



Tribal Nation Partners: Working Together for Strengthened Emergency Management Programs

Lisa Figueroa, MA, CEM

Goals for today

- Foster understanding
- Remove barriers to collaboration
- Improve regional partnerships
- Address the element of equity
- Recognize vital elements of federal policies and security

We were a people before “We the People”..

- 20th and 22nd President of the National Congress of American Indians, Jefferson Keel, 2013



[Tribal Maps | GOIA \(wa.gov\)](http://tribalmaps.goi.a.gov)

Importance to Homeland Security

100 MILLION ACRES ARE UNDER AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE CONTROL

THAT IS 100 MILES LONGER THAN CALIFORNIA'S BORDER WITH MEXICO

260 MILES OF INTERNATIONAL BORDERS ARE SHARED BY TRIBAL LANDS

MORE THAN 40 TRIBAL NATIONS HAVE BORDERS SPANNING MEXICO OR CANADA

THESE BORDERS ARE OFTEN UNDERSTAFFED AND UNDERFUNDED

Federal Recognition

Most of today's 574 federally recognized tribes received this status through treaties, acts of Congress, federal executive orders or actions, or federal court decisions.

The criteria include:

- Petitioner can show continuous entity since 1900
- Proves a distinct community in terms of history, culture, and geography
- Continuous political influence or authority
- This designation can be granted or lost based on the criteria

Sovereignty

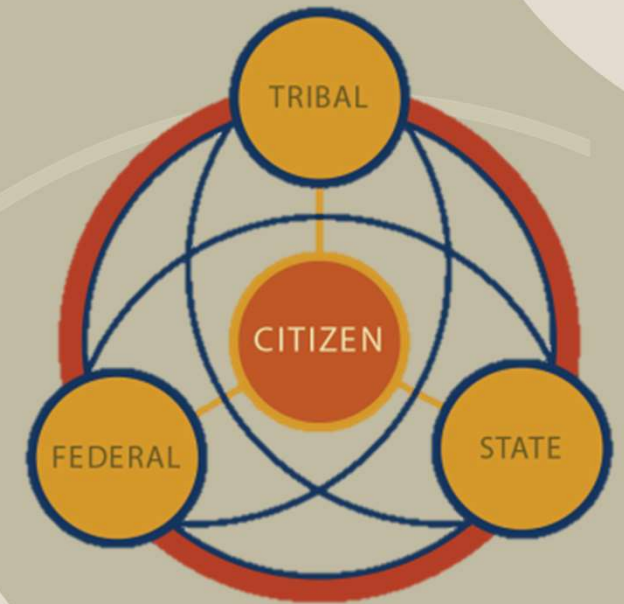
“The Congress shall have the power to...regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.” – Article 1, Section 8, U.S. Constitution



Tribal Sovereignty

Authority to self-govern

- Laws and governance
- Determine membership
- Provide services such as medical, educational, social
- Workforce development
- Energy and land management
- Build and maintain infrastructure such as water treatment, roads, and bridges



Tribal lands

Lands such as reservations, rancherias, or pueblos.

May also include the protection of sacred sites, marine sanctuaries, or access to hunting and gathering locations.



Tribal policy

- 1988 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act
- 2000 Presidential Executive Order 13175 Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments
- 2013 Sandy Recovery and Improvement Act
- Subordinated tribal nations to the states
- Reaffirmed in 2010. Directed all federal departments and agencies to consult with tribal nations on a government-to-government basis.
- Recognized sovereignty of tribal nations. Can choose to request presidential declaration.

More tribal policy

- National Response Framework
- NRF Tribal Relations Support Annex, 2013
- NRF Tribal Relations Support Annex, 2021
- Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships, 2021
- National Tribal Strategy, 2022
- Recognized tribal sovereignty
- Subordinated tribes to state authority
- Recognized tribal sovereignty
- Recognized tribal sovereignty
- Pledges increased FEMA support


2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy

We must never forget Tribal Nations continue to face indescribable hardships in this country. As President Biden said, American Indian and Alaska Native peoples represent unyielding perseverance “despite a painful history marked by unjust Federal policies of assimilation and termination.”

