

## **Indigenous Sacred Places and Cultural Protections Overview**

Native Nations and Indigenous Peoples have been here since time immemorial. We stand together to protect our sacred places, medicines, burials, ancestors, cultural items, and ceremonial ways, and to ensure Indigenous voices and representation lead in these important matters pertaining to our rights, freedoms, and ways of life. These represent a sacred duty and traditional law, which are indigenous to these lands. The following is an overview of important issues that must be addressed:

- Tribal consultation is not enough. Free, prior, and informed consent should be adopted in all policies, procedures, and legislation by the President and Congress.
- The U.S. should engage in a Truth and Reconciliation process where hearings are held that focus upon sacred places and cultural protection among Native Nations. Included within these hearings, should be an investigation into the harms that the Doctrine of Discovery, intergenerational trauma, man camps, destructive practices in extractive industries, land taking, and development have done to our peoples.
- All efforts should require the involvement Native Nations, Grassroots organizations, Native Hawaiian Organizations, traditional societies, ceremonial leaders, and Indigenous Peoples.
- This is an era of examining racial injustice and climate change. The authority of Native Nations, traditional societies, ceremonial grounds, and Indigenous spiritual leaders must be recognized and lead in these most important matters regarding the protection of sacred places and Indigenous ways of life.
- The harms done to our sacred places, Ancestors, and cultural ways of life violate our natural and constitutional rights, natural and spiritual laws, human rights, and individual freedoms. These harms have taken an immeasurable toll on the health, safety, welfare, self-determination, and well-being of our Peoples.
- Indigenous data governance structures with the free, prior and informed consent of Native Nations, traditional societies, ceremonial grounds, Indigenous spiritual leaders, and Indigenous Peoples to protect culturally sensitive information, Indigenous knowledge, and Indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights should be developed.
- Require agency-wide education of Native Nations, Indigenous Peoples, and all laws that pertain to sacred places protection and repatriation; and require inter-agency and intra-agency coordination of federal laws pertaining to sacred places protection, repatriation, and Indigenous cultural practices.

Additional information and our Sacred Places and Cultural Protections Statement may be viewed on our website at [www.nativeorganizing.org](http://www.nativeorganizing.org).