



13TH TRIBAL LAND STAFF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

April 2-4, 2024

Planet Hollywood
Las Vegas, Nevada

◆ Advancing Tribal Sovereignty in the Digital Age ◆



Co-Sponsored by
National Tribal Land Association
Indian Land Tenure Foundation

13th TRIBAL LAND STAFF NATIONAL CONFERENCE ♦ Agenda Snapshot

Monday,
April 1, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Conference Registration (Mezzanine)
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Tuesday,
April 2, 2024

7:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Conference Registration (Mezzanine)
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Blessing, Welcome, and Opening Plenary (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Exhibition Hall Open (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7)

	SUNSET 3 & 4	SUNSET 5 & 6	MELROSE 3
SESSION I	9:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Navigating BIA Systems for Tribal Realty Staff	Veterans Affairs Native American Direct Load (NADL) Overview
	11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Networking Lunch (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)	
SESSION II	1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Planning and Community Involvement in the Digital Age	*The HEARTH Act*
	2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Break – Exhibitor Showcase (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)	
SESSION III	3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Completing Infrastructure Projects in a Challenging Economy	Treaty Signers Project
	4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Exhibitor's Happy Hour (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7) (ONE COCKTAIL IS INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION)	
	5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Welcome Reception (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7) (APPETIZERS INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION.)	

Wednesday,
April 3, 2024

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Exhibition Hall Open (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7)

	SUNSET 3 & 4	SUNSET 5 & 6	MELROSE 3
SESSION IV	8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Reclaiming and Reconnecting with Ancestral Lands	True Land Sovereignty
	10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break – Exhibitor Showcase (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)	
SESSION V	10:30 a.m. – Noon	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation Restoration Act	Real Estate on Reservations
	Noon – 1:30 p.m.	Brown Bag Lunch (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)	
SESSION VI	1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Navigating BIA Systems for Tribal Realty Staff (REPEAT)	National Tribal Land Association Round Table
	3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Break – Exhibitor Showcase (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)	
SESSION VII	3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Implications of BIA Agricultural Leasing Updates	The New Fee-to-Trust Regulations
			Negotiating Section 105(l) Leases under the ISDEAA (CLE Pending)

Thursday,
April 4, 2024

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)
8:00 a.m. – Noon	Exhibition Hall Open (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7)

	SUNSET 3 & 4	SUNSET 5 & 6	MELROSE 3
SESSION VIII	8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Asserting Self-Governance: Management & Control on Trust Lands	Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for Land Recovery
	10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break – Exhibitor Showcase (Celebrity Ballroom 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)	
SESSION IX	10:30 a.m. – Noon	Empowering Tribal Sovereignty through GIS	Tribal Co-Stewardship of Federal Lands (CLE Pending)
	Noon – 2:30 p.m.	Networking Lunch, Drawing and Closing Plenary (Celebrity Ballroom 1-4)	

Conference Agenda



Monday, April 1, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. ♦ Conference Registration (MEZZANINE)

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

7:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. ♦ Conference Registration (MEZZANINE)

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. ♦ Breakfast Buffet (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. ♦ Blessing, Welcome and Opening Plenary (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)

9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ♦ Exhibition Hall Open (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7)

SESSION I (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 9:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. (PDT)

Navigating BIA Systems for Tribal Realty Staff (SUNSET 3 & 4)

This presentation will look at software applications provided by the BIA for Tribes and how these can be used by Tribal realty staff to streamline the land transaction approval process. This includes the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS), BIA NEPA Tracking System 2.0, Kofax Scanning System, AVIS (appraisal services) and other pertinent information systems.

Presenters: Katie Yates Free, Realty Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Natasha Yancey, Director of Real Estate, Osage Nation

Veterans Affairs Native American Direct Loan (NADL) Overview (SUNSET 5 & 6)

The VA Native American Direct Loan (NADL) Program helps eligible veterans finance the purchase, construction, or improvement of homes on Federal Trust Land, or reduce interest rates on current NADL loans. Benefits of the program include no down payment, no private mortgage insurance requirement, limited closing costs, and low-interest 30-year fixed mortgages.

Presenters: Craig Filbeck, VA NADL Coordinators, Dept. of Veterans Affairs

James Lewis, VA NADL Coordinators, Dept. of Veterans Affairs

Writing and Reviewing Non-Rectangular Land Descriptions (CLE Pending) (MELROSE 3)

Writing and reviewing non-rectangular land descriptions can be complicated. This presentation will help Tribal land managers become more familiar with land description information, common mistakes that occur, solutions to reduce mistakes, and best practices to successfully write or review land descriptions.

