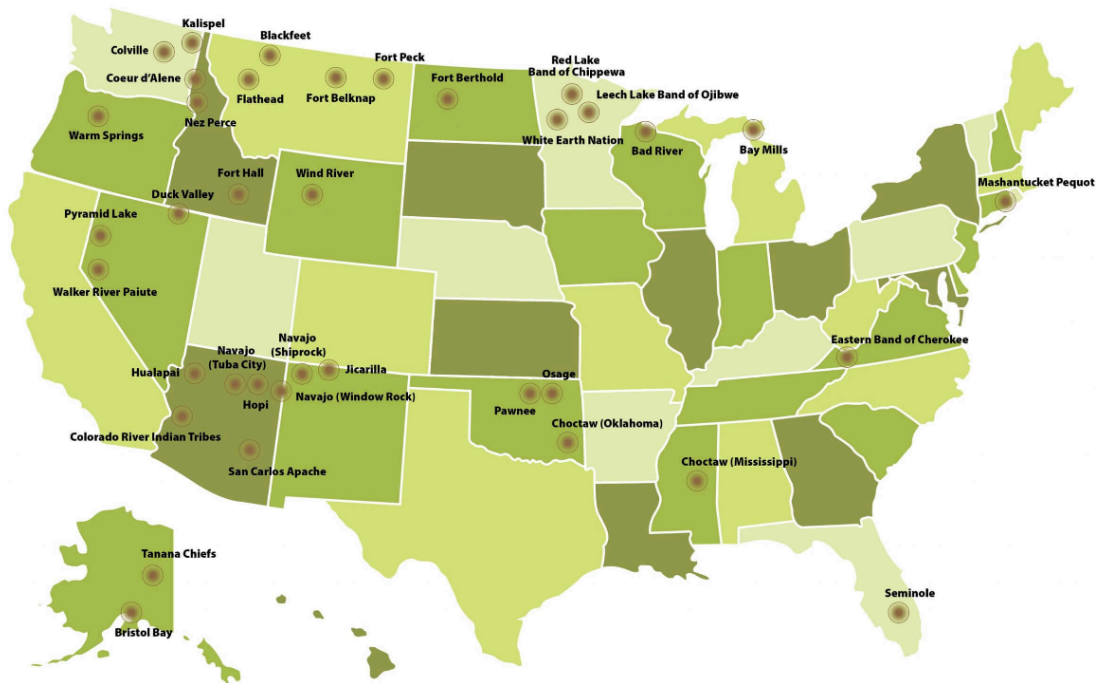


Figure 9: Map of Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Programs. There are currently 35 Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Programs - [Current FRTEP Profiles](#)

Analysis of Funding:

Within Oregon, only Oregon State University is able to access this funding (Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible). Currently, Oregon State University only serves 1 out of the 9 Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon and has been providing extension services for over 30 years. Currently, California has no FRTEP. California's University of California is eligible to apply for FRTEP.

Extension receives an average of \$22,250/year through FRTEP funding

In FY 2022, the total grant funding available for FRTEP was approximately \$3.2 million with a maximum of \$360,000 per award and anticipation of 36 awards (NIFA, n.d.-b). This averages to just under \$89,000 per award to provide services over a 4 year funding period (\$22,250/year).

Limitations of this funding:

- **Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible** to receive funding through the NIFA Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program.
- FRTEP gives preference to previously established FRTEPs.
- Limited funding is available
 - Currently, the average funding amount is not adequate to support 1 FTE. According to Salary.com, an Agriculture Extension Agent in Oregon earns an average salary of \$58,598 per year.
- Extension has established programming and curriculums that are modern-agriculture focused and not based around First Foods or the diverse cultures of each Tribe.
- Extension would need to agree to replace long-established programs and curriculums in favor of Federally Recognized Tribes co-creating new culturally-based programs and curriculums.
- New culturally-based programs and curriculums would need to be developed.
- If a Federally Recognized Tribe is located far from an existing Extension office, it may be difficult to establish a new FRTEP within the tribal community.

Opportunity:

Tribal governments may support their local Land-Grant institution and Extension office to apply for FRTEP funding. To apply, the Land-Grant institution must obtain an MOU from the Federally Recognized Tribe. As Federally Recognized Tribes consider drafting MOUs to bring FRTEP to their communities, they can reference previously funded awards¹³, where some activities include reference to cultural education or Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK).

The amount of funding dedicated to cultural education and TEK is unclear, so the project's objectives and budget would need to be developed in consultation with the federally recognized tribe to determine needs and activities.

Recommendation:

Expand funding for FRTEP

- increase the number of awards
- increase the amount per award, especially for Alaska and other rural Federally Recognized Tribes.

Recommendation:

Employ or contract with Tribal Members of Federally Recognized Tribes to provide culturally-based education within their communities.

Recommendation to Tribes:

Federally Recognized Tribes should request programming that meets their unique needs via their MOU.

¹³ Follow link to see a list of [FRTEP Awardees and project descriptions](#) going back to 2002.

NIFA Funding 3: Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

“The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awards AFRI research, education, and extension grants to improve rural economies, increase food production, stimulate the bioeconomy, mitigate impacts of climate variability, address water availability issues, ensure food safety and security, enhance human nutrition, and train the next generation of the agricultural workforce.” (NIFA, n.d.-c).

Eligibility:

- Native American Tribal Organizations (not federally recognized tribal governments)

Analysis of Funding:

Tribal governments need research and educational funding for First Foods. **Tribal governments are not eligible** to lead research projects, however, tribal governments can work with Native American tribal organizations or specific universities. Tribal governments may or may not receive a share in funding through these collaborations.

Options for making AFRI funding more accessible to tribal governments:

1. Make tribal governments eligible for AFRI funding.
2. Make 5 year renewable funding available to tribal governments similar to the AFRI grants available through the BIA 477 Workforce Development

Table 8 shows a selection of funding opportunities available through AFRI that may be applicable to First Foods. Note that research and education can include TEK and education on First Foods, but federally recognized tribal governments are not able to apply for this funding.

NIFA Funding Success Story: Klamath Basin NIFA grant

An example of a successful collaboration on a NIFA grant was a 2012 food assessment research project led by the University of California, in partnership with tribes throughout the Klamath Basin in California and Oregon. A 5-year, 5 million dollar NIFA AFRI grant was awarded to UC Berkeley and shared by the university with partnering tribes. The University of California budgeted grant funding for tribal governments to hire staff to conduct outreach and education within their tribal communities. It should be noted that it is unusual for universities to direct funding to tribal governments and that the tribal governments would not have been able to obtain these funds without the university. The subsequent report, titled “Food Security Assessment of Native American Communities in the Klamath Basin with the Karuk Tribe, Klamath Tribes, Yurok Tribe and Hoopa Tribe,” provided baseline food security and First Foods data which was instrumental to tribal governments addressing hunger and First Foods’ needs. This research project involved outreach and evaluation of food security needs, with tribes assisting with outreach efforts and community food educational workshops.

Analysis:

- This grant was written by and managed by UC Berkeley, putting the university in the position of power in the funding arrangement. The funding then filtered down to tribal governments.
- NIFA requires large scale projects and this funding would not have been available to the tribal governments without the grant writing, research and financial administration capacity of UC Berkeley.
- The project generated baseline food security data and could be used by tribal governments to demonstrate their community need when applying for future grants.
- The funding budgeted into the grant for tribal government provided tribes with the opportunity to staff First Foods projects within their community.
- The project funded tribal members employed in First Foods and Food Security work within their communities, which increased trust between the tribal community and university.
- After the NIFA grant ended, the Karuk Tribe pursued new grant funding to support First Foods staff and continue growing the work in the community.
- After the NIFA grant ended, the Klamath Tribes dissolved the staff position due to a lack of funding.
- NIFA grant funding is unsustainable for staffing First Foods employment in tribal communities.

Table 8: Select NIFA AFRI funding that could be applicable to First Foods.

USDA NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Funding - Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible to apply.									
This is a select list of funding opportunities available through AFRI. This demonstrates funding where tribes are not eligible, but they may wish to support other entities in pursuing funding. Note that Native American Tribal Organizations and other entities are eligible, but not tribal governments. In the Description and Notes column, see how other entities are funded to research Traditional Ecological Knowledge, which is considered cultural property for some tribal governments.									
Assistance Listing Number	Funding Name	Program Area Priority Name	Limitations	Amount	Duration	Match	Indirect allowed	Renewable	Description and Notes
10.310	Sustainable Agricultural Systems	Farm Bill priority areas: 1. Plant health and production and plant products; 2. Animal health and production and animal products; 3. Food safety, nutrition, and health; 4. Bioenergy, natural resources, and environment; 5. Agriculture systems and technology; and 6. Agriculture economics and rural communities.	Eligibility: colleges and universities only	\$50,000 - \$10,000,000	Up to 60 months	Matching required if commodity specific	Indirect not to exceed 30% of total award	Unless otherwise stated, grants are not renewable.	Traditional Ecological Knowledge is considered an acceptable topic of research, education, and extension for projects funded by this RFA (must fit within priorities, goals, and objectives of the RFA). 15% of applications funded
10.310	Education and Workforce Development (EWD)	- Professional Development for Agricultural Literacy (A7501) - Agricultural Workforce Training at Community Colleges (A7601) - Food and Agricultural Non-formal Education (A7801) - Research and Extension Experiences for Undergraduates (A7401)	Eligibility: - Native American Tribal Orgs, not Federally recognized Tribal Governments - Nonprofits with or without 501(c)(3) IRS status - Small Business	\$22,000 - \$750,000	12-48 months	Matching is Required.	Yes	No	Development program areas to support: - professional development opportunities for K-14 educational professionals; - non-formal education that cultivates food and agricultural interest in youth; - workforce training at community, junior, and technical colleges; - training of undergraduate students in research and extension;

USDA NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Funding -

Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible to apply.

This is a select list of funding opportunities available through AFRI. This demonstrates funding where tribes are not eligible, but they may wish to support other entities in pursuing funding. Note that Native American Tribal Organizations and other entities are eligible, but not tribal governments. In the Description and Notes column, see how other entities are funded to research Traditional Ecological Knowledge, which is considered cultural property for some tribal governments.

Assistance Listing Number	Funding Name	Program Area Priority Name	Limitations	Amount	Duration	Match	Indirect allowed	Renewable	Description and Notes
10.310	Foundational and Applied Science Program	1c. Pests and Beneficial Species in Agricultural Production Systems (A1112)	Eligibility: - 1862, 1890, or 1994 Land Grant Institutions - For-profit Organizations	\$750,000	36-60 months	Applicants MUST provide matching contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis for all Federal funds awarded under AFRI for applied research grants or equipment grants unless a waiver applies.	Yes	Unless otherwise stated, grants are not renewable.	The goal of the Pests and Beneficial Species in Agricultural Production Systems program is to advance knowledge of invasive or established plant pests and associated beneficial species leading to innovative and biologically-based strategies to manage pests.
		3c. Diet, Nutrition, and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases (A1344)	other than Small Business - Individuals - Native American Tribal Orgs, not Federally recognized Tribal Governments	\$1,000,000	36-60 months				NIFA requests proposals for integrated projects that help prevent and control chronic disease equitably across the lifecycle by supporting and encouraging culturally relevant, healthy dietary choices through data-driven, flexible, customer-focused approaches.
		4d. Sustainable Agroecosystems (A1451)	- Nonprofits with or without 501(c)(3) IRS status - Small Business	\$750,000	36-48 months				This program area priority calls for research projects that focus on improvement of ecosystem health and output of ecosystem services in managed production systems (croplands, forests, and rangelands) that are currently under stress or at risk from climate change, pests, pathogens, invasive plants, and increased environmental pressures.
		4e. Environmental Justice (A1461)		\$1,000,000	48-60 months				Applications are required to meaningfully incorporate participation of communities with environmental justice concerns at all stages of project development and execution. This may involve incorporating use of traditional ecological knowledge such as Indigenous traditional knowledge and/or utilizing methods such as participatory research and extension, co-production, and transdisciplinary approaches.

USDA NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Funding -

Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible to apply.

This is a select list of funding opportunities available through AFRI. This demonstrates funding where tribes are not eligible, but they may wish to support other entities in pursuing funding. Note that Native American Tribal Organizations and other entities are eligible, but not tribal governments. In the Description and Notes column, see how other entities are funded to research Traditional Ecological Knowledge, which is considered cultural property for some tribal governments.

Assistance Listing Number	Funding Name	Program Area Priority Name	Limitations	Amount	Duration	Match	Indirect allowed	Renewable	Description and Notes
		7f. Extension, Education & USDA Climate Hubs Partnership		\$1,000,000	36-60 months				This program area priority will support projects that provide effective, translatable, and scalable approaches to address climate change through regional partnerships including the USDA Climate Hubs and extension.
10.225	Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program	In FY 2024, CFPCGP will fund two project types: 1) Planning Projects (PP), and 2) Community Food Projects (CFP).	To be eligible for a grant under CFPCGP, a public food program service provider, a tribal organization, or a private nonprofit entity.	\$25,000 - \$400,000	12-36 Months	Applicants MUST provide matching contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis for all Federal funds requested.	Yes	No	<p>The CFPCGP is designed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a. Meet the food needs of low-income individuals through food distribution, community outreach to assist in participation in Federally assisted nutrition programs, or improving access to food as part of a comprehensive service; b. Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for the food needs of the communities; and c. Promote comprehensive responses to local food, food access, farm, and nutrition issues; or 2. Meet specific State, local, or neighborhood food and agricultural needs, including needs relating to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Equipment necessary for the efficient operation of a project; b. Planning for long-term solutions; or c. The creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers. <p>The CFPCGP is intended to bring together stakeholders from distinct parts of the food system and to foster understanding of national food security trends and how they might improve local food systems. Understanding that people with low incomes experience disproportionate access to healthy foods, projects should address food and nutrition security, particularly among our nation's most</p>

USDA NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Funding -

Federally Recognized Tribes are not eligible to apply.

This is a select list of funding opportunities available through AFRI. This demonstrates funding where tribes are not eligible, but they may wish to support other entities in pursuing funding. Note that Native American Tribal Organizations and other entities are eligible, but not tribal governments. In the Description and Notes column, see how other entities are funded to research Traditional Ecological Knowledge, which is considered cultural property for some tribal governments.

Assistance Listing Number	Funding Name	Program Area Priority Name	Limitations	Amount	Duration	Match	Indirect allowed	Renewable	Description and Notes
									vulnerable populations. Applications from organizations that address food insecurity in rural, tribal, and underserved communities are encouraged.

Forest Service Funding

The Forest Service's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations (Forest Service, n.d.-g). The Forest Service is a USDA agency which greatly impacts First Foods, though much of the funding is focused on forestry, not food specifically. Many tribes have ancestral homelands or reservations that were transferred to the management of National Forests, but tribes today still need protected access to First Foods within these lands.

The Forest Service was mentioned in several interviews with tribal government staff as offering beneficial funding to tribes. The Forest Service was viewed as offering funding that was applicable to the needs of tribal governments and also the needs of First Foods. Tribes felt that it was hard for the Forest Service to increase funding to tribes because the Forest Service is underfunded, in general.

Examples of how the Forest Service is working with tribes includes Tribal Liaisons and Region 5 has a Traditional Gathering Policy. The two funding opportunities most mentioned during interviews were the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and the Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA). Several other funding opportunities were recommended during interviews with Tribal Liaisons and are listed later in the chapter.

Forest Service Tribal Liaisons

Two Forest Service Tribal Liaisons were interviewed for this project, representing the Pacific Southwest Region 5 and Pacific Northwest Region 6. Forest Service Tribal Liaison Kristi Tapio-Harper recommends that tribes work with their local forests to inform them of areas important to the tribe. Tapio-Harper said that the current Administration is trying to incorporate tribal input into the Forest Service planning efforts in an effort to be preemptive. (Kristi Tapio-Harper, personal communication, October 17, 2023).

The Forest Service is doing outreach to tribal governments asking for them to attend meetings, participate in interdisciplinary teams, and be a part of planning, but they repeatedly hear from tribes that they don't have time or manpower. Forest Service is looking to help fund positions at the tribal government to help with liaison work between agencies. Tapio-Harper shared that the Forest Service is planning to start providing funding for Tribal Liaisons for Yakama and Colville to be the tribal government counterpart to the Federal Tribal Liaisons.

