



Forum 2022 Handbook

Session 2: Indigenous Values & Practices Tied to Land

Featured on the panel:

- ❖ Jonathan Cordero, Co-founder & Executive Director of *The Association of Ramaytush Ohlone*
- ❖ Sara Moncada, CEO of *The Cultural Conservancy*
- ❖ Redbird Willie, Land Steward & Educator, *The Cultural Conservancy*

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Inspired to take action? Here's how!

Recommendations from the panelists:

1. **Support local efforts on environmental restoration by indigenous organizations:**
 - a. The Association of Ramaytush Ohlone: <https://www.ramaytush.org/>
 - b. The Cultural Conservancy: <https://www.nativeland.org/>
2. **Seek opportunities to volunteer** with indigenous organizations
3. **Build a relationship** with an Indigenous organization
4. **Listen to The Native Seed Pod:** <https://www.nativeseedpod.org>
 - a. The Native Seed Pod is a podcast that explores and celebrates Native foodways, ancestral seeds, and the traditional ecological knowledge needed to renew the health of the Earth, restore agrobiodiversity, and sustain resilient communities.

Recommendations by EFM:

1. To learn more about Indigenous people in your community, look up Native territories, languages, and treaties [here](#).
 - a. This mapping tool was developed by Native Land Digital, an Indigenous-led nonprofit based in Canada. Read on [NPR](#) about the challenges related to mapping tribal lands.
2. Indigenous organizations face constraints that limit the sharing of traditional knowledge. Consider offering your expertise and experience to any of these local organizations:
 - a. [Alliance for Felix Cove](#)
 - b. [Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin](#)
 - c. [Indigenous Healing Center](#)
 - d. [Museum of the American Indian](#)

Highlights from Panel Presentations

Sara Moncada:

1. Indigenous people value caring for Mother Earth in the same way that she has been caring for us for millennia.
2. The notion of ownership is foreign to Indigenous people. They are "web thinkers" and are aware that interdependence is essential to survival.
3. There are approximately 500 tribes and over 700 Indigenous languages in the United States. All Indigenous people have a unique connection to land.
4. How do we enter projects with Indigenous people? First, understand the protocols of the land. Then wait and listen to the clear request of the community.

Redbird Willie:

5. Why do we have to know Indigenous traditional knowledge? One reason is whatever we have been doing isn't working.
6. How do we integrate Indigenous practices in modern times? Give attention to small pieces of land. It's better to have a deep, focused understanding of our own small space.
7. Review the [Heron Shadow garden](#) to learn about modern agricultural processes that are sustainable and regenerative.

Jonathan Cordero:

8. Indigenous people don't necessarily have the expertise to understand technical reports, so, out of necessity, they join larger groups that have expertise in technology and science.
9. Can federally unrecognized tribes qualify for public funding? Most funding comes from individual donors and corporations, and some community organizations and foundations provide general support. This is greatly needed. Grant money from the state is for project implementation.
10. Unrecognized Indigenous tribes have fewer resources and may turn to the philanthropic community to get funding for administrative capacity building and to become self-sustaining.

Take a moment and reflect on the following questions:

- A. What are your values and principles, and how do they influence your relationship with land and the community you serve?
- B. From what you have learned, are there particular elements of Indigenous culture that seem especially relevant to solving our current environmental challenges?
- C. As an environmental advocate, where/how can you draw upon Indigenous practices that align with your goals and values?

Resources

The Environmental Forum of Marin does not advocate in favor of the opinions or arguments featured in the following article items. They have been solely selected for educational purposes.

Films & Program Recordings

The Ghost Rainforest, by Earthrise Studios Production (2022), is told from the perspective of Indigenous activist Narubi Werreria. The film follows a group of five indigenous leaders and activists from the Amazon as they take an emotionally charged journey to the last remnant of a lost ecosystem, a rainforest habitat on the West Coast of Scotland.

See the full-length (9:51) film on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOzdNRX4Vas>

On Healing Indigenous Landscapes through Indigenous Science, produced by the [California Institute of Integral Studies](#), features indigenous scholar and activist Melissa Nelson (Founding Executive Director/CEO of the Cultural Conservancy) in a conversation with Dr. Hernandez, environmental scientist and founder of environmental agency [Piña Soul](#). Together they explore how to stop the eco-colonialism ravaging indigenous lands and restore a relationship to those lands based on harmony and respect.

See the full-length (1:29:25) program on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83kIHDvqaKY&t=1560s>

Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin

Prior to the “Indigenous Values & Practices Tied to Land” live session, our panelists requested permission to speak on Coast Miwok territory from the Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin. This Indigenous protocol demonstrates respect for the land and its community. Learn more about the Marin Coast Miwok Council through the following video, which includes personal family history, songs, stories, and examples of native crafts. It was produced by the *San Geronimo Valley Planning Group*.

See the full-length (1:29:16) recording on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGSTnJmAhqQ>

Toolkits & Reading Materials

Native Governance Center

This Native-led nonprofit organization is dedicated to assisting Native nations in strengthening their governance systems and capacity to exercise sovereignty. They create accessible, introductory-level resources on a variety of topics related to sovereignty, governance, and nation rebuilding.

Explore useful guidelines and resources here: <https://nativegov.org/resources/>

Land Acknowledgement Statements



As highlighted on the website of The Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, Indigenous communities have lived in this area for hundreds of generations. Review the following resources and noteworthy considerations to learn about these Indigenous ancestors and their descendants.

For more information visit: <https://www.ramaytush.org/land-acknowledgement.html>

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

This book by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation as well as a botanist, embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In reviewing this book, Elizabeth Gilbert notes that Kimmerer takes us on “a journey that is every bit as mythic as it is scientific, as sacred as it is historical, as clever as it is wise.” This book illuminates the interconnection between nature and humanity, and encourages us to rethink our relationship with living ecosystems.

To learn more about the book and the author, read this [interview](#) by James Yeh at *The Guardian*. Order the book on Amazon [here](#).

Indigenous Seed Keepers Network (NAFSA)

NAFSA provides educational resources, mentorship training, outreach, and advocacy support on seed policy issues. Learn more about their work and Seed Sovereignty Assessment Toolkit here:

https://nativefoodalliance.org/our-programs-2/indigenous-seedkeepers-network/?eml_id=88915

News and Blogs

Native Guardians: Canada’s First Nations Move to Protect Their Lands

Learn how Native people in Canada have partnered with scientists to conserve their lands and their way of life: <https://www.cohousing.org/create-cohousing/create-it/>

UC Berkeley repatriating artifacts to Indigenous tribes

Read more about it here: [Berkeley News](#)

US Advances Largest Dam Demolition in History, By Gillian Flaccus, *The Associated Press*

Read about Native tribes that rely on the Klamath River in Oregon and the powerful role that they can play in environmental restoration efforts:

https://edition.pagesuite.com/popovers/dynamic_article_popover.aspx?guid=a92a6810-b8bc-439a-ad1b-7bd092f6bc7c&appcode=MAR722&equid=d8a565bc-bcd0-48d5-8f75-eff29435e220&pnum=20#