Presenter: Tasha Huhta, Land Surveyor, Bureau of Land Management

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. ♦ **Networking Lunch** (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)

SESSION II (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. (PDT)

Planning and Community Involvement in the Digital Age (SUNSET 3 & 4)

This hands-on learning session offers participants an opportunity to explore how the digital age is impacting their individual communities. The discussion will include the relationship between the digital age and planning and policy in today's world, including the effects of technology on community and economic development, government, public involvement, culture, education, the economy and more.

Presenter: Amy Wilson, Founder & Principal Consultant, SEE Renewal

The HEARTH Act (SUNSET 5 & 6)

Under the HEARTH Act, once Tribes' governing Tribal leasing regulations are submitted to and approved by the Secretary of the Interior, they are authorized to negotiate and enter into surface leases under their approved HEARTH Act regulations without further approval from the Secretary. This session will discuss the policy and regulations that the BIA follows when reviewing Tribal HEARTH Act submissions.

Presenters: Sharon Kidman, BIA Division of Real Estate Services, Central Office

Carla Clark, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Acting Division Chief, Division of Real Estate Services

Tribal L.A.N.D. Committee (Learning And Navigating Development) (MELROSE 3)

The Fort Peck Tribe will share how it has navigated the challenges of development on its land in Montana, including Tribal land processes, leadership and project transitions, department permits and contradictions, trust-support issues within the committee, Tribal transparencies, procurement policies, and setting proactive goals to map future development and protection of resources.

Presenters: Maureen Dionne, Community Planner, Economic Development Department

Wilfred Lambert, Enforcement Programs Coordinator, Office of Environmental Protection

Jeff Berger, Director, Disaster Emergency Services

Connie Thompson, Planner, Indian Reservation Roads

Dyan Youpee, Director – Cultural Resource Department, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ♦ Break – Exhibitor Showcase (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)

SESSION III (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. (PDT)

Completing Infrastructure Projects in a Challenging Economy (SUNSET 3 & 4)

This panel discussion, with active audience participation, will explore the steps involved in securing support to build large public infrastructure projects on Tribal lands starting at the pre-conceptual phase, sketching out needs to be addressed, capital requirements, sustainability of the completed project, and how to effectively present infrastructure concepts to the community, Tribal government and lenders.

Presenters: Philomena Kebec, Economic Development Coordinator, Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Desmond Bruguier, Founder & CEO, Tatanka Ska Ventures

Samantha Skenandore, Lawyer, Quarles & Brady LLP

Treaty Signers Project (SUNSET 5 & 6)

From 1778 to 1871, Indian nations ceded most of their land to the U.S. government through treaties, but the story of westward expansion in America is a myth. This presentation will explore the Treaty Signers Project, which tells the truth of how business interests in land speculation, railroads, the fur trade, mining, forestry and more carved up the country for their personal benefit. Visit treatysigners.us prior to learn more.

Presenter: Samantha Manz, Program Officer, Indian Land Tenure Foundation

Wills & Estate Planning for Tribal Communities (CLE Pending) (MELROSE 3)

Wills and estate planning documents are a key component for the healing and consolidation of fractionated Tribal trust lands. This session will explore the basics of estate planning for Indian people, including the nuances involved in Tribal trust land planning and how to prepare documents. The discussion will include common myths and misconceptions about wills and the probate process.

Presenter: Kate Jones, Founding Member – Attorney, Law Offices of Kate Jones, PLLC

4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. ♦ Exhibitor's Happy Hour (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7)(ONE COCKTAIL INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION)

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. ♦ Welcome Reception (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7) (APPS INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION)

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. ♦ Breakfast Buffet (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ♦ Exhibition Hall Open (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7)

SESSION IV (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (PDT)

Reclaiming and Reconnecting with Ancestral Lands (SUNSET 3 & 4)

Dr. Ken Lucero of the Trust for Public Land will lead a panel discussion exploring multiple approaches to support Tribal communities in their efforts to reclaim and reconnect with ancestral lands. The presentation will include examples from the Trust for Public Land's partnerships to facilitate land-back programs and an innovative Tribal Community Schoolyards pilot program.