“We have a supplemental agreement with an overarching master agreement with the Native American Tribal Historic Preservation Office. And part of that consultation that we're trying to bring to the table is pay for staff time for one of our forests in the region... But not a Federal Tribal Liaison, so to speak. But it's a Tribal Member or a person employed by the Tribes, that do kind of the flip side of a Federal Tribal Liaison. They work with the Tribe and work with the Forest Service on various things, and [the Forest Service is] going to pay for that position to sit at the table during NEPA planning”
(Kristi Tapio-Harper, personal communication, October 17, 2023).

Recommendation:

Forest Service funding for new Tribal Liaisons at the tribal government level.

Forest Service Traditional Gathering Policy

The Forest Service (and Bureau of Land Management) have a Traditional Gathering Policy for Region 5¹⁴ in California (near the Karuk Tribe) that supports traditional native cultural practitioners in gathering culturally utilized plants for personal, community, or other non-commercial traditional use. Rowena Yeahquo said that most Forests require a permit, so many Forest Service employees are unaware of the policy when they come to Region 5.

“It gets a little confusing when the tribe goes out and they start gathering for baskets, or medicinal, or ceremonial. And then we have Forest Service employees stopping them and asking questions or law enforcement, or whoever. And so it's one of the biggest things I'm doing right now is just educating our Forest Service employees... They [the tribes] have a very small land base here in California, and there's a whole history behind that. Why their treaties didn't get ratified and all kinds of things, so they don't have a very, a lot of the tribes don't have a very big land base, so they depend on the forest. I mean, that is their ancestral lands, and that some of them still have ceremonies out there.”
(Rowena Yeahquo, personal communication, November 1, 2023)

Recommendation:

In Region 6, Tribes should work with their local forests to develop policy for their Tribal Members to have protected access for traditional gathering.

¹⁴ For more on the Forest Service Region 5 Traditional Gathering Policy, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/workingtogether/tribalrelations/?cid=fseprd683463>

Recommendation:

The Forest Service should institutionalize the Traditional Gathering Policy into new employed training within Region 5.

638 Authority for the Tribal Forest Protection Act

In the 2018 Farm Bill, (P.L. 115-334) Section 8703 authorized the Forest Service to use 638 authority for Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) demonstration projects¹⁵, where the Forest Service is doing 638 contracting for “projects”, which is different from how the BIA does 638 contracting for programs or 638 compacting. “To start out, the Forest Service will pilot 638 agreements for projects as we all learn how this authority can work for the Forest Service and tribal partners for work on NFS lands.” (Forest Service, 2020, p. 13)

TFPA requires a tribal government to develop a proposal to the Forest Service and 638 is a tool to fund work identified as a priority in an approved TFPA proposal. “TFPA projects can include pre-planning support work in their proposal, such as the development of the Environmental Analysis. It’s essential that the Forest Service and the Tribe plan work together in order to ensure a quality project or program.” (Forest Service, 2020, p. 4)

It is important to note that Forest Service 638 agreements are for work on National Forest System (Forest Service) lands, while work on tribal lands is ineligible for funding (Forest Service, 2020, p. 2) Tribal staff work throughout their ancestral homelands on Forest Service, BLM, tribal land and private land. When planning projects throughout ancestral homelands, it becomes harder to budget staffing when the funding doesn’t allow tribes to work across these imposed land-classifications or jurisdictions. Regardless, 638 pilot project funding is a move in a positive direction for tribal governments.

First Foods Funding Need:

Funding for Stewardship Agreements that grow into Co-Management Funding

Stewardship agreements are decided on a Tribe by Tribe and Forest by Forest basis and there are no funds associated with it. The Forest Service has discretion to decide what funding support they want to dedicate to a tribe and the scope of work. “There is no money in the stewardship agreements. But you can put money into it, if the Forest Service, if they think that's something that they feel like is a priority, and they want to put that on their program of work” (Rowena Yeahquo, personal communication, November 1, 2023). Forest Service Tribal Liaison for California, Rowena Yeahquo, said that possibly training funding or workforce development funding could be a part of agreements with the Forest Service.

¹⁵ The Intertribal Timber Council hosted 638 authority webinars, to watch, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/inside-fs/out-and-about/forest-management-intertribal-timber-council-host-638-authority-webinars>

Forest Service Funding Opportunity 1: Collaborative Forest Restoration Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) funding

“The purpose of the Forest Service’s Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program is to encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes and:

- encourage ecological, economic, and social sustainability;
- leverage local resources with national and private resources;
- facilitate the reduction of wildfire management costs, including through re-establishing natural fire regimes and reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire;
- demonstrate the degree to which various ecological restoration techniques achieve ecological and watershed health objectives; and,
- encourage utilization of forest restoration by-products to offset treatment costs, to benefit local rural economies, to and improve forest health.”

(Forest Service, n.d.-f).

CFRLR was established in 2009, but funding for the program dramatically increased after it was reauthorized in the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 Section 8629 (the Farm Bill), and again when CFRLR received an influx of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (H.R.3684 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act). Most tribes are not the lead awardee in these collaborations, typically they are listed as partners. Some collaborations have budgeted award funding for tribes, but the greater award allocations tend to go to NGOs, businesses or local Forest Service districts. The Karuk Tribe was awarded in 2022 for their project proposal, Western Klamath Restoration Partnership CFLRP Proposal, in which they are collaborating to implement cultural burns to improve habitat and reduce wildfire risk. Cultural burning is an important cultural land management practice for First Foods. The Karuk Tribe shares more about their experience with CFLRP and TFPA funding in the next section.

Nationally, 37 projects have been awarded since 2010, including both projects that involve or do not involve tribes.

- 10 projects were awarded in 2010 ranging from \$392,000 to \$1.63 million
 - 10 projects were awarded in 2012, ranging from \$324,000 to \$3,500,000
 - 3 projects were awarded in 2021, ranging from \$672,536 to \$3,000,000
 - 12 new projects were awarded in 2022, ranging from \$180,366 to \$3,000,000, including two 10 year project extensions which requested \$21,406,027 and \$10,000,000
 - 2 projects were awarded in 2023, ranging from \$1,100,000 to \$1,093,053
- (Forest Service, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c, n.d.-d, n.d.-e).

See the next section for the analysis of CFLRP funding.

Forest Service Funding Opportunity 2: Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA)

“The Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) allows federally recognized tribes to propose projects to be conducted on Forest Service land to reduce threats to adjacent tribal lands, trust resources, and values. Tribal values can be ecological, cultural or archaeological, and the tribe proposing a TFPA project must specify how taking action on Forest Service lands will reduce risks to those values.” (Climate Hubs, n.d.).

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized the Forest Service to execute "638" agreements to undertake TFPA work under the Indian Self-Determination Education and Assistance Act (Public Law 93-638) and demonstration projects are currently being led by tribes who will help shape and expand future agreements (Intertribal Timber Council, n.d.).

The Intertribal Timber Council has developed TFPA resources and templates, available on their website¹⁶.

Kristi Tapio-Harper, Forest Service Tribal Liaison:

“The one [funding opportunity] that has a lot of flexibility right now is the Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA). My history with grants and agreements is mainly with NRCS, but the TFPA process is really simple. It is probably the most simple [opportunity] for a tribe to fill out with the Forest Service. And the TFPA right now with this Administration is very broad. As long as you have some type of restoration activity within that TFPA, the sky's the limit. The universe is the limit. You can have it solely focused on forest restoration activities for a little part, and then you could go as broad as ‘hey, we're going provide some tribal heritage folks to actually do your cultural surveys and whatnot.’ So it's very open and what I've been told, and I've been telling tribes is, if you have an idea, submit it. And we'll work to find funding to do it, whether it's through this TFPA program or some other mechanism. But having that TFPA process be so simple, we just tell them to like, submit it through. Then we'll find funding opportunities for it”

(Kristi Tapio-Harper, personal communication, October 17, 2023).

Analysis of CFLRP and TFPA Funding Opportunities:

The Karuk Department of Natural Resources said that their two largest sources of USDA funding are through the Forest Service’s Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA). Both funding sources have portions that can focus on monitoring and implementations, but there are no planning dollars in CFLRP. The TFPA has planning dollars and was able to apply to all departments within the Karuk’s DNR.

¹⁶ Intertribal Timber Council resources: https://www.itcnet.org/issues_projects/issues_2/tfpa/tfpareports.html

Director Neva Gibbens shared how beneficial TFPA has been to the Karuk Tribe's Department of Natural Resources because it applied to First Foods and was able to fund programs across the department. Gibbens said, "The TFPA funding that we have, the Tribal Forest Protection Act, we got 4.5 million dollars through the Forest Service from the bipartisan infrastructure law last year. It's a 5 year agreement, so it'll roll over [each year]... And the Tribal Forest Protection Act really is any sort of work being done in our traditional territory that has something to do with our natural landscape, so traditional foods are a part of our tribal forest protection and plants are also a part of that. Yeah, we were able to fund pretty much every program here at DNR only partially. But every program qualified to be funded through the TFPA." (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024). When funding can apply to multiple programs or departments within a tribal administration, they are able to better collaborate with staff from other programs. Funding provided in this way makes work more efficient rather than separating which staff are eligible to work on projects.

TRPA funding demonstrates that cross-disciplinary funding for tribal governments is possible, within a single agency within the USDA. Tribes need funding consistency in order to strengthen and maintain their Departments of Natural Resources and the Forest Service should offer similar funding to more tribal governments.

Forest Service Funding Need:

Capacity funding for tribal government staffing.

Funding for tribal governments that is not institutionalized into the ongoing agency funding structure can create instability for tribes. Not all tribes have the administrative capacity to access short-term funding when it becomes available. Low funding and funding inconsistency also lead to a lack of planning capacity within departments. Tribal governments need long-term staff and funding fluctuation leaves tribes in a perpetual start-up phase. The lack of planning funding in CFLRP means that tribal department staff have to find other funding to cover their staff time for planning. Gibbens said, "CFLRP was also through the Forest Service last year, and we were able to navigate getting pretty good chunks of that as well. Some of it more short term, some of it more long term. Like CFLRP I think that one was like 30 million over 10 years. So 3 million a year, for the next 10 years. So that one was huge. The TFPA was just a one-time 4.5 million. With the hope that we can get more this next year, but it all depends on the government" (Neva Gibbens, personal communication, January 17, 2024).

Lastly, what makes the Forest Service funding especially helpful to the Karuk Tribe is that the large majority of their ancestral lands have been taken by the Forest Service, meaning that they have fewer cross-jurisdictional boundaries to cross than another tribe who may have patchwork ownership throughout their ancestral territory of trust, fee, State, Forest Service (USDA), National Parks (DOI), BLM (DOI), or wildlife preserve (DOI).

Recommendation:

The Forest Service should increase the funding and consistency for TFPA and CFLRP, which are providing multi-million dollar funding over a 10-year funding period. These funds expand the capacity of tribal governments, but these needs are ongoing beyond 10 years. More tribes need to be able to access this funding.

Forest Service Funding Opportunity 3: Urban and Community Forestry Program

“USDA Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Program is the only dedicated urban forest program in the federal government. It is a technical, financial, and educational assistance program, delivering nature-based solutions for climate and environmental justice, and green jobs where more than 84 percent of Americans live, work, and play” (Forest Service, n.d.-h).

Rowena Yeahquo, Forest Service Tribal Relations Specialist, recommended the Urban and Community Forestry Program¹⁷ funding as a resource for projects on tribal land. She described how the funding can be used to do things like plant trees or start community gardens, with many of the projects focused on reforestation and environmental justice (Rowena Yeahquo, personal communication, November 1, 2023).

Example of tribal government awarded in PNW

In 2023, the Forest Service Region 6 (Washington and Oregon) awarded the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe \$1,374,299 for their proposal, Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Culturally Modified Tree Protection Program (Forest Service, 2023).

Analysis of Funding Opportunity:

Tribes can sometimes be eligible for funding named “Urban”, especially if they are in proximity to where a tribe’s headquarters or communities are located. Due to the dollar for dollar match requirement, this funding may be inaccessible for many tribes. Tribes located in urban areas with more partnership connections may have an easier time obtaining match or in-kind for projects. This funding is still an excellent resource, but is limited duration funding. What makes this funding unique is that it also funds food programs, like community gardens, which in the case of PNW tribes may be able to apply to areas near the community where First Foods are occurring naturally. Due to the urban nature of this funding, it is unlikely that this funding could be used for areas far from tribal communities, for example, some First Foods grow only in different climates, like the mountains. Further research would be needed to identify the rate at which tribal governments are accessing this funding.

¹⁷ For more on Urban Community Forestry Program, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf>

Chapter 4 - Policy Recommendations

Funding Policy Recommendations

Capacity Recommendations

Base funding for tribal government First Food Department/Departments of First Foods.

Tribal governments are like other governments, who operate at local and regional and state (sometimes-interstate), and national levels. Tribal governments are governments and should be funded as governments, not only as producers, industries, or interest groups.

- Tribal governments need funding for First Foods departments, equivalent to a Tribal Department of Agriculture.

Consistent funding for First Foods

Funding inconsistency makes it difficult for tribal governments to retain momentum when grant funding ends, which leaves tribes in a perpetual start-up phase. Pooling funds from multiple grants makes more work for employees and creates employment instability.

First Food Capacity Needs:

- Long-term funding structure, rather than grant-to-grant funding.
- Larger funding amounts to reduce piecemeal funding for programs and projects.
- Tribes need funding for grant writing and grant coordination.
- Equitable tribal-capacity in new legislation.

Funding for First Foods staff

Many tribal employees working in Natural Resources, Culture, and Health already are overburdened with existing projects and roles. For tribal governments to be able to effectively expand their work in First Foods, they require additional staff to help with coordination, leadership, communication, planning, education and more.

First Food Staffing Needs:

- Funding for consistent staffing levels, employee retention and advancement.
- Funding for First Foods traditional educators, knowledge-keepers and elders.
- Long-term funding is needed to support the growth of tribal government staffing.
- Staffing at all levels is needed for First Foods work, from education, to workforce development, to project managers, to higher-level leadership positions.
- Positions within the tribal government to obtain, process and store First Foods for the community.
- Tribal land staffing equivalency to other government agencies, like rangers or enforcement staff.
- Coordinators for funding planning

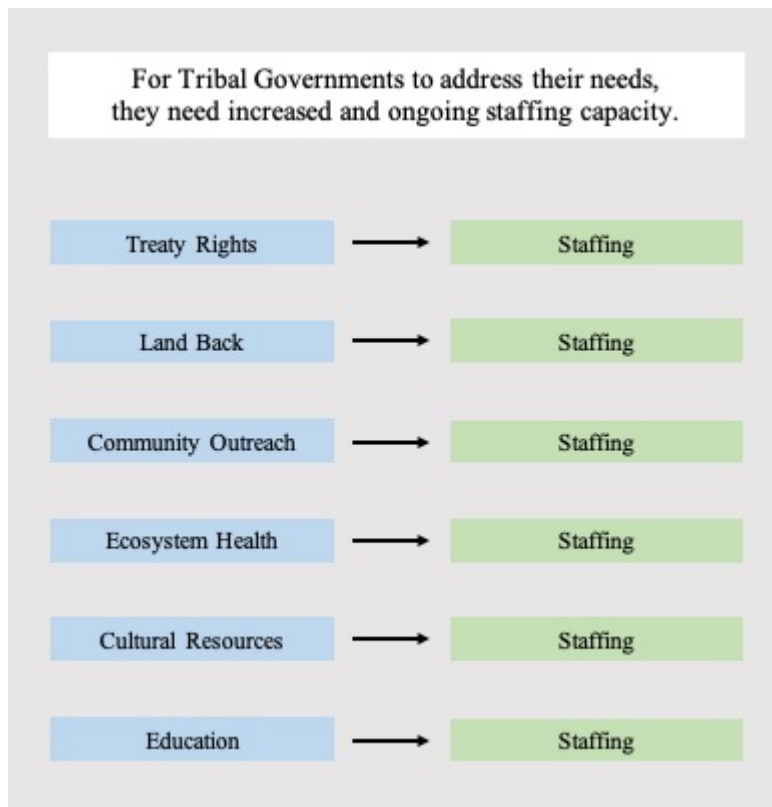


Figure 10: Examples of tribal government staffing needs.

Funding Flexibility

Funding that is highly restricted creates more work for tribal governments, who often utilize funding from multiple federal agencies. Funding that can be reallocated to other needs or funding that tribes can retain for use later, helps tribes respond faster to their communities and gives tribes more time to meet grant requirements.

First Foods Flexibility Needs:

- Simplified application process, reduce reporting requirements, and eliminate match/in-kind tracking.

- Tribes need the ability to customize and design programs to fit their own circumstances and needs.
- Make application periods longer for tribal governments.

Fund Tribal Consultation

Tribal governments need adequate funding for tribal consultation. Tribal governments may receive consultation invitations, policy feedback, or requests for project engagement, however, many tribal governments lack funding for engagement or outreach. Generally, consultation services provided by a tribe to local, state, or federal governments, public education institutions, NGOs or private entities ends up being entirely at the cost of the tribal government. Elected leaders may be able to use their own personal capacity to provide some amount of engagement with outside entities, however, the labor of facilitating partnerships eventually falls to already stretched tribal government staff who have existing grants and programs to run. Other government elected leaders and government employees (local, state, federal) are funded for their labor in consultation, so tribal governments need funding equivalency for their consultation services.

First Foods Leadership Needs:

- Compensation for Tribal Consultation.
- Tribes need capacity in order to engage in Partnerships

Cultural Resources and NEPA Recommendations

Funding equivalency for Cultural Resources

Dedicate funding to support Cultural Resources within tribal governments. Tribes should have equitable staffing that can address needs across their ancestral territories. Engage in Tribal Consultation on the development of formulas that include ceded territory and usual and accustomed areas.

First Foods Cultural Resources Needs:

- Base funding for Cultural Resources
- Longer timelines for NEPA to allow time for Tribes to measure impacts on cultural foods.
- Funding for Cultural Resource Research and Tracking
- Systems improvement for agencies and Tribes on NEPA timeline and funding timelines
- NEPA should require impacts on Treaty Rights in EIS.
- Funding for Cultural Resources and NEPA would help other departments within the tribal government complete their projects and meet deadlines.

Outreach, Education and Workforce Development Recommendations

Funding for First Foods Communication and Community-Responsive Planning

First Foods are communally managed, so funding is needed that is community-focused and enables tribal governments to be responsive to community needs. Tribal governments need funding for communication, education, consultation and outreach which all assist with First Foods planning and evaluation.

First Foods Outreach Needs:

- Outreach professionals to provide cultural education for cultural continuity.
- Tribal Councils need feedback from tribal communities in First Foods decision making.
- Evaluation that is tribal-community-focused.
- Funding for tribal government consultation with elders on research and historic preservation

Funding for First Food Community Education

Community education is central to communal food systems by providing opportunity for the community to come together. Community education is essential to cultural continuity and facilitates inter-generational educational opportunities.

First Food Cultural Education Need:

- Funding for tribes to provide community education to pass First Foods and traditional ecological knowledge down through generations.

Funding for Workforce Development

To prepare youth for careers within First Foods' food systems, First Foods must be integrated into educational opportunities from a young age. Tribal governments want to develop career paths for Tribal Member employees to work with First Foods because they are central to cultural identity and provide Tribal Members the opportunity to practice culture as a part of their role in the tribal government.

First Food Education Need:

- Funding for tribal governments to support Tribal Member students from elementary through higher education, including non-college job training.

First Foods Access Recommendations

Funding for Tribes to manage land across boundaries.

For tribal staff, their work spans across ancestral territories, not only on tribal land. Tribes work on land that is private, trust, Forest Service, BLM, National Parks, state and local public land. Each of these categories receive different types of funding for work being done on those lands. Funding that is tied to management across ancestral territories should take treaties into consideration, as well as usual and accustomed places.

- Funding for Tribes to manage land across boundaries.

Funding for unique First Foods needs

First Foods are unique because they are communal foods, not individual producer foods. Traditionally, every Native American person had multiple roles in the food system (hunting, fishing, gathering, transporting, cooking, preserving, storing, trading). Today, many Tribal Members have to have other paid jobs in order to do these traditional jobs for their community. Multiple tribal interviewees expressed the need for staff who could assist the community with First Food acquisition and these staff could also be community educators.

First Foods Access Needs:

- Tribal staff to gather, hunt, and fish to provide food for the community.
- Funding is needed for tribes to conduct research, restoration and monitoring of First Foods.
- Funding for tribal governments to manage lands at a landscape-scale and at an ancestral homelands scale.

Funding for Land Back

Tribes want to be able to culturally manage First Foods across their ancestral lands. Land Back is a movement across the United States of returning land to the federally recognized tribes.

First Foods Access Needs:

- Funding for staff to facilitate access to areas with First Foods.
- Funding for tribes to be able to restore First Foods within their reservation and within their ancestral territories.
- Funding for tribal governments to protect historic gathering sites and manage First Foods for future generations.
- Tribal governments need funding support to address First Food losses across the reservation and ancestral lands (First Food reconnaissance and mitigation).
- Agencies need to uphold trust responsibility to tribal governments through funding.
- Funding for tribal governments to coordinate with the Forest Service, BLM, and other agencies, rather than agencies relegating Treaty Rights to local forests who may be ill equipped to address trust responsibility.

- Land for community centers, cultural structures, and other land-use needs.
- Funding for tribal government labor associated with policy and legal expenses to address policy inconsistencies where Treaty Rights and access to First Foods are being impacted by land use, conservation easements, etc.
- Policy substitution where tribal governments develop their own tribal conservation easements to replace easements restricting land use and access to First Foods.

Funding for First Foods Policymaking

Because tribal governments interface with outside entities regarding Treaty Rights, tribal governments need funding to be able to engage in policy making.

First Food Policy Needs:

- Tribal governments need funding to engage in policy making.
- Policy development to address land use damage, for example ongoing cattle grazing that impacts First Foods.

Funding for Land Management and Research

As tribes are able to regain access to First Foods, they need capacity to manage First Foods with culturally appropriate methods. As tribes are able to manage First Foods places, tribal governments need the capacity to track and monitor First Foods abundance.

First Food Research Needs:

- Funding is needed for tribal governments to conduct cultural preservation and research.
- Funding is needed for data collection and tracking of First Food abundance. One-time funding can establish baseline data, but ongoing funding is needed for monitoring due to environmental threats, such as the Climate Crisis.
- Funding for tribal governments to carry out co-management on Federal and State land.

Funding to address Climate Crisis impacts on First Foods

Tribes are place-based communities with place-based cultures that cannot move to a more suitable climate. Tribal governments need capacity to address First Foods at risk from the Climate Crisis.

First Food Climate Crisis Funding:

- Tribal governments need funding for Climate Change remediation and to prevent extinctions and extirpations of First Foods.
- Consistent funding for First Foods and Climate Change.

Other Funding Recommendations

Funding for Public Health First Foods needs

First Foods are a public health issue for tribal communities and tribal governments have a role in addressing public health issues in their communities.

First Food Health Needs:

- Funding for Tribal Member staffing to provide the tribal community with First Food access throughout ancestral lands.
- Prevention and public health funding for First Foods.
- Increased and ongoing funding for cultural health staff positions, who contribute to public health, nutrition, food security, prevention and mental health.
- Funding for First Foods as public health.

Funding for First Foods Infrastructure needs

First Foods are managed communally and tribal communities need infrastructure where the community can all be together for First Foods cultural practices, cooking, preservation and storage.

First Food Infrastructure Needs:

- Funding for Community Centers with community food storage for First Foods.
- Infrastructure for program staff to be stationed near work sites and workforce housing in rural areas.

Recommendations for Tribal Governments

Many tribal governments are creating First Foods programs or Natural Resources programs focused on restoring ecosystems. They are creating programs that work for their unique circumstances and being led by passionate First Foods leaders. For grant-funded programs, many staff positions are often funded by multiple, one-time, short-term grants. Multiple grants are often needed to staff First Foods programs because the grant amounts are low and staff need to overlap grants to prevent funding gaps which can lead to staff loss. Tribal government leaders can assist with long-term planning and funding strategy for how First Foods programs will accomplish their goals.

Questions for tribal governments to consider:

- What are your goals and needs for your First Foods?
- What is your tribal government's role in managing First Foods and land?
- Does your tribal community need more protected areas to access First Foods?
 - Does your tribal community have reliable First Foods abundance available for future generations?
 - Will the Climate Crisis make First Foods less available or susceptible to loss?
- Examine how your tribe is funding First Foods work now.
 - Is that funding sustainable? Or will the funding end or run out in the future?
- What existing funding structures could tribal governments use creatively to fund First Foods work? Ideas:
 - Tribal departments or programs could fund First Foods education for their clients.
 - Natural Resource grant proposals could include an outreach budget to fund cultural educators.
 - What other tribal departments could partner in grant seeking for First Foods?
Health/Social Services/Youth/Housing
- What are regional or national advocacy groups doing to build capacity and resource equity for tribes? Are you ready for what they are planning?
 - Are your Tribe's needs uniquely different from other tribes?

Role of Tribal Governments

Tribal governments role in food sovereignty:

- Provide resources to identify all traditional plants, medicines and foods
- Establish and defend protection for those unique cultural foods and seeds
 - Through written policy
 - Through infrastructure development
 - Through continual propagation, storage and protection
 - Through identification of location and sites and preserving the locations
 - Through establishing staff in government infrastructure to lend assistance to citizenry
 - Through establishing and maintaining importance

Other roles: interface with other tribal governments, anticipate and prepare for future challenges

Source: (Parker, 2018).

Participate in regional PNW First Foods policy discussions

The Native Farm Bill Coalition and other national food policy advocacy organizations need to hear from PNW tribes on the tribal government needs for First Food cultures. Tribal governments need equitable funding, at the local, state, regional and federal levels, to meet the demands of tribal consultation, to uphold Treaty Rights, to restore ecosystems, to ensure cultural continuity, and to increase the abundance of First Foods

Recommendation to Tribes:

Develop consensus between tribes on a First Foods vision for Tribal Departments of Agriculture.

Regional intertribal discussions are needed regarding the potential for 638 funding in future Farm Bills. This funding could have the potential of providing tribal governments with base funding for First Foods Departments.

Regional PNW inter-tribal discussions are needed in order to identify how 638 funding could address the unique needs of First Foods. Outreach and discussions could be hosted at Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), Intertribal Agriculture Council, or other regional inter-tribal gatherings.

The risk of not engaging in USDA 638 design discussions may mean that tribal governments are limited to only administer the same USDA programs, which currently do not address First Foods' needs. If PNW Tribes build consensus on First Foods funding needs, that can be built into a future Farm Bill.

Potential organizing groups for regional discussions:

- Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI)
- Intertribal Agriculture Council

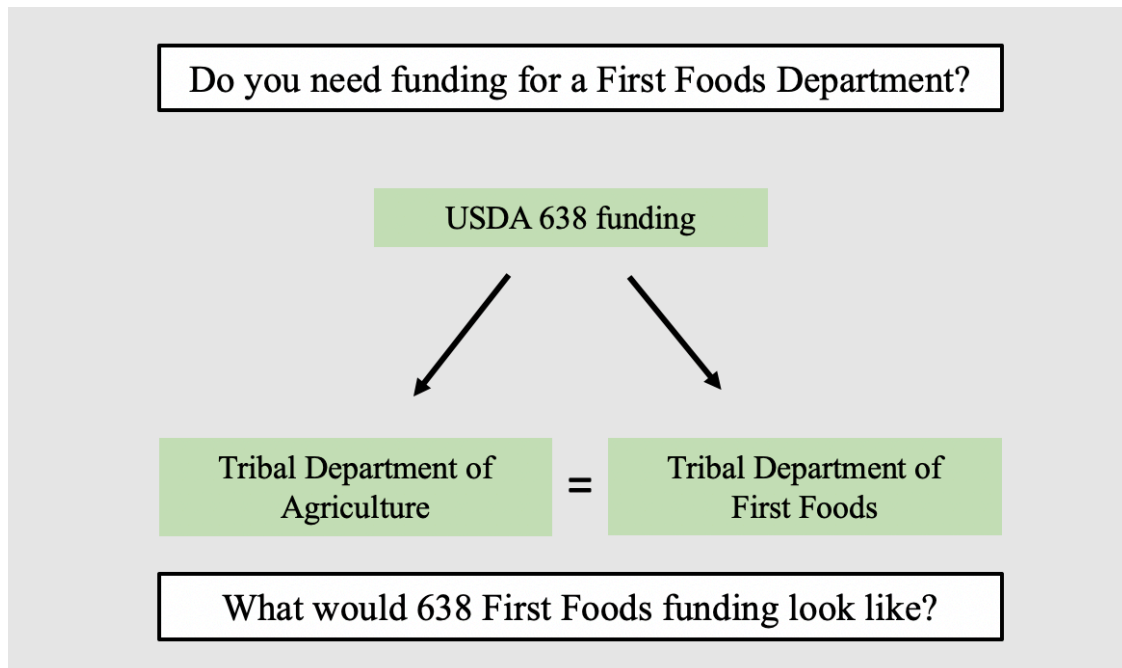


Figure 11: Prompt for tribal governments with First Foods funding needs.

Develop First Foods Departments

The Native Farm Bill Coalition is recommending that tribal governments develop Departments of Agriculture in preparation of future Farm Bills where 638 funding may be available to tribal governments. Some tribal governments may be satisfied with administering existing funding structures designed by USDA through their Tribal Department of Agriculture. However, for many PNW tribes, much of the funding available through the USDA does not apply to First Foods.

Native food policy leaders are recommending that tribes develop their Departments in their own image or according to their unique governmental or cultural needs. Ideally, the 638 funding would allow for a customization of Departments of Agriculture, however, it will be easier to customize if tribes can provide the USDA with a demonstration of the diverse needs in the PNW. Tribal governments can become a model for 638 funding by developing departments within their government administrations. By designing First Foods departments in a culturally-relevant way, tribes may be able to act as a “model” or influence the design of USDA 638 funding.

First Food Model Departments

For example, the CTUIR Department of Natural Resources is structured around their First Foods cultural protocols. Another example is the Karuk Tribe who has an Eco-cultural Revitalization Department and Food Sovereignty Program within their Department of Natural Resources.

First Foods Departments could be PNW tribes’ equivalent of a Tribal Department of Agriculture. 638 funding has the potential to become tribal governments’ base First Food Department funding.

Pamela Barlow-Lind, CTSI Tribal Planner recommended that tribes create a blueprint and vision for the funding, before regulations, or before tribes have to concede to what the USDA wants the Tribal Department to look like. She said that in her experience, tribes will get closer to what they want in First Foods Departments if they develop the blueprint and guardrails now, rather than wait for the funding to come and have all the entrenched systems that come with it. Barlow-Lind said, “I think it comes from the experience of working with things and trying to make them fit after the fact—but my suggestion is to **pre-negotiate** as much of that as you can... When you say ‘we’ll go by your rules, start the Department of Agriculture’, and you start hiring people with that background. So even internally, then, you kind of start entrenching a certain mindset. ...But I think you would end up with a closer progress to what you want to see happen, to **take a little time in the beginning, to get more clarity on an agreement on what your vision is for where you're going with it, and amend those rules before you get into them.** And I think it's worth the investment of time to do that and because in the long run it'll pay off more. You'll be spending your energy on getting to that endpoint instead of wrestling each other.” (Pamela Barlow-Lind, personal communication, March 19, 2024).

Increase awareness of national food policy advocacy

Tribal leaders should increase awareness of policy changes proposed by the Native Farm Bill Coalition, Intertribal Agriculture Council and other leading national Indigenous foods organizations. For example, the Native Farm Bill Coalition is advocating for a future Farm Bill to include 638 funding for Tribal Departments of Agriculture, which could create base funding for tribal governments.