Presenters: Dr. Ken Lucero, Tribal & Indigenous Lands Director, Trust for Public Land (TPL)
Valentin Lopez, Chair of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, President of the Amah Mutsun Land Trust
Jason Robison, Land and Resources Officer, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians

True Land Sovereignty (SUNSET 5 & 6)

Unlike a culture of dependency, sovereignty emphasizes self-governance and individual empowerment. While land is the cornerstone of Tribal culture, Federal policy requires an appraisal for most routine land transactions. This presentation will look at the ways the appraisal process delays and prevents true land sovereignty and the role Tribal land staff can play in reversing this paradigm.

Presenter: Alberto Ugas, Principal, Sovereign Homeland Valuations

BLM (Federal) Land Status Records (MELROSE 3)

This session is designed to support Tribal managers with resources to better locate, use and interpret various BLM (Federal) Land Status Records. Attendees will gain a better understanding on the use and application of Master Title Plats, Historical Indexes, Control Document Indexes, and Cadastral Survey Records to identify and interpret land status..

Presenter: Tasha Huhta, Land Surveyor, Bureau of Land Management

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. ♦ Break – Exhibitor Showcase (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)

SESSION V (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 10:30 a.m. – Noon (PDT)

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation Restoration Act (SUNSET 3 & 4)

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation Restoration Act requires the transfer of about 11,760 acres of federal land from the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture to the Secretary of Interior to be held in trust for the benefit of the Band. This session will explore the land tenure history of the reservation and how the Tribe and federal partners were able to right a historic wrong.

Presenters: Kenneth Roy, Indian Lands Surveyor, BLM
Matt Frazer, GIS Specialist, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Real Estate on Reservations (SUNSET 5 & 6)

The session will provide a holistic overview of real estate, lending, federal funding, land status, and future planning in Indian Country. The goal is to provide participants with practical knowledge and real-world examples of current construction costs and lending limitations, the inequity of federal housing funding eligibility for Native Americans on Reservations, and alternative land status options to consider.

Presenter: Maria Cohen, Real Estate Broker/ Housing Consultant, Native Housing Consulting Services, LLC

Renewable Energy Development 101 (CLE Pending) (MELROSE 3)

The presentation will explore the basics of renewable energy development on Tribal lands. Participants will gain knowledge on due diligence, project financing, and the various phases of development along with an understanding of important legal and regulatory requirements surrounding renewable energy projects in Indian Country.

Presenter: Pilar Thomas, Partner, Quarles & Brady LLP

Noon – 1:30 p.m. ♦ Brown Bag Lunch (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)

SESSION VI (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (PDT)

Navigating BIA Systems for Tribal Realty Staff (REPEAT) (SUNSET 3 & 4)

This presentation will look at software applications provided by the BIA for Tribes and how these can be used by Tribal realty staff to streamline the land transaction approval process. This includes the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS), BIA NEPA Tracking System 2.0, Kofax Scanning System, AVIS (appraisal services) and other pertinent information systems.

Presenters: Katie Yates Free, Realty Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Natasha Yancey, Director of Real Estate, Osage Nation

National Tribal Land Association Round Table (SUNSET 5 & 6)

National Tribal Land Association chose the theme, “Advancing Tribal Sovereignty in the Digital Age,” to demonstrate how Indigenous nations are utilizing different technologies to serve their citizens. NTLA Board Members will host a roundtable to discuss their own work and how they’re advancing Tribal sovereignty.

Presenters: National Tribal Land Association Board Members

Tribal Energy and Mineral Resource Development (MELROSE 3)

The presentation will look at opportunities offered by the BIA Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) that enable Tribes to implement energy and mineral projects. These programs include financial, technical, business and mapping services to provide Tribes with access to key information for leasing, developing, and managing energy and mineral resources on Tribal land.

Presenters: Jennifer Reiman, Branch Chief - Renewable and Distributed Generation, Energy and Mineral Development
Albert Bond, Division Chief DEMD, Division of Energy and Mineral Development
Payton Batliner, Acting Division Chief, Indian Energy Service Center
Karen Woodward, Morongo Band of Mission Indians

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. ♦ Break – Exhibitor Showcase (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)

SESSION VII (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (PDT)

Implications of BIA Agricultural Leasing Updates (SUNSET 3 & 4)

Presented by the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI), this session will explore the BIA’s proposed draft language to update the Ag Leasing Regulations, including interfacing with Agricultural Resource Management Plan provisions, changes to housing and HEARTH Act considerations, and the impact on producers, lessors and lessees. Participants will have ample opportunity to provide feedback.