Native Farm Bill Coalition Policy Priority:

Alternative Models of Program Delivery—638, Other Flexibilities for Tribes

“Applying “638” Self-Determination contract opportunities to Conservation Title programs would enable Tribal governments to directly administer Conservation Title programs to eligible Tribal producers in Indian Country. This is not only a strong acknowledgment of Tribal sovereignty, but it also places program access within easier reach for Native producers, because their Tribal governments deeply understand the land holdings issues that often prevent robust Native producer participation.” (Parker et al., 2022, p. 31). The Native Farm Bill Coalition's advocacy for 638 authority is an important step in building tribal governments capacity to administer conservation programs within their lands.

The researcher believes that 638 is an excellent funding mechanism to tribal governments that someday could be used to create sustainable base funding for food and agriculture staff within tribal governments. The flexibility potential, especially for 638 compacts, would provide tribes with some ability to customize the budget to suit the needs of their community, however tribes generally have to supplement 638 funds with other funding to maximize their impact. Ideally, with this authority, tribes would then have the authority to plan, conduct, redesign, and administer their own programs, functions, services, and activities that meet the needs of their communities (Native American Affairs, 2020).

About 638 Authority:

“Tribal Self-Governance - 638 Authority, The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (Pub. L. No. 93-638) allows Tribes to directly assume the responsibility of administering programs, services, functions, and activities otherwise provided by the federal government to individual Indians, and to obtain funding in carrying out these responsibilities—called ‘638 contracting or compacting authority.’ Examples include healthcare, education, social services, and construction. 638 authority recognizes that Tribal governments are best positioned to serve their own citizens and communities and allows for more direct program delivery, greater service, and programs tailored to suit the unique needs of each Tribal community.” (Indigenous Food & Agriculture Initiative, 2020)

Demonstration 638 Pilot Projects are currently underway since the 2018 Farm Bill provided opportunity for limited demonstration projects with tribal governments for the USDA. At this time, the pilot projects only extended to the USDA’s Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) and one pilot project within the forestry title. In future farm bills, tribes will be best served with the flexibility to redesign and administer food and agriculture programs that better reflect the needs of different tribal communities, especially in reference to non-commercial, communal foods that are of high cultural value to tribal communities. Continuation or expansion of the demonstration projects will depend on the next Farm Bill negotiations, as tribes seek to build off of the momentum of these limited initial projects. If additional demonstration projects are offered, multiple PNW tribes could propose their First Foods

Departments as 638 funding models and cater the funding to the special needs of their departments, such as cultural fire, monitoring, etc.

Consultation

Tribes have the opportunity to address commercial take of First Foods in the Forest Service's Northwest Forest Plan. For tribal governments who are not sitting on the Northwest Forest Plan Federal Advisory Committee, they can use opportunities for one-on-one consultation, which is important for addressing the unique needs of different tribal governments.

Recommendation to Tribes:

Tribes should address issues around the Commercialization of First Foods in the Northwest Forest Plan.

Currently, the Northwest Forest Plan is in the process of being amended. The Federal Advisory Committee includes some representatives from tribal governments. Tribes have the opportunity to address commercial take of First Foods in the Northwest Forest Plan. For tribal governments who are not sitting on the Federal Advisory Committee, they can use opportunities for one-on-one consultation, which is important for addressing the unique needs of different tribal governments. Tribal Liaison Kristi Tapio-Harper said, "The Tribal input is going to have a huge opportunity to impact decisions, such as commercial, cultural uses [redacted cultural information] so there's a huge opportunity there... Once the Northwest Forest Plan is amended, we've been told it's going to be used heavily as a template for other Forest Plans, not only in the [PNW] region, but within the whole nation. So yeah, huge opportunity to incorporate cultural traditional plant uses within that" (Kristi Tapio-Harper, personal communication, October 17, 2023).

Fundraising

Some Tribes are engaging in fundraising efforts to increase their tribal government capacity to address needs within their Natural Resources Departments. Natural Resources funding for Outreach and Education is not generally accessible to tribal governments, so often self-governance, tribal business revenue, or short-term grants are required for funding those staffing needs. Neva Gibbens from the Karuk Tribe shared that she would like to see other tribes develop similar Funds, so that they become common and easy for potential funders to understand (Neva Gibbens, personal communication January 17, 2024).

Karuk Tribe

Eco-Cultural Revitalization Fund

<https://connect.clickandpledge.com/Organization/karuk/Campaign/EcoculturalRevitalization/>

With this fund we are working to transfer knowledge to our youth, change policies on land, water, fisheries and fire management, revitalize our cultural principles and practices and build sustainable capacities for current and future generations. A healthy

endowment will allow us to move away from dependency on grants and extraction-based forest management systems.

The Karuk Tribe's Department of Natural Resources is seeking to raise \$50,000,000 to provide 20% funding sustainability. "With a total annual projected funding need of approximately \$8,000,000 to \$10,000,000, it would take an Endowment of approximately \$200,000,000 to achieve full funding... These funds would be used to cover baseline leadership and support positions, along with providing general operating capital and supporting facilities improvements."

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

First Foods Fund

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Department of Natural Resources has a First Foods Fund, which supports multiple funding needs:

1. Land Acquisition: For the purpose of acquiring fee title to lands and/or waters (e.g. water rights) that provide First Foods, or access to such lands or waters;
2. Cultural Continuity: Projects that promote CTUIR First Foods continuity to CTUIR tribal members and community; and
3. First Foods Knowledge Development: Including investigative or assessment work that develops knowledge to inform First Foods management, policy development, and regulatory mechanisms; and
4. Outreach and Education: Outreach and education activities that promote understanding of First Foods in 1) the CTUIR community, or 2) external communities where benefits to the First Foods or CTUIR goals and interests may be demonstrated.

Cultural Resources Protection Program Manager, Teara Farrow Ferman explained that the Fund was started with mitigation dollars that CTUIR negotiated from environmental impacts on cultural resources. The Fund can accept donations, but has not been promoted to the public or potential donors.

For anyone wishing to donate, please contact: Teara Farrow Ferman, CTUIR Department of Natural Resources, tearafarrowferman@ctuir.org

Future Policy Ideas for Native Farm Bill Coalition and advocacy groups

Funding for restoring First Foods abundance

History has shown that government agencies are not adequately working collectively to address First Foods trust responsibilities, which has led to declines in First Food populations. The success of self-governance funding has shown that tribes are more than capable of taking ownership of trust responsibilities on behalf of the US government. Tribal governments are more dedicated to managing First Foods than government agencies. Tribal governments are more effective at managing First Foods because current laws, such as ESA, do not go far enough to actually restore species to meet Treaty Right subsistence levels.

Tribal governments are justified to receive associated funding and resources to support First Foods' food systems for the following reasons:

- Religious Freedom - Creation stories and religious practices for Native American people often involve First Foods, making them central to religious ceremonies, traditions and cultural lifeways. (American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, Public Law 95-341)
- Cultural Preservation and Protection - Cultural values and teachings, today referred to as *traditional ecological knowledge*, is proprietary information that tribes are seeking to protect from exploitation and preserving for future generations. (Section 106: National Historic Preservation Act of 1966)
- Cultural Education - In tribal communities, elders and cultural leaders are the educators who pass on cultural values and teachings on to the next generations in their tribal communities.
- Treaty Rights - Tribal governments hold Treaty Rights on behalf of their enrolled tribal membership and descendants. (ratified and unratified treaties)

First Foods are interdependent on Native American peoples to carry out their cultural practices. Cultural resources are more likely to be protected, first foods are more likely to flourish, and ecosystems are more likely to heal under the leadership and management of tribal governments.

Recommendation:

638 compacting for First Foods Departments, equivalent to Tribal Departments of Agriculture.

Recommendation:

Host First Foods gatherings for PNW tribes to build regional consensus on 638 funding needs for First Foods Departments.

Crop insurance for First Foods

Crop insurance is standard for conventional agriculture. Currently, there is no systemic compensation to tribal governments for loss of First Foods. First Foods could occur on reservation or anywhere within ancestral territories. So, what would it look like to have USDA crop insurance pay for landscape losses of First Foods?

Coverage could include loss due to:

- Wildfire
- Extreme Heat
- Drought, flood
- Fish die-offs, including fry loss
- Plant and animal poaching on reservation land or protected areas - huckleberries
- Landslide, earthquake, volcanic activity (PNW, but also California, Alaska and Hawaii)
- Water contamination
- Invasive species damage
- Disease and pest predation
- Illegal take

Recommendation:

Conduct regional consultation with tribal governments' Natural Resource Departments and Culture Departments to consider the potential benefits or negative impacts to crop insurance being applied to First Foods.

Since crop insurance is assessed based on annual sales/loss, how could crop insurance be applied to subsistence First Food cultures? But how would this apply to cultures where it is taboo to sell First Foods commercially? Tribes should not have to sell their cultural foods in order to be compensated for loss.

Also, subsistence crop insurance should not apply to non-Tribal commercial foragers. When damage happens, tribal governments need compensation for the financial resources they have to deploy to monitor damages, mitigation and restoration. Crop insurance could be an efficient way to get funding to Tribes' Natural Resources Departments for these purposes.

Staple food financial supports for staple First Foods

For many Tribes, there has been a massive depletion of staple foods within a First Foods diet. The USDA provides funding for conventional staple crops, so funding is needed that would support Tribal Government management of staple foods within their First Foods culture.

Recommendation:

Conduct regional consultation with tribal governments' Natural Resource Departments and Culture Departments to consider what staple foods funding would look like for First Foods.

Rare food and conservation funding for First Foods

Often, it is NGOs, environmental groups, or governments who receive funding for protecting rare plants and animals. Tribal governments need to have resources to be in conservation and manage cultural resources that are depleted and high-risk.

Recommendation:

Tribal governments need funding to conserve and protect sensitive habitats and restore rare First Foods. Funding needs to go beyond ESA, which currently stops short of actually restoring healthy long-term populations.

Environmental Restoration Funding

It is only after an oil spill, or energy development, or mining has taken place, that funding is given to heal the land. Much of current funding for restoration is only to reduce toxic damage.

Since colonization, Tribes have experienced devastating loss of First Foods access, so long-term environmental restoration funding is needed to repair that harm. Ongoing environmental restoration funding is needed due to the increasing impacts of the Climate Crisis on First Foods access.

Recommendation:

- Ongoing, consistent funding for environmental restoration.
- Create a system for funding disaster relief like crop insurance for wild foods (currently there is no disaster funding directed at restoring wild foods).

Designate First Foods and cultural materials as Cultural Resources

First Foods are Cultural Resources

The USDA should recognize First Foods as a Cultural Resource and dedicate funding to tribal governments for their management.

For further examination:

Would this designation as a cultural resource, enable the funding to be applied across jurisdictions beyond just Agricultural lands? Cultural Resources funding would then be more aligned with the needs to both use historic gathering places and enable tribes to protect historic places.

Recommendation:

Increase funding for surveys and monitoring of First Foods and cultural materials. Funding for enforcement for gathering site monitoring.

Conclusion

The First Foods' food systems of Pacific Northwest tribes have unique funding needs that are not being met by most USDA funding structures. Tribal governments are in need of base funding to support First Foods abundance and cultural continuity. The recent advancements on the Farm Bill by the Native Farm Bill Coalition are laying the groundwork for tribes to design culturally-relevant First Foods Departments, in their own image, with their unique funding needs. Federally recognized tribes need and deserve consistent USDA funding for base tribal government functions related to First Foods.

Currently, tribal governments are stretched to meet the First Foods needs of their communities because they are heavily dependent on multiple, short-term, restrictive grants. These funding structures are often competitive, restrictive, and do not cover the full cost of labor necessary to advance First Foods goals. The lack of funding structures for First Foods means that tribal governments are prevented from using their cultural protocols and practices when conducting work with their First Foods. And the lack of First Foods funding structures encourages tribes to assimilate to modern agriculture to address food security for First Foods. Based on interviews with tribal governments, funding is needed for tribal government capacity, cultural resources and NEPA, outreach, education, workforce development, and funding that can facilitate increased access to First Foods.

Funding opportunities were identified based on recommendations from interviews and desk research, then analyzed for their applicability to First Foods and recommendations were made to improve funding for tribal governments. First Foods are communal food systems and require long-term, community-scale funding, so an outstanding barrier for current USDA funding structures is that they are built for individual farmers and individual businesses. When the existing funding structure does not provide a pathway for communal food systems, simply opening existing funding structures for tribal governments does not adequately address their population-scale and baseline tribal government function funding needs.

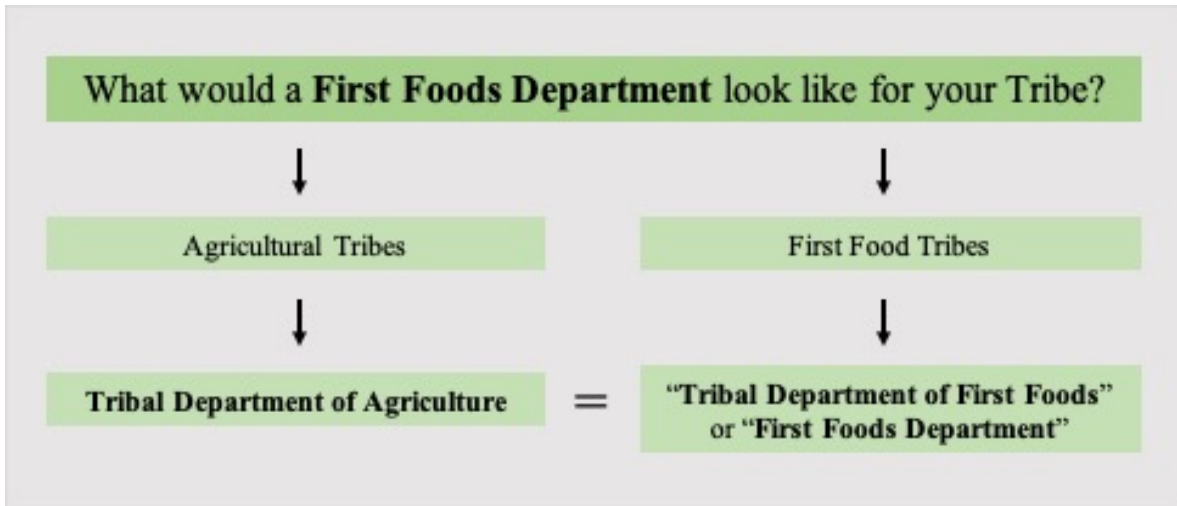
In recent years, the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative at the University of Arkansas has been suggesting that tribal governments assert their sovereignty through developing Tribal Food Codes and Tribal Departments of Agriculture that fit the unique needs of their cultures and food systems. (Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, 2020Building). As tribes develop Tribal Departments of Agriculture, the Native Farm Bill Coalition has made it a policy priority for the USDA to recognize Tribal Departments of Agriculture. The 638 pilot projects currently underway is a positive sign that 638 authority could potentially open base funding to support Tribal Departments of Agriculture (Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, 2020Building). **Funding often dictates what tribal government departments do, how they function, and through funding structures assimilate tribal governments by not directing funds to culturally-specific funding needs.**

Right now, tribal governments have a unique opportunity to influence the 638 funding planning being led by the Native Farm Bill Coalition. The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative is seeking Tribal model departments to serve as templates for Tribal Departments of Agriculture. The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative is recommending that Tribes start designing their own unique Tribal Departments of Agriculture, in their own image (Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, 2020Building). By showing

a variety of Tribal model departments, food policy advocates can demonstrate the need for flexible funding to accommodate the diversity of food cultures.

So the question to PNW tribes is:

- What would a First Foods Department look like? Or a Department of First Foods?
- What funding would be needed to support this Department?



Unfortunately, until 638 funding is secured, tribal governments must secure their own funding if they are interested in developing model departments. And in the meantime, tribal governments and First Foods leaders should stay abreast of policy development with the Intertribal Agriculture Council, Native Farm Bill Coalition, Indigenous Food & Agriculture Initiative and other national and regional organizations.

Recommendation to PNW Tribal Governments:

In preparation for future 638 funding, tribal governments should design First Foods Departments that model the unique needs of their food cultures. Policy advocates need tribal department models to demonstrate the diversity of tribal governments and the diverse needs of First Foods.

Suggested uses for this report

- Tribal governments may use this report to:
 - advocate for increased funding for First Foods.
 - understand how funding is impacting their tribal government's capacity to protect and increase First Food abundance for future generations.
 - identify sources of funding for First Foods.
 - learn about national policy proposals that could increase tribal government funding for First Foods (for example, upcoming 638 funding for Tribal Departments of Agriculture).
- Tribal organizations such as the Intertribal Agriculture Council or Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians (ATNI) may use this report to address the specific regional needs that PNW tribal governments need for First Foods and Treaty Rights.
 - Build regional consensus between tribal governments on the design of 638 Tribal Departments of Agriculture to meet the needs of First Foods Departments within tribal governments.
- Policymakers may use policy recommendations from this report to address funding gaps for First Foods and develop funding mechanisms for tribal governments.
- First Foods advocates may use this report to better understand the economic system underlying First Foods.
- USDA policymakers may use this report to develop funding opportunities that facilitate the US government upholding treaty obligations and make equitable funding for tribal governments.

Suggested Next Step

Prepare for Tribal Departments of First Foods

The Native Farm Bill Coalition is advocating for 638 self-governance Tribal Departments of Agriculture funding. However, the funding tribal governments need for First Foods is different from the standard USDA agricultural funding programs currently available.

To PNW tribal governments:

- What would your Tribal Department of First Foods look like? What are your funding needs?

Regional discussions are needed in anticipation for 638 Tribal Departments of Agriculture, so that First Foods do not get left out.

To PNW tribal governments:

- If tribal governments could get PL 93-638 or self-governance compact funding for First Foods Departments, what funding is needed for First Foods?
- How are the funding needs for First Foods unique and different from agriculture?

Based on interviews, PNW tribes are more likely to get funding that they need for First Foods if we design the funding now, rather than have the USDA roll out the same funding that they already provide.

Resources

Leading policy advocates and resources:

These organizations are drafting policy and laying the groundwork that will support food sovereignty for tribal governments and tribal producers.

[Intertribal Agriculture Council](#) (IAC)

[Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative](#), University of Arkansas
[Developing a Department of Agriculture within your tribal government](#)
[Model Tribal Food and Agriculture Code](#)

[Native Farm Bill Coalition](#)

[First Nations Development Institute](#) (FNDI)
[Seed Saving and Seed Sovereignty](#)

[Native American Agricultural Fund](#) (NAAF)
[Native Agricultural Statistics](#)
[Financial Tools](#)

[Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance](#) (NAFSA)

[North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems](#) (NATIFS)

Appendix

Appendix A: About Tribal Government participants

Overview of participating Tribes

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI) is a federally recognized confederation of more than 27 bands, originating from Northern California to Southern Washington. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians include Clatsop, Chinook, Klickitat, Molala, Kalapuya, Tillamook, Alsea, Siuslaw/Lower Umpqua, Coos, Coquille, Upper Umpqua, Tututni (including all the lower Rogue River bands and those extending up the coast to Floras Creek and down to Whales Head), Chetco (including all of the villages from Whales Head to the Winchuck River), Tolowa, Takelma (including the Illinois Valley/mid-Rogue River and Cow Creek peoples), Galice/Applegate and Shasta. Each of these Tribes has a unique individual history, culture and legal relationship with the federal government, which was brought to be incorporated into the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. Ancestors of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz spoke at least 10 different base languages. The Coast/Siletz Reservation is located on the Central Oregon coast.

(Oregon Department of Human Services, n.d.)

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) is a union of three Tribes: Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla. The CTUIR has over 3,100 Tribal Members. Nearly half of those Tribal Members live on or near the Umatilla Reservation located in Northeastern Oregon near Pendleton. CTUIR is governed by a Constitution and bylaws adopted in 1949. The governing body is the nine-member Board of Trustees, elected every two years by the General Council. In 1855, the three Tribes signed a treaty with the U.S. government, in which it ceded over 6.4 million acres to the United States. In the treaty, the Tribes reserved rights to fish, hunt and gather foods and medicines such as roots and berries, and pasture livestock on unclaimed lands.

(Oregon Department of Human Services, n.d.)

The Karuk Tribe is Federally Recognized. The Karuk Tribe's government-to-government relationship with the US Federal Government was established in 1851. However, the lack of formal contact with the Spanish according to the terms of the Treaty of Limits (1828) and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), left the United States' jurisdiction over Karuk lands dubious, and it continues to be disputed today. In 1851, Karuk tribal people met with the Redick McKee US Senate delegation, and participated in treaties signed in Weitchpec, Somes Bar, and near the mouth of the Scott River. That government-to-government relationship continues to the present day; however, there was a reduction and eventual termination of services following WWII and during the Termination era of the 1950's. Federal Recognition was reaffirmed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs officially in January of 1979.

(Karuk Tribe, 2020)

The Klamath Tribes consist of the Klamath, Modoc and Yahooskin Peoples. The present-day Klamath Indian Reservation consists of 12 small, non-contiguous parcels of land in Klamath County. These fragments are generally located in and near the communities of Chiloquin and Klamath Falls. The Tribes have established comprehensive unity by fostering the enhancement of spiritual and cultural values through a government whose function is to protect human and cultural resources and Treaty Rights, and to provide for the development and delivery of social and economic opportunities. There are over 5,700 enrolled members in the Klamath Tribes, with the government headquarters centered in Klamath County, Oregon.
(Oregon Department of Human Services, n.d.)

Termination Policy and the dispossession of land and natural resources

Two of the tribal governments in this study, the Klamath Tribes and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, were targeted for termination and experienced a dramatic loss of land, the effects of which are still felt today.

The Termination Era 1953-1970

Congress adopted termination-the abolition of Indian reservations and the removal of all governmental power from Indian tribes-as the United States' Indian policy in the 1950's and applied the policy to numerous tribes. Termination, however, had devastating effects on tribal autonomy, community, and economic welfare. Consequently, the United States soon abandoned the policy experiment. But Congress has failed both to fully repeal the termination acts and to permit the terminated tribes to return to the same status as all other Indian groups. Though the termination experiment was abandoned long ago, most of the terminated tribes and tribal members still suffer from the loss of autonomy and economic and psychological damage caused by termination. (Walch, 1983, p. 1181)

Most of the members of Congress on the committees responsible for Indian affairs were from Western states, where the pressure from developers and business interests was particularly strong to open Indian lands for sale and timber harvest (Walch, 1983, p. 1185). In Oregon, demand for natural resources and commercial interests by political leaders made tribes a direct target for Termination (Walch, 1983). Timber harvest in Oregon had greatly increased during World War II leading to the extraction of old growth Port Orford Cedar from the Oregon coast and pine from the Klamath Basin. "Eisenhower's secretary of the interior was former Oregon governor Douglas McKay, who spoke for powerful timber and water resource developers in the West. There is evidence that McKay wanted his home state to serve as a showcase for the new direction in Indian policy...In the Klamath situation, other forces were involved—the actions of a coercive federal government eager to force termination and the attractions of the extensive ponderosa-pine stands on the reservation" (Robbins, 2002).

The Klamath Tribes Reservation

"By 1873, Tribal members were selling lumber to Fort Klamath and many other private parties, and by 1896 the sale to parties outside of the reservation was estimated at a quarter of a million board feet. With the arrival of the railroad in 1911, reservation timber became extremely valuable. The economy of Klamath County was sustained by it for decades. By the 1950's the Klamath Tribes were one of the wealthiest Tribes in the United States. We owned and judiciously managed for long term yield, the largest remaining stand of Ponderosa pine in the west. We were entirely self-sufficient. We were the only tribes in the United States that paid for all the federal,

state and private services used by our members” (The Klamath Tribes, n.d.). In 1973 the remaining reservation land was sold and shareholders received lump-sum payments, and Congress turned 700,000 acres of the Klamath forest into the Winema National Forest (Robbins, 2002).

Siletz Coast Reservation

Tribes from across western Oregon were confederated together on the Siletz Coast Reservation headquartered by an Indian Agent at the Siletz Agency. “All able bodied persons were forced to labor at these farms, which rarely produced well, and then the people would have to scramble to prepare enough salmon, shellfish, elk and deer meat to get them through the winter” (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d.). The climate and geography of the reservation along the Oregon coast was ill-suited for crop agriculture, but rich in timber.

Within 10 years of the reservation being established, commercial interests within the reservation began a series of forced reductions to the reservation without compensation to the tribes. Further, commercial rights were withheld from the tribes, eliminating any option of economic development from timber until the Allotment era when 191,000 acres were deemed “Surplus Lands” and sold away. “Just compensation did not happen. Sale of the land occurred for a nominal price of \$142,000 for 192,000 acres. The land, which consisted of old growth timber, was purchased by the U.S. for a price of 74¢ an acre. Only by ceding the majority of their remaining lands did the Siletz Tribes finally received recognition of commercial rights to 3,200 acres of timberland randomly scattered throughout the original reservation” (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, p. 14)

In 1954, the Klamath Tribes were terminated under the Klamath Termination Act and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians were terminated under the Western Oregon Termination Act (Fixico, Donald, n.d.)

Restoration to Federal Recognition

In 1977, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians became the second tribe in the nation and the first in Oregon to achieve Restoration as a Federally Recognized Indian Tribe. In 1980, CTSI regained approximately 3,600 acres of scattered parcels administered by the Bureau of Land Management under the Siletz Reservation Act (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, n.d., p. 15). Today, much of the original reservation has been converted to private timber land or National Forest.

Klamath Restoration Act H.R. 3554 passed in August 27, 1986. The Klamath Tribes were the only tribe to be “restored” without a land base, or return of land, however, they retained Treaty Rights in the 1954 treaty boundary area of southern Oregon (Oregon State Legislature, n.d.). Today, much of the original reservation has been converted to private land or National Forest.

Loss of Land

See below, maps showing homelands, reservations and current landholdings. Today, many tribes have to buy back land to restore their land base.

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

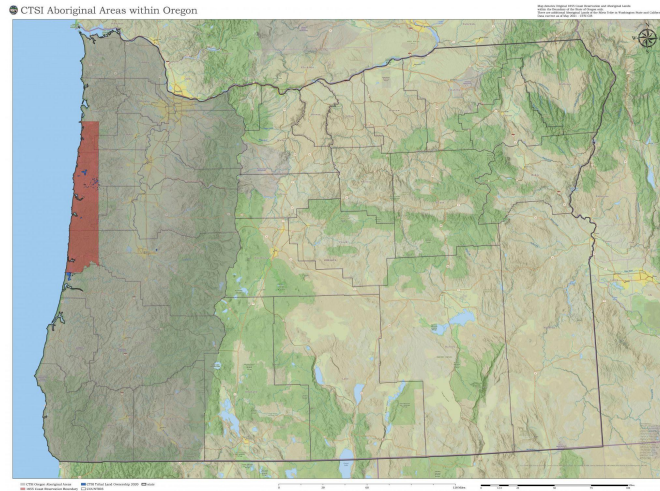


Figure 4: Ancestral Area and original reservation. Note the current land owned by CTSI is in blue (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, May 2021).

The dark area shows ancestral territory within Oregon. The red shows the original reservation area, which is approximately 5% of the Tribes’ collective ancestral territory.

Current land holdings are 1.5% of the original reservation and .0832% of the Tribes’ total ancestral territory.

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

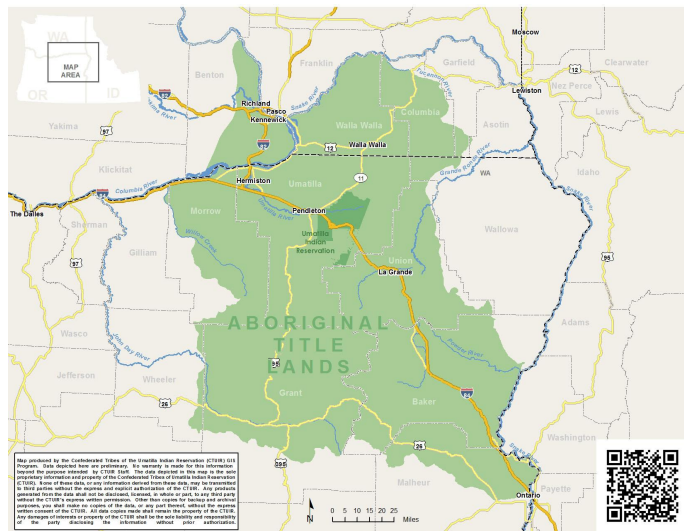


Figure 5: Ancestral area and current landholdings.

All green areas indicate ancestral territory. The dark green indicates current landholdings, which is approximately 2.68% of their ancestral territory.

Source: <https://gis.ctuir.org/standard-maps/#Aboriginal%20Title%20Lands%20Map>

Karuk Tribe



Figure 6: Map of Karuk Aboriginal Territory (California and Oregon, U.S.) with overlapping National Forest areas. The Ti Bar Demonstration Project site co-management initiative is located approximately halfway between the towns of Orleans and Happy Camp. Map by Jill Beckmann, Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources. (Diver, S., 2016)

The black outlines ancestral territory. The magenta indicates current landholding, which is approximately 0.164% of their ancestral territory.

The Klamath Tribes



Figure 7: Klamath Tribes' homeland (ceded lands), Reservation boundary in Treaty and ultimate Reservation boundary. (Hatcher et al., 2017)

All colored areas indicate ancestral territory. Today, the Klamath Tribes have approximately 5,300 acres, which is approximately 0.023% of their ancestral territory.

Appendix B: Funding from the Department of the Interior (DOI)

Below is a selection of BIA and other Department of the Interior (DOI) funding opportunities that could be applicable to First Foods and conservation.

Conservation Law Enforcement Officer Program

The Conservation Law Enforcement Officer Program¹⁸ offers competitive funding to Tribes to hire conservation law enforcement officers to protect natural resources on Tribal lands (Indian Affairs, n.d.-a).

Federally-recognized Tribes are eligible to apply for CLEO funding if:

1. The Tribe is responsible for managing fish and wildlife resources on lands held in Trust status.
2. The Tribe has established Tribal Fish and Wildlife Codes that are enforceable through an established court system.
3. The Tribe commits to funded CLEO positions obtaining Federal Law Enforcement Training Certification, or a recognized equivalent, within one year of the position being filled.
4. The Tribe has an established Law Enforcement Handbook or adopts the BIA Law Enforcement Handbook.

How to Apply:

New applications for CLEO funding are considered every 5 years. See website for information on 2024 CLEO applications and deadlines. Successful applicants may be awarded up to \$47,000 per CLEO, per year.

(Indian Affairs, n.d.-a)

Recommendation:

Make more funding available for tribes, so that funds are not competitive and tribes can support long-term employment for this purpose. Some tribes may need more than one staff position, so the funding amount should be increased to meet the needs of different tribes.

¹⁸ For more information about the Conservation Law Enforcement Officer Program, visit:

<https://www.bia.gov/service/competitive-fisheries-wildlife-recreation-programs/conservation-law-enforcement>

Tribal Youth Initiative Program

The Tribal Youth Initiative Program supports projects that engage and educate Tribal Youth towards careers related to natural resource management in the context of fisheries, wildlife, and outdoor recreation.¹⁹ The Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreation provides competitive funding to federally-recognized Tribes and Tribal Organizations' programs to engage Tribal youth in natural resource management work and prepare them for careers related to fisheries, wildlife and outdoor recreation (Indian Affairs, n.d.-e).

Federally-recognized Tribes and Tribal Organizations may submit project proposals to the Tribal Youth Initiative Program contact at their Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Regional Office. Project proposals may be inclusive of Tribal youth up to and including 26 years of age. Each application may request between \$2,000 - \$50,000 in project funding (Indian Affairs, n.d.-e).

Previously Funded Tribal Youth Initiative Projects

Karuk Tribe's Tayáv Papírish Project

Willow gathering during youth field trip. Students learn about the cultural value of basket willow while removing invasive plants that encroach willow patches, such as Himalayan blackberry.

Tribal youth inclusion is supported throughout the Karuk Tribe's Tayáv Papírish (Plant Selection) Project of 2022. In coordination with the Mid Klamath Watershed Council and University of Washington, the Karuk Tribe co-hosted a restoration field trip for 4-6th graders. The students participated in invasive plant removal, traditional basket willow gathering, and riparian plan community mapping using drone technology throughout their ancestral homelands of the middle Klamath River basin. (Indian Affairs, n.d.-e)



¹⁹ For more information on the Tribal Youth Initiative Program, visit:

<https://www.bia.gov/service/competitive-fisheries-wildlife-recreation-programs/tribal-youth>

Indian Youth Service Corp (IYSC)

The Indian Youth Service Corps (IYSC)²⁰ is a Department of the Interior (DOI) initiative designed to engage Native youth in meaningful public service projects on federal and Tribal lands for the benefit of Native communities.