Presenter: Carly Griffith Hotvedt, Associate Executive Director, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative

The New Fee-to-Trust Regulations (SUNSET 5 & 6)

This session will provide an overview of the new Bureau of Indian Affairs fee-to-trust regulations that went into effect Jan. 11, 2024. Participants will learn about changes to the application requirements, the required documents, and processing timelines. At least 30 minutes will be reserved at the end of the presentation for a question-and-answer session with the presenters.

Presenters: Sarah Roubidoux Lawson, Attorney, Schwabe
Jacob Broussard, Attorney, Schwabe

Negotiating Section 105(I) Leases under the ISDEAA (CLE Pending) (MELROSE 3)

Tribes have the right to secure funding through Section 105(I) lease proposals to the BIA and Indian Health Service (IHS) but have historically been underfunded for operation and maintenance of facilities. The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) offers a significant opportunity to receive more funding. This session will look at the background, elements, and how to put a lease proposal together.

Presenter: Craig Jacobson, Attorney, Hobbs, Straus, Dean and Walker LLP

Thursday, April 4, 2024

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. ♦ Breakfast Buffet (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)
8:00 a.m. – Noon ♦ Exhibition Hall Open (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7)

SESSION VIII (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (PDT)

Asserting Self-Governance: Management & Control on Trust Lands (SUNSET 3 & 4)

This session will discuss the E' Numu Diip (END) Project, an example of what can be accomplished when allottees assume control and management of their lands. The END cooperative is doing regenerative grazing practices on trust land that was overgrazed under BIA management. This nonprofit model enables allottees to serve as good stewards of land, water and energy resources for future generations.

Presenters: Cherly Lohman, END Project Manager, Numu Allottee Association
Marilyn Pollard, Board Member, Numu Allottee Association

Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for Land Recovery (SUNSET 5 & 6)

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are a valuable tool to help manage tribal land holdings. The Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ILTF) uses GIS to assist Tribes with land issues. This session will look at GIS work currently being done on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in Minnesota, as well as the Youth GIS Program that provides instruction, technology, and experience to Native youth.

Presenter: Josh Meisel, Project Director, Indian Land Tenure Foundation

The New Fee-to-Trust Regulations (REPEAT) (MELROSE 3)

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Presenters: Sarah Roubidoux Lawson, Attorney, Schwabe
Jacob Broussard, Attorney, Schwabe

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. ♦ Break – Exhibitor Showcase (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 6-7) (REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS OFFERED)

SESSION IX (CONCURRENT SESSIONS) ♦ 10:30 a.m. – Noon (PDT)

Empowering Tribal Sovereignty through GIS (SUNSET 3 & 4)

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) can be a powerful tool to help advance Tribal sovereignty in the digital age. Participants in this hands-on session will gain geospatial insights and learn about tools and technology that can be used to more effectively manage lands and natural resources, enhance disaster resilience, and navigate data sovereignty.

Presenters: Victoria Anderson, Senior Solution Engineer, Esri
Manu Kaur, Solution Engineer, Esri

Tribal Co-Stewardship of Federal Lands (CLE Pending) (SUNSET 5 & 6)

Federal agencies under the current administration have issued significant policies and guidance intended to promote Tribal co-stewardship of federal lands. This session will introduce the legal, regulatory, and policy framework for Tribal co-stewardship arrangements; discuss co-stewardship opportunities and examples; and provide practical advice on how to negotiate these agreements.

Presenter: Matthew Adams, Partner, Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell

Exploring Agricultural Resource Management Plans in Action (MELROSE 3)

When effectively implemented and enforced, Agricultural Resource Management Plans (ARMPs) can serve as a foundation for establishing strong conservation measures and employing greater Tribal self-governance. This working group session will offer technical assistance to address the barriers that stall or prevent implementation of ARMPs across Indian Country.

Presenters: Carly Griffith Hotvedt, Associate Executive Director, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative
Tikaan Galbreath, TA Network Director, IAC
Keir Johnson-Reyes, Chief Stakeholder Engagement Officer, IAC

Noon – 2:30 p.m. ♦ Networking Lunch, Drawing and Closing Plenary (CELEBRITY BALLROOM 1-4)