Under IYSC, Tribal Nations, Tribally-affiliated organizations, and corps can enter into cooperative agreements with certain federal agencies to fund youth projects related to natural resources; parks and recreation; environmental conservation and restoration; infrastructure and construction; energy; and a broad range of cultural, historic, and archaeological resources. These projects provide education, employment, and training to Native American and Alaska Native individuals ages 16-30 (or veterans up to the age of 35) and can serve as an invaluable community resource and hiring pipeline to careers in several critical fields.

IYSC funding spans several fields to meet the diverse needs of Indian Country. Youth activities and training opportunities vary depending on the nature of the funded project but can include: hands-on crew work, restoration of trails and ceremonial sites, scientific fieldwork, fire and forestry management, watershed restoration, invasive species removal, habitat surveying, climate mitigation activities, infrastructure projects, research projects, oral histories, language revitalization, agriculture and food sovereignty, community education, and more.

In 2023, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) allocated nearly \$3.5 million to establish IYSC pilot projects in partnership with Tribal Nations and qualified youth and conservation corps.

Federally-recognized Tribes, Tribally-affiliated organizations, and corps seeking information about IYSC project funding for FY 2024 and beyond may contact the acting Indian Youth Service Corps coordinator at OTSYouth@bia.gov.
(Indian Affairs, n.d.-c)

FY 2023 awarded pilot project descriptions are available on the website. In the pilot year, funding was not available to Federally recognized tribes and only funding positions working for non-tribally owned or controlled organizations. In order for tribes to have the capacity to further tribal youth employment, funding is needed to retain tribal professionals within tribal communities.

Recommendation:

This program could make funding available to tribes to employ youth in cultural resources within their communities. Training and education are beneficial to youth to introduce them to different professions and build interest in cultural resources.

²⁰ To learn more about the Indian Youth Service Corps, visit:
<https://www.bia.gov/service/iysc>

Appendix C: Example of DOI funding that will soon be available to tribal governments

DOI Land and Water Conservation Fund

Description:

“The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was established by Congress in 1964 to fulfill a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources and cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans.” (Department of the Interior, n.d.). In 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) authorized \$900 million annually in permanent funding for LWCF. Prior to the GAOA, funding for LWCF was reliant on annual Congressional appropriations (Department of the Interior, n.d.). Recently, the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior announced a proposed a joint investment of \$2.8 billion in fiscal year 2025 through the GAOA and the Interior Department proposes \$8 million to establish a new Tribal LWCF Land Acquisition program (USDA Press, 2024). Tribal governments will be eligible for the first time to directly participate in the LWCF to acquire lands for natural and cultural resource conservation and recreation access.

Paid for by oil and gas leases

“The primary source of revenue for the LWCF is from Federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. The LWCF is based on a simple concept: take revenues from the depletion of resources –offshore oil and gas – and use them to conserve other resources: parks, wildlife refuges, forests, open spaces, trails and wildlife habitat.” (Department of the Interior, n.d.)

Analysis:

Currently, funded programs under the Department of the Interior (DOI) include the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Park Service (NPS) who provide grant programs and federal acquisition programs. While some funds are distributed directly to states and local communities through grant programs, Tribes have been directed to work with States’ grant programs to secure LWCF funding for recreation and conservation projects. (Department of the Interior, n.d.) In 2025, as LWCF awards funding to tribal governments, any land acquired with LWCF funding may require public access to consistent with the purposes of the LWCF and other program criteria (USDA Press, 2024).

Recommendation:

Tribal governments should be able to restrict public use and access to land acquired with LWCF funding, because they do not have the staffing capacity for rangers like Federal agencies. Tribal governments may also need to protect sensitive habitats and cultural resources.

Federal Land Acquisition Programs

The BLM, NPS, and FWS can all use LWCF money to acquire land. And “Tribes can collaborate with agencies to support Federal land acquisition projects funded by LWCF.” (Department of the Interior, p. 4)

Recommendation:

Land purchased for protection purposes, such as a wildlife refuge, should not impede First Foods access.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

Lands acquired by FWS with LWCF funding become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System or National Fish Hatchery System. Lands and waters acquired with the LWCF must meet the following conservation priorities:

- 1.) recovery of the threatened and endangered species where land acquisition is required by the recovery plan;
- 2.) implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan; and
- 3.) conserving migratory birds of conservation concern.

(Department of the Interior, p. 4)

Recommendation:

Ideally, the Klamath Tribes would be able to reacquire land and water to protect C'waam and Koptu (Lost River and shortnose sucker) endangered species and First Food for the Klamath Tribes. Currently, the Klamath Tribes only have the option of supporting FWS to use LWCF funding to acquire land and water.

Conservation and protected areas have a history of intentionally preventing tribes from exercising Treaty Rights. Having land designated as National Wildlife Refuge should not impede on the Klamath Tribes' Treaty Rights.

Appendix D: NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant award data

Below is a list of tribal governments or projects claiming affiliation with Indigenous people which were awarded RCPP funding between 2020-2023.

Also listed are projects claiming affiliation or partnership with “Tribes”, “Tribal lands”, “BIPOC”, “Indigenous”, “Native people”, “Native Hawaiian”, “Indigenous Food System”, “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”, “Alaska Native landowners”, but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Note the color coding for Table 4 below.

Key:




	Awarded directly to a tribal government
	Awarded project identifies tribal government, but funding arrangement or sharing is unknown.
	Awarded project claiming affiliation or partnership with “Tribes”, “Tribal lands”, “BIPOC”, “Indigenous”, “Native people”, “Native Hawaiian”, “Indigenous Food System”, “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”, or “Alaska Native landowners”, but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to Tribal Governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2023	AFA	Red River Basin Commission	ND	<p>North Dakota and Minnesota Supply Chain Soil Health Partnership</p> <p>The North Dakota/Minnesota Supply Chain Soil Health Partnership project will work with producers to increase adoption of climate-smart and soil health practices and systems in the northern Great Plains. Adoption of climate-smart ag/soil health practices, particularly no-till and cover crops, has generally lagged in the northern Great Plains when compared to other growing regions such as the Southeast and Midwest. The short growing season in the northern Great Plains can complicate adoption of cover crops. The partnership in this project recognizes the importance of including Historically Underserved producers in the project and intends to work with CCAs to ensure that outreach and education is carried out to their client producers who qualify as HU. As part of its ongoing programming, the Trusted Advisor Partnership will continue engagement with Tribes to explore how Tribal producers and communities could benefit from these activities.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Prairie Grasslands Region</p>	\$20,000,000
2023	AFA	Oregon Agricultural Trust	OR	<p>Restoring, Protecting, and Supporting Tribal Connection to Native Oak Habitat</p> <p>Oregon's biodiverse oak savannas and woodlands hold immense ecocultural value. This project's three interrelated goals are to 1) restore native oak habitat by reintroducing traditional disturbance regimes, 2) permanently protect private agricultural lands with associated oak habitats from development and fragmentation and 3) facilitate access to restored and protected properties for Native people for harvest, cultural purposes and stewardship. The Oregon Agriculture Trust's priority area for this project are Oregon's Lane and Linn Counties in the Upper Willamette Valley.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Western Waters</p>	\$9,232,000
2022	AFA	one.two.five Benefit Corporation	OH	<p>Financing Climate Smart Agriculture in Ohio's Miami Valley</p> <p>Targeting an urban and rural network of BIPOC farmers as well as non-BIPOC farmers, the Financing Climate Smart Agriculture project will spur the adoption of NRCS-based conservation practices and systems designed to enhance soil quality and soil carbon storage. This project will advance the most pressing issues for climate smart agriculture, including soil carbon capture and retention by establishing a pay-for -performance compensation approach for farmers who adopt climate-smart agriculture practices and systems. The project area encompasses a diverse landscape of urban and rural and small and large farms and is home to over 1 million inhabitants, 5,000 farms and 8,000 producers spread across six counties.</p>	\$2,900,000
2023	Classic	Changemakers Community Economic Development Corporation	HI	<p>Ainapreneur Rural Farmer Conservation Collective</p> <p>The goal of Hiiaka Function Project is to reverse climate change by growing healthy soil that captures and stores carbon. To achieve this goal, Hiiaka Function will utilize biochar to create healthy soil and store carbon. By the end of year one, Hiiaka Function will create a biochar-use educational program for Native Hawaiian organizations and farmers. By the end of year two, Hiiaka Function will create a trained biochar soil workforce to create, distribute and measure the effectiveness of biochar for Native Hawaiian organizations and farmers. At the end of five years, Hiiaka Function will distribute biochar to 20 Native Hawaiian organizations and farmers with degraded soil through NRCS financial assistance contracts.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$1,304,878

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2023	Classic	Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians	MI	<p>Tribal Stream and Michigan Fruitbelt Collaborative</p> <p>The Tribal Stream and Michigan Fruitbelt Collaborative's primary goal is the preservation and restoration of the fragmented multi-tribal fisheries and wildlife populations in northwest Lower Michigan. These natural resources face challenges posed by the modern transportation network's disruption and unsustainable development. The Anishinaabeg people heavily depend on stream crossings within the contemporary transportation system as vital access points, enabling them to exercise their Treaty-protected rights to hunt, fish, trap, and gather resources within the 1836 Treaty of Washington Ceded Territory. Led by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, one objective of this project is to rectify 29 problematic stream crossing structures throughout the Ceded Territory. Furthermore, the local waterways and wildlife corridors face additional threats from escalating development pressures. Particularly concerning are the areas proximate to water bodies jointly managed by tribal governments for both commercial and subsistence purposes. To ensure the protection of vital groundwater supplies and to maintain the viability of these pivotal wildlife corridors, a second objective will be undertaken safeguarding 3,700 acres with perpetual conservation easements which will significantly limit development and maintain rainwater infiltration.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Great Lakes Region</p>	\$20,359,756
2023	Classic	Wildlife Mississippi	MS	<p>Upper Pearl River At-Risk Species and Source Water Protection Project, Phase III</p> <p>The Upper Pearl River At-Risk Species and Source Water Protection Project Phase III will protect 10,500 acres through U.S.-held, high restrictive perpetual easement on private land, 1,200 acres of a 10-year rental agreement on tribal land of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and 5,000 acres of entity held easements utilizing non-USDA funds, and 500 acres of Longleaf Pine and bottomland hardwood restoration. Through this project, Wildlife Mississippi will prevent future land-use conversions that would eliminate habitats for native wildlife and worsen water quality in the river for maintaining populations of two at-risk aquatic turtles and up to 11 other species considered Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the state. The project area includes the last remaining portion of unprotected, privately owned land upstream of Mississippi's largest source of surface water used for drinking and protected lands to the north and its main tributaries. The reservoir supplies drinking water to more than 200,000 homes and businesses of the majority-African American city of Jackson.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area</p>	\$25,000,000
2023	Classic	Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation	MT	<p>The Blackfeet Tribe and project partners will provide sprinkler irrigation as on farm/ranch improvements to address conservation priorities as established by the Blackfeet Agricultural Resource Management Plan. These conservation activities will be located on both Tribal and Bureau of Indian Affairs) irrigation projects and along rivers and streams in all six of the Blackfeet Nations watersheds. This allows the Blackfeet Water Department to put water rights onto the land and improve tribal farms and ranches in the process. It also provides tribal producers with the opportunity to improve their forage production for their livestock operations.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area</p>	\$15,350,610

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2023	Classic	Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust	ME	<p>Headwaters Restoration</p> <p>The Penobscot Indian Nation and the US Fish and Wildlife Service have partnered for the Headwaters Restoration project which will improve fish and aquatic organism passage while restoring and enhancing instream habitat for Eastern brook trout in the mainstem and tributaries of the Kennebago River and in Alder Stream. This project's goals include enhanced climate resilience, a more natural flow regime and sediment transport, and habitat connectivity and associated fish and wildlife benefits.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area</p>	\$2,439,024
2022	Classic	O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council	HI	<p>O'ahu North Shore Working Wetlands</p> <p>The O'ahu North Shore Working Wetlands project will focus on strategically enhancing wetland management of lowland agricultural operations on O'ahu's North Shore in order to sustain both indigenous cropping systems and critical habitat for endangered Hawaiian waterbirds. A combination of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), biocultural restoration techniques and other conservation practices will be used to remove invasive species, restore native wetland species, and help create a more climate resilient indigenous food system. Since 2020, Oahu RC&D has worked with NRCS and local partners to inventory opportunities for indigenous agriculture and wetland management on Oahu's North Shore. This project will benefit from this analysis as locations ripe for restoration have already been identified.</p>	\$3,341,099
2022	Classic	Wildlife Mississippi	MS	<p>Upper Pearl River At-Risk Species and Source Water, Phase II</p> <p>Phase II of the Upper Pearl River At-Risk Species and Source Water Protection Project will build on current efforts underway in phase I of the project to protect, restore and sustainably manage native forest habitats, associated riparian and wetland areas. Wildlife Mississippi and four partners will use conservation easements to protect critical farmland, forest land and Tribal lands to safeguard the last remaining portion of unprotected private lands upstream of Mississippi's largest source of drinking water for the majority-African American city of Jackson. Project activities will also protect and enhance critical habitat for migratory birds and a turtle species listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Partner contributions provided by the Carbon Fund will be used to report on the carbon sequestration benefits of the project.</p>	\$2,883,929
2021	Classic	Gila River Indian Community	AZ	<p>Canal 15</p> <p>The Gila River Indian Community proposes to protect soil productivity and conserve scarce water resources for tribal growers by placing a new pipeline into the main irrigation lateral, Canal 15. Agriculture is the traditional economy of the Gila River Indian Community and is the core of the cultural and economic fabric of the Pima and Maricopa Tribes. Integrated with an innovative partnership between the Tribes and the Bureau of Reclamation, RCPP funding of this irrigation infrastructure will help ensure the continued economic well-being of the community and tribal growers.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$6,363,636

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2021	Classic	Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation	ID	<p>BOA OGOI Water/Land/Habitat Restoration Project</p> <p>The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation (Tribe) is a federally recognized tribe committed to developing, managing, and protecting tribal water and related resources. Tribal members are the direct decedents of those who lost their lives during the 1863 Bear River Massacre. The Massacre site is located on the northern bank of the Bear River, also called Boa Ogoi (Big River) by the Tribe, in Franklin County, Idaho. Over the past 160 years, the riparian habitat along the Bear River, and the river itself, have become severely degraded due to agricultural production. In many areas, the native vegetation has been overrun with non-native, invasive species resulting in negative impacts on terrestrial and aquatic habitats as well as loss of ecosystem functions such as nutrient uptake and sediment retention. The specific goal of the restoration is to create a site that evokes the ethos of the precolonial landscape but is resilient to climate change. The project will remove invasive species, re-establish native vegetation including culturally important medicinal and food species, and improve wildlife and fisheries habitat. Additionally, this project will improve water quality, restore and enhance existing wetlands and create additional ponds and wetlands to attract a greater abundance and diversity of wildlife. Partners will also develop a resource to connect present and future generations of the Tribe to their historical and cultural heritage and put project land into entity-held conservation easements. Battle Creek provides an opportunity to apply processed-based restoration to improve ecological and hydrologic functions on project land and land serviced by the Bear River.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$954,351
2021	Classic	Yakama Nation	WA	<p>Middle Columbia Steelhead Partnership</p> <p>The Yakama Nation and 14 non-governmental, state and federal partners will work with producers and landowners to restore Mid-Columbia Steelhead habitat with forest stand improvements, invasive weed removal and native species plantings, and the replacement of inefficient irrigation systems. The project will target farm operators whose property contains riparian, wetland or floodplain habitat that impact this Steelhead species, which is of cultural and ecological importance to the Yakama Nation.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Western Waters</p>	\$6,781,670
2021	Classic	Resource Institute, Inc.	NC	<p>EBCI Stream Habitat Improvement</p> <p>The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) Stream Habitat Improvement project will stabilize severely eroding and unstable streams in the Ravens Fork watershed working with a historically underserved population in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. The goals of this project include reduced stream sediment, improved aquatic habitat, improved plant diversity, and the planting of riparian buffers to offset carbon emissions.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$3,500,000

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2021	Classic	Minnesota Department of Agriculture	MN	<p>Irrigation Partnerships to Protect Groundwater</p> <p>The Irrigation Partnerships to Protect Groundwater partnership, consisting of over 30 entities and an Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, will improve irrigation water management and reduce energy use and nitrate leaching on approximately 120 irrigation systems in Central Minnesota. The partnership intends to tailor incentives to producers based on the sophistication of irrigation system adoption, and also plans to model conservation outcomes and analyze economic outcomes based on farmers enrolled in a Farm Business Management program.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$3,510,500
2021	Classic	Lummi Nation	WA	<p>Nooksack Watershed Restoration</p> <p>The Lummi Nation will partner with the Nooksack Tribe to support recovery of two native chinook salmon populations essential to the recovery of the threatened Puget Sound chinook species. The project will increase key habitat quality and diversity by creating pools with innovative, engineered logjams; increase the length of secondary and side channels; increase the availability of cold-water refuges; increase rearing habitat; and improve riparian forest conditions.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Western Waters</p>	\$4,827,100
2021	Classic	Roberts Conservation District	SD	<p>Northeast South Dakota Glacial Lakes Project</p> <p>The Roberts Conservation District, in partnership with seven supporting entities, will implement systems and practices to improve water quality in impaired lakes and streams in northeast South Dakota. One partner, the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, will support efforts to improve water quality on the Lake Traverse Reservation.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$2,425,424
2021	Classic	Colorado River Indian Tribes	AZ	<p>Colorado River Indian Reservation Conservation</p> <p>The Colorado River Indian Reservation lies entirely within the Lower Colorado River Valley which is the largest, hottest, and driest subdivision of the Sonora and Mohave Deserts. Colorado River Indian Tribes will improve soil health, irrigation systems and water management on Tribal Reservation farms to address Colorado River water quality degradation. The project will upgrade on-farm irrigation water conveyance efficiency and irrigation water management practices and address soil compaction, and salinity management.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Colorado River Basin</p>	\$4,000,000
2021	Classic	Wildlife Mississippi	MS	<p>Upper Pearl River At-Risk Species and Source Water</p> <p>Wildlife Mississippi and four partners will use conservation easements to protect critical farmland, forest land and Tribal lands to safeguard the last remaining portion of unprotected private lands upstream of Mississippi's largest source of drinking water for the majority-African American city of Jackson. Project activities will also protect and enhance critical habitat for migratory birds and a turtle species listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Partner contributions provided by the Carbon Fund will be used to report on the carbon sequestration benefits of the project.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area.</p>	\$5,597,900

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2021	Classic	Copper River Watershed Project	AK	<p>Restoring Fish Habitat in Copper River Watershed</p> <p>Copper River Watershed Project partners will help Alaska Native landowners replace undersized culverts with structures mimicking natural stream features and revegetate streambanks to improve fish habitat and return natural stream flows. Supporting state and municipal agencies will implement similar work on public lands. Landowners will incur less property damage resulting from extreme flood events. Participating municipalities will enjoy reduced road maintenance costs. Reconnection of up to 187.5 miles of high-quality stream habitat and 527 acres of lake habitat will benefit anadromous salmon populations, a culturally important subsistence resource.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area</p>	\$3,842,440
2021	Classic	Urban Agriculture Cooperative	NJ	<p>Northern NJ Small Farm Food Link Conservation Project</p> <p>The Urban Agriculture Cooperative will deliver technical and financial assistance to new and historically underserved urban farmers in Northern N.J. Implementation of seasonal high tunnels, composting facilities, cover crops and irrigation practices will improve soil health and irrigation water use efficiency, as well as help urban producers realize lower input costs and more production. Participating farms will also see new revenue streams from composting activities. The project will increase opportunities for black, Indigenous, people of color, women, immigrants, and new young farmers to participate in all aspects of the local food economy from production to retail. Historically underserved farmers pursuing land tenure will benefit and strengthen their linkages with rural farmers to bring more food to the urban residents who lack fresh food access.</p> <p>N/A Critical Conservation Area</p>	\$355,000
2020	Classic	Polk Soil & Water Conservation District	OR	<p>Polk County Oak Habitat Restoration 2020</p> <p>The Polk Soil and Water Conservation District plans to enhance and restore oak habitat and associated wildlife species on private lands in Polk County. The project will create habitat corridors that traverse the county, adding increased wildlife forage and unobstructed travel from and between neighboring counties. The partners also plan to acquire three permanently conserved tribal ancestral lands through the Willamette Wildlife mitigation fund, and to instill a deeper commitment to maintaining oak habitat among private landowners.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Columbia River Basin</p>	\$1,753,247
2020	Classic	Barry Conservation District	MI	<p>Thornapple-Kalamazoo Water Quality Partnership</p> <p>The Barry Conservation District aims to make measurable improvements and protect water quality and habitat for fish, wildlife, and invertebrates in the Gun, Rabbit, and Thornapple River Watersheds. The local partners, including the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, plans to build on existing community partnerships to implement the first farmer-led and landowner-led conservation practice implementation initiatives in the region.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Great Lakes Region</p>	\$762,740

Table 4: List of USDA NRCS RCPP awards which directed funding to a tribe or awarded projects claiming affiliation with tribes between 2020-2023.

Year	AFA	Awardee	State	Project description	Award
2020	Classic	Gila River Indian Community	AZ	<p>Canal 13 Lining Project</p> <p>The Gila River Indian Community project will protect and improve soil productivity and conserve water resources for more sustainable agricultural development on-reservation. Through partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation, the project will address upstream water quality degradation and associated soil quality degradation that occur due to upstream diversions.</p> <p>Critical Conservation Area: Colorado River Basin</p>	\$9,090,909

Key:

	Awarded directly to a tribal government
	Awarded project identifies tribal government, but funding arrangement or sharing is unknown.
	Awarded project claiming affiliation or partnership with "Tribes", "Tribal lands", "BIPOC", "Indigenous", "Native people", "Native Hawaiian", "Indigenous Food System", "Traditional Ecological Knowledge", or "Alaska Native landowners", but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Appendix E: NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) grant award data

Below is a list of NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants awarded to tribes or tribal-related projects since 2007. The green highlight indicates awards to tribal governments.

Key:

	Awarded directly to a tribal government
	Awarded project identifies tribal government, but funding arrangement or sharing is unknown.
	Awarded project claiming affiliation or partnership with “Tribes”, “Tribal lands”, “BIPOC”, “Indigenous”, “Native people”, “Native Hawaiian”, “Indigenous Food System”, “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”, or “Alaska Native landowners”, but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Table 6: Conservation Innovation Grants awarded since 2007 to tribal governments or tribal community affiliated projects (data retrieved on 3/31/2024 <https://cig.sc.egov.usda.gov/cig-projects>)

<p>Enhanced Satellite Imagery Analysis Providing for Invasive Species Control in the Chickasaw Nation The Chickasaw Nation OK 2021</p> <p>The project will apply an innovative approach using enhanced satellite imagery analysis for optimizing efforts to identify and clear invasive red cedar trees in the CN treaty territory. This proposal involves identifying land parcels that are most suitable for cedar removal through prescribed fire and the transfer of the associated methods for potential integration into the Rangeland Analysis Platform (RAP).</p>
<p>Tribal Lands Carbon and Co-Benefits Tool Indian Land Tenure Foundation AZ, CO, KS, NE, NM, OK, TX 2020</p> <p>The goal of this project is to develop and pilot an operational web-based tool to assess and quantify the co-benefits of enhanced land-based carbon sequestration produced through ecosystem conservation and restoration activities on tribal lands.</p>
<p>Increasing Native Producer and Community Access to Quality Water Resources First Nations Development Institute AZ, NM 2020</p> <p>First Nations Institute will work with two Native American organizations, taking a community-focused approach to empower Native American agricultural producers both individually and collectively to create, implement, and sustain conservation strategies that will address water quality and watershed management issues. They will develop a conservation planning training and build capacity to address watershed issues.</p>
<p>Innovative Approach to Controlling Medusahead at a Management Scale Burns Paiute Tribe OR 2019</p>

This project will test the applicability of the combination of prescribed fire, pre-emergent herbicide application, and seeding at controlling medusahead and revegetation with more desirable vegetation at a management scale and to compare the efficiency of indaziflam and imazapic within these treatment combinations.

Building Native American Capacity for Conservation of Grazing Lands

First Nations Development Institute | AZ | 2018

The project's goal is to develop resources that will build the capacity of Native producers to sustainably manage agricultural natural resources through developing conservation plans as well as monitoring and evaluating grazing systems. Two-year objectives are to: 1. Build local capacity in three communities on the Navajo Nation Reservation and at the Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona to develop conservation plans. 2. Develop A Conservation Evaluation & Monitoring Planning Guide for Native American Ranchers to support the evaluation and monitoring of grazing systems to meet natural resource objectives. 3. Document and publish three case studies of successful Native conservation plan development and implementation to encourage other Native producers to develop conservation plans.

Beginning Tribal Ranching Training Course

Hualapai Tribe | AZ | 2017

To create and implement a tribal ranching training course that teaches tribal youth and beginning ranchers sustainable grazing and livestock techniques and approaches. The project emphasizes outreach and one-on-one technical training with the Agriculture Program of the Hualapai Department of Natural Resources in collaboration with the University of Arizona Extension office.

Demonstration of an Advanced Distillation and Nutrient Separation Processor for Dairy Wastewater

Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians | WA | 2017

The primary goal of this project is to successfully build, install, and demonstrate the effectiveness of an Advanced Distillation and Nutrient Separation (ADNS) Processor on a dairy farm in Washington State.

Community Tiered Approach to Conservation Planning

First Nations Development Institute | AZ | 2016

First Nations Development Institute proposes to harness the momentum of the Association of Arizona Tribal Conservation Districts, an informal group of all 10 of the conservation districts in Arizona established by Tribal Council law. The project's goal is to create an adaptable process for Native American communities to engage multiple and diverse stakeholders in developing community-wide conservation plans, and for Native American producers to leverage this momentum and information to create their own conservation plans. The effect of the development of these conservation plans will be to increase the ability of Native American tribes, entities and producers to participate in USDA programs and grant opportunities.

Strengthening Arizona Tribal Conservation Districts

First Nations Development Institute | CO | 2015

The purpose of this project is to build the organizational capacity of a Native conservation association and the individual capacity of Native farmers and ranchers who are primarily in Arizona in a culturally-appropriate and -sensitive manner that will increase Native control of Native assets of natural resources and of a Native community-based organization.

Using carbon markets to finance grassland conservation and rangeland restoration on tribal lands

Indian Land Tenure Foundation | MN | 2015

The purpose of this project is to increase engagement and participation of Indian Tribes in greenhouse gas markets. ILT will adapt greenhouse gas protocols to address Tribal issues and complete pilot projects that generate carbon credits for sale in greenhouse gas markets.

Refining the Use Environmental DNA for Aquatic Species Detection

Burns Paiute Tribe | OR | 2015

The purpose of the proposed project is to refine existing environmental DNA (eDNA) techniques designed to detect and monitor rare, cryptic, and/or invasive species. eDNA is becoming widely used for detecting the presence of rare, cryptic, or invasive species. However, sampling is inconsistent and there are no known protocols for comprehensively sampling a stream or watershed. The project will target brook trout on the Lake Creek system in order to limit populations to promote Bull trout. Deliverables, development of comprehensive protocol for sampling eDNA for detection of rare and invasive species in a stream reach or watershed.

Ahtna Region Resource Assessment, EQIP Habitat Tool Development and Inter-Tribal Conservation District Technology Transfer: A Groundbreaking Project for Alaska

Copper River-Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Conservation District | AK | 2014

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has recognized Alaska Native Corporation as agricultural lands and subsistence food production and harvest as an agricultural product. Native private corporate ownership in Alaska is over 44 million acres. This has created a significant number of historically underserved and beginning farmers. In addition, tribal conservation districts are being developed to help serve these landowners in Alaska. Many of the traditional NRCS EQIP and other practices need to be adapted to Alaska and applied in new, innovative ways. In addition, tools such as ecological site descriptions are needed in Alaska to help effectively link NRCS programs and practices with beginning farmers and their unique subsistence resource production issues. This project will develop technical expertise on **wildlife, habitat** and forestry and provide advisory services to land managers for two native corporations and eight regional tribes. These activities will help NRCS better serve its primary clientele in Alaska and will help other tribal conservation districts recognize their opportunities to positively support sustainable subsistence food production in their districts.

The Value of Traditional Burning as a Means of Increased Acorn Production

American Indian Education Consultants, Inc. (AIEC) | CA | 2014

Conduct a Field Demonstration designed to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies that will enhance the agricultural production of acorn in accordance with NRCS standards resulting in a technological approach or a substantive method that can be used to augment agency technical guidance.

Using Innovative Techniques for Assessing Herbivore Animal Diet

Navajo Nation | AZ | 2014

Many unknowns exist regarding baseline data for natural resources on Native American reservations. Existing technologies to examine and assess wildlife diet are becoming more costly, time-consuming, and inefficient in their abilities to produce reliable results. This project will help alleviate both issues by introducing a new and innovative technology for assessing **wildlife diet** for a Native American tribal wildlife resource. The new conservation technology may prove more efficient at producing results for wildlife than the old method, will provide baseline data for the Native American tribal Fish and Wildlife Department, and will provide knowledge that can then be transferred to Native American tribal natural resources personnel for future use in conservation efforts. The main objectives of this study are to 1) use an innovative **conservation technology to assess wildlife diet for a socially and economically important natural resource: mule deer**, 2) provide baseline wildlife diet data to the Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife for said natural resource, 3) compare results from the new diet assessment technique to an older, well used technique and 4) transfer the knowledge from the innovative diet technique to the Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife for future conservation use.

Conservation Planning for Navajo Livestock Producers

First Nations Development Institute | CO | 2014

A development freeze (preventing the erection of buildings, homes and community infrastructure) on lands disputed between the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe persisted from 1966 until 1999 when it was repealed. Only now are these communities beginning to initiate new development in this area that depends heavily on farming and ranching for livelihoods. This project will build on First Nations' work with Navajo producers started in 2011 with funding from the USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach and others. These efforts revealed the need to transition first steps in conservation planning from USDA NRCS to the producers by developing a conservation process for Navajo producers in a manner that will balance traditional ecological stewardship with NRCS' requirements. 12,000 conservation plans on the Navajo Nation are stymied by the logjam created by lack of professional resources. This project will develop a conservation planning process, led by Navajo livestock producers on the Navajo Reservation, which will be offered as a template to USDA NRCS, the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Navajo Nation. The conservation planning process could have the potential to remedy the issue of pending conservation plans at the producer level on the Navajo Nation and could be replicated in other Navajo communities and by other tribes.

Native Capacity Building to Address Effective Drought Management

InterTribal Buffalo Council | SD | 2013

The Inter Tribal Buffalo Council sees a need for the formation and implementation of drought-related strategic plans for Native American Reservations within its Membership Regions. As evidenced by a lack of planning, few communities are prepared to engage in the formation and implementation of a drought planning process because of lack of know-how. The purpose of this project is to enhance Tribal system resilience to drought by developing models using the Tribal Bison Programs that can be used to demonstrate various technology transfer means and methods for use by other Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers and Indian Tribes. Specifically, an evaluation/assessment of the impacts of drought across member Tribes, their response to drought and the effectiveness of the responses will be used as the basis for regional trainings that will involve the adoption of the appropriate best management practices and associated technologies into each Tribe's Bison Management Plan. On line databases will be created for the Tribes that include a resource library for drought management including links to entities that forecast drought, assistance for drought response, and technical data would enable the Tribes to adequately prepare system responses to drought. Regional trainings will be provided on the development and usage of the Tribal databases and drought management resource library. Implementation of conservation technologies, management, practices, systems, procedures, and approaches will also be supported. This could include alternative feeding systems, water and range enhancements and fodder systems.

Adaptation of Forest Carbon Protocol to Include Tribal Lands

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation | WA | 2011

This project aims to overcome a variety of market-based barriers to entry for American Indians and Alaska Natives in the AFOLU sector. The project model has two components: it will adapt and implement approved forest carbon methodologies and protocols (e.g. afforestation, reforestation, improved forest management, and avoided conversion) to address issues involving tribal sovereignty; and it will create a streamlined system where adapted carbon methodologies can be applied with participation of tribes to determine baseline values of carbon sequestration, verify the implementation and maintenance of GHG benefitting practices, and determine GHG benefits (additionally) to successfully register these benefits in a commonly recognized carbon.

Growing fuel from the sun

Colville Confederated Tribes | WA | 2011

This project seeks to demonstrate the effectiveness of crop rotation sequencing, using canola in rotation with cereal crops, pastures and hay. This project will stimulate the development and adoption of an innovative conservation approach, while providing environmental enhancement and protection, and lead to the accelerated transfer of conservation practices and technologies within the Colville Confederated Tribes.

Demonstrate Innovative Approaches of Carbon Sequestration Strategies

College of Menominee Nation | WI | 2009

The purpose of this award is for the grantee to demonstrate the viability of carbon sequestration as a market mechanism tool for promoting environmental preservation, biodiversity, conservation, and sustainable development among tribes and their lands.

Biological Control of Leafy Spurge within the Exterior Boundaries of the Spirit Lake Nation

Spirit Lake Tribe | ND | 2009

This project aims to develop a systematic approach of processes and procedures for integrated leafy spurge control that is effective in long term control of the weed.

Grassland Restoration and Bison Management on American Indian Lands

InterTribal Bison Cooperative, via NFWF | SD | 2008

Centralize bison management activities on tribal lands. Project will inventory bison and their range ecosystems and provide data on long-term ecological trends.

Using Carbon Credits to Offset the Costs of Implementing Carbon Conservation Practices: Landowner Education and Development of a Carbon Credit Market Infrastructure for Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Coeur d'Alene Tribe, via NFWF | ID | 2008

Inform landowners of the developing market in carbon credits, develop carbon credit trading expertise, and improve **water quality, wildlife habitat and ecological resiliency of forest lands** on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation.

Improving Conservation of Wetland and Riparian Habitat Through Enhanced NWI Updates, Aquatic Weed Mapping, and Reed Canary Grass Control Demonstration Project

Confederate Salish and Kootenai Tribes | MT | 2007

The purpose of this award is for the grantee to develop promising conservation technologies, practices, systems and procedures that will aid in the identification, mapping and demonstration of effective Reed canary grass control and native plant re-establishment. Conservation of wealth and riparian Habitat on the Flathead Indian Restoration (FIR) of western Montana is complicated by ‘checkerboard’ land ownership. Lands containing wetland and riparian lands are owned, managed, or regulated by numerous tribal, Federal, State, or local government, or private stockholders. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSK) and other agency stakeholders often share common conservation goals and objectives that can not be effectively achieved independently. The resources conservation and management community on the Reservation is in need of accurate, up-to-date mapping of wetland and riparian resources for effective planning and coordination. In addition to land-use and development pressures, invasion and spread of invasive aquatic species pose a major threat to the health of aquatic ecosystems on grazing and forest lands within the Reservation. This project will improve conservation of wetland and riparian Habitat through:

- 1) enhanced National Wetland Inventory (NWI) and riparian mapping;
- 2) identification and mapping of aquatic weed infestations from 1m CIR and NAIP imagery;
- 3) implementation of demonstration projects for RCG control in representative wetland and riparian areas, and
- 4) development of technical guidance, and improved planning and management tools.

Planting People Project

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe | ND | 2007

Implement Community Conservation Projects on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation

Source: (NRCS, n.d.-b).

Data obtained with search for Awardee Name terms “tribe”, “tribal”, “Indian”, and “nation”.

Key:

	Awarded directly to a tribal government
	Awarded project identifies tribal government, but funding arrangement or sharing is unknown.
	Awarded project claiming affiliation or partnership with “Tribes”, “Tribal lands”, “BIPOC”, “Indigenous”, “Native people”, “Native Hawaiian”, “Indigenous Food System”, “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”, or “Alaska Native landowners”, but more research into individual projects would be needed to determine if any substantial funding would be directed to tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, or Native Hawaiian organizations or peoples.

Appendix F: Acronyms

BIA - Bureau of Indian Affairs

BLM - Bureau of Land Management

CTSI - Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

CTUIR - Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

DOI - Department of the Interior

IHS - Indian Health Service

KTAFF Committee - Klamath Tribes Agriculture and First Foods Committee

NAGPRA - Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act

NIFA - National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NOAA - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NRCS - Natural Resources Conservation Service

PNW - Pacific Northwest

USDA - United States Department of Agriculture

Appendix G: Additional Terminology

Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Indigenous, Native, Indian, Tribal.

The focus of this report is limited to American Indian or Alaska Native peoples, also referred to as Native American, Native, Indian and Tribal peoples. Data mentioning Native Hawaiian populations is included as a demonstration of organizations who claim to be Native or Indigenous-serving entities.

The Native Agriculture Fund explains that “we use the term Indian in the field of agriculture, despite concerns about its historical and contemporary implications primarily because of its presence in federal law. This usage reflects the complexity of cultural, legal and political dynamics that shape the way that Native communities navigate their identities and relationships within broader society” (Native American Agriculture Fund, 2023).

Tribal Member or tribal citizen

Each tribal government has their own unique enrollment requirements. Tribal members are citizens of three sovereigns: their tribe, the United States, and the state in which they reside. (National Congress of American Indians, n.d.-b)

Tribal community

For the purposes of this paper, tribal community refers to a group or groups of enrolled tribal members or descendants of a tribal government. It may also indicate the community location(s) close to a tribal government headquarters in reservations or towns. Tribal communities for one Tribe may be multiple hours travel away from each other because ancestral homelands can be large geographic areas. Outside of ancestral homelands, Native diaspora populations also often create communities in cities outside of their ceded territories and sometimes collectively with other Native diaspora.

Appendix H: Mainstream vs. First Foods

Table 1: (enlarged from page 7)
What makes First Foods’ food systems different from mainstream conventional food systems?

Mainstream Conventional Food System	First Foods Food System
<p>The Mainstream Conventional Food System is supported by <u>for-profit</u> economy.</p>	<p>Northwest Tribal First Foods System is supported by <u>communal</u> use and caretaking.</p>
<p>Federal funding <u>supports</u> production of staple crops and supports conventional agriculture financial viability and stability.</p>	<p><u>No systemic funding support</u> is available for First Food staple-foods or ecosystems (NW First Food examples: acorn, carmas, salmon, lamprey, deer, elk.)</p>
<p>Food system stability provided by government economic support systems for individual and family farmers, education, viability (e.g. price stability, crop insurance), farm and crop sustainability.</p>	<p>Food system sustained by individuals committed to cultural practice and sharing with community. First Food access relies on family and communal volunteering. Government economic support systems available to Tribal Governments do not fit or meet all needs.</p>
<p>Employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant employment opportunities with job growth. • Primary economic activity is in private industry • Stable employment for government employees is supported by baseline sustainable funding (USDA, and other agencies) which contributes to stability and productivity. 	<p>Employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities are rare for full-time work in First Foods (local jobs). • Primary economic activity is within tribal governments. • Less stable tribal government employment is dependent on grant funding (one-time grants common, renewable grants needed) leading to employment instability and turnover.
<p>The US government <u>does not have treaty obligations</u> to US farmers, corporations or industries.</p>	<p>The US government <u>has treaty obligations</u> to tribal governments, and tribal governments serve the collective needs of tribal citizens.</p>
<p>Funding is structured around individuals and businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional Food Systems require trade (exporting food away from community). • Funding systems are designed for individuals on a farm-by-farm basis without need to coordinate between farms or consider ecosystem impacts. • The current US government’s food system funding structure prioritizes limited-duration project funding or start-up loans. • Food System funding and policy provide protection for Conventional Agriculture production, but development and climate change are increasing concerns. • Conventional Food systems do not require food to be produced locally and farmers may choose to move or change their crop regardless of cultural suitability. • Because the funding structure is designed for commercial, for-profit businesses, many of the funding opportunities offered by the USDA require a 50% match. 	<p>Funding structure needed at community scale for cultural continuity and ecosystems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many First Foods are non-commercial, are considered sacred with cultural value. • Funding systems must enable tribal governments to work across jurisdictional boundaries at a landscape or ecosystem scale with neighboring tribal governments. • Food system policy and economic systems are needed that uphold Treaties by enabling tribal governments to ensure the abundance of First Foods in perpetuity. • Historic and ongoing damage to ecosystems make First Foods increasingly rare or threatened by development, climate change, and lack of systemic protections. • First Foods are local foods that are specific to areas and ecosystems within the ancestral homelands. Tribal cultural continuity are dependent on Food Systems. • Match requirements prevent tribal governments from applying for funding and economic development is an ongoing challenge for rural tribal governments.
<p>Government agencies receive <u>ongoing funding</u> for baseline needs and functions to support the food system needs for Mainstream Conventional Food Systems.</p>	<p>Tribal governments need <u>funding stability and sustainability</u> in order to carryout baseline First Foods work within their communities.</p>

Appendix I: Interview Questions

USDA Interviews

Interviews with staff from the following USDA Agencies:

Forest Service (FS)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Interview Questions:

- Please give a brief overview or description of the different collaborations or partnerships that you have with tribal governments in Oregon.
- Can you describe MOUs or tribal consultation that your Agency conducts?
- Can you give a brief description of the different types of grant assistance that you provide to tribes, farmers and businesses?
- Is the data regarding farm demographics that you serve available as public data?
- Do you have demographics of farmers receiving grants/aid from (FS or NRCS)?
- Are they able to share what tribal governments or tribal businesses/entities are receiving grant or funding through USDA?
- What grants/programs are tribes using?
 - How could I find out what programs or how much funding tribes are accessing?
- If a tribal government applies for funding for multiple properties, are they limited to 1 property at a time, or can they have multiple applications at the same time?
- Could you describe more details about the different conservation programs that you offer?
- Could you describe more details about the workforce development programs that you offer?

Discussion:

For Native American tribes who are wanting to use more of a conservation type of agriculture for cultural foods that will be communally managed for cultural purposes, but not for commercial purposes--what types of grants/programs/resources could individuals or tribal governments use to support their cultural foods?

Needs may include:

Land purchase

Labor (maybe workforce development)

Education

Science/monitoring

Discussion on the different grants/programs/resources.

Tribal Government Staff Interviews

Additional procedure for interviewing tribal government staff:

This research project is focused primarily on funding sources available from the U.S. government that are available to Native American tribal governments and citizens.

Recruitment for interviews will focus on Tribal government staff (tribal citizens or non-tribal) who may work in Natural Resources, Culture, Agriculture, Planning, Health, or other related department who may be involved in grant writing or grant seeking.

Tribal government staff may be a tribal citizen or non-tribal and will be asked if their tribal government requires an approved IRB prior to their participation in an interview. If the tribal government requires an IRB to interview tribal staff, the Co-PI (Sharla Strong) will be responsible for obtaining that IRB prior to the interview. The Co-PI (Sharla Strong) will work with ASU's university tribal liaison on the tribal government IRB request.

This study will include references to food sovereignty and cultural resources, but only to understand funding sources and will be based on publicly available information only. Sensitive cultural information is not the focus of this study.

Interview Questions:

Confidentiality:

- Would you approve if I listed you specifically as someone I interviewed in this project? Would you prefer to be anonymous? I can list responses as being from your tribe, but not name you specifically, if you prefer. And you can change your mind later.

Intro Qs:

- Can you briefly describe how your food programs were started?
- Where does your food program currently fit within your administrative structure?
 - Dept:
- What departments or programs in your tribe are involved with supporting your cultural food work? Collaborating depts?
 - NR, Culture, Health...
- Can you give a brief overview of how you are working to restore ancestral/cultural food and material availability?

General Funding Qs:

- Do you have a primary funding source that supports your food work?
- What grants, government funding, etc. are you using?
- When you think about annual or regular work that is needed for restoration activities or maintenance of cultural food places (like gathering areas). What are your workforce needs?
- Do you employ or contract with elders in the projects that you do?
- Volunteers? Or community involvement? #/year
- What do you see as the community role in your cultural foods care, maintenance, etc.?
- What positions in your tribe are working directly on food initiatives/projects?
 - # of staff? Different funding sources?
- What positions are indirectly helping? Like sessional or helpful in an annual event.

USDA funding Qs:

- What projects are you doing that are funded through USDA?
- Is USDA funding supporting cultural foods or mainstream foods?
- Can you share about your experience with the USDA funding and provide any constructive criticism?

General grant funding Qs:

- Are you actively looking for additional funding?
- What are you looking for in funding opportunities?
- Can you describe funding that has been successful for you?

Funding barriers Qs:

- Can you talk about capacity? Are there goals or projects that you need funding for, but have not found a funding source that fits?
- Are there limitations on certain funding opportunities that mean you are less likely to apply?
 - Match?
 - Indirect?
 - Data sovereignty? Cultural resource privacy?
 - Reporting requirements? Would you change something about the reporting?
- Are there restrictions on grants or funding that create barriers for your work? (like cannot purchase food?)
- Can you describe situations where you have decided not to accept funding?
- Can you describe situations where you have decided not to apply for funding?
- Do you talk to your tribal administration leadership about funding needs?

Funding in partnerships Qs:

- Have you received funding support from partners or partnered with groups on funding?
 - Can you describe how that went?
- Can you describe your preferences on funding arrangements in your partnerships?
- What capacity would be added if you had funding from partnerships?

Cultural Qs:

- Is there community discussion or known protocols around food access for the community versus tribal members selling cultural foods? Example: Salmon or plant foods?
 - Is communal food access important for your tribe?
 - Is selling cultural foods taboo in your culture?
- How does funding impact your tribal governments' food sovereignty?

Discussion:

- What policy recommendations would make it easier for Tribal Governments to grow and sustain cultural food programs?
 - Other needs?
 - Land purchase
 - Labor (maybe workforce development)
 - Education
 - Science/monitoring
-

Non-profit/NGO Interviews

Recruitment will be to interview non-profit or NGO staff focused on conservation, native plants, forestry, etc.

Interview Questions:

- Can you give a brief overview of the different projects that your organization is doing?
- Can you describe how you are able to financially support that work?
 - Grants, etc.
 - # of staff – how are they funded
 - Volunteers
 - What types of annual or regular practices are needed for restoration activities or maintenance?
 - What is a need that is not currently funded?
 - Can you talk about capacity? Are there goals or projects that you need funding for, but have not found a funding source that fits?
 - Are there restrictions on grants or funding that create barriers for your work?
 - What are your workforce needs?
 - Would additional funding help your cause? How? What types of need do you have?
- What projects are you doing that are funded through USDA?
- Are there limitations on certain funding opportunities that mean you can't apply (like match or indirect, or reporting requirements)?
- What types of grants do you wish existed?
- Are reporting requirements challenging or would you change something about the reporting?
- Please give a brief overview or description of the different collaborations or partnerships that you have with tribal governments in Oregon.
- What are you doing to help tribes who partner with you?
- What funding is shared with tribes to provide capacity for tribal participation?
- Do you compensate tribes for their staff time when they participate in meetings, consultation, etc.?
 - Do you reimburse for travel costs?
- Can you share about your business model? Strengths/weaknesses of that model?
- Can you share more about the sustainability challenges that your organization or organizations like yours face?

Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, University of Arkansas questions:

Tribal Dept. of Ag

- How would this be funded until Federal funding would be allocated?
- Does 638 funding mean that the tribes are essentially administering the exact same programs? Rather than administering the exact same programs that USDA offers, would 638 funding be able to fund staffing for a cultural foods program?
- How would a nonprofit work with 638 funding?

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“I just think there needs to be more funding available for First Foods, the cultural plant work, whether it's restoration or it's monitoring. In the future, I hope to see more available funding for Tribes that's specifically directed for First Food work.”

Cheryl Shippentower, Plant Ecologist

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation



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