That is why, as emergency managers, we must be proactive and deliberate in our support to Tribal Nations as they build climate-resilient and prepared communities. We will only be successful when our programs are fully accessible to tribal communities. We must strive toward delivery of assistance that meets their unique needs.

~Deanna Criswell, FEMA Administrator

[2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy | FEMA.gov](#)



Challenges and successes



DECEMBER 06, 2023

Executive Order on Reforming Federal Funding and Support for Tribal Nations to Better Embrace Our Trust Responsibilities and Promote the Next Era of Tribal Self-Determination



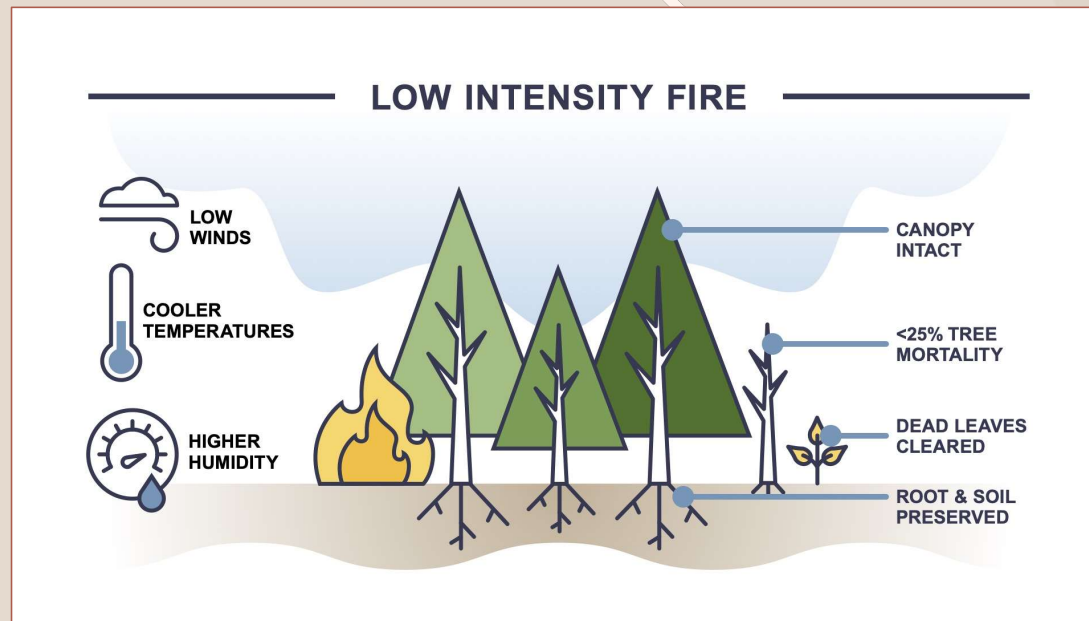
BRIEFING ROOM

PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:


Section 1. Policy. My Administration is committed to protecting and supporting Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, and to honoring our trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations. We recognize the right of Tribal Nations to self-determination, and that Federal support for Tribal self-determination has been the most effective policy for the economic growth of Tribal Nations and the economic well-being of Tribal citizens. Federal

The White House Tribal Nations Summit 2023



“By setting regular, controlled fires, tribes were able to maintain an ideal landscape for growing and collecting first foods, clearing land for travel, and preventing more intense, severe fires.”

Lauren Gallup, “Fighting fire with fire: Bringing prescribed burns back to Washington state,” Northwest Public Broadcasting, June 27, 2023. <https://www.nwpb.org/2023/06/27/fighting-fire-with-fire-bringing-prescribed-burns-back-to-washington-state/>



Tribal curriculum

EMI Tribal Curriculum Goal

To collaborate with tribal governments to build emergency management capability and partnerships to increase the resilience of tribal nations and communities.

[Emergency Management Institute | EMI Tribal Curriculum \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov)



E/L0580: Emergency Management Framework for Tribal Governments

- Provide tribal governments with new information and strategies for improving their emergency management systems.
- Integrate tribal governments more seamlessly into the Nation's emergency management system.
- Promote the integration of all emergency management mission areas into the planning process.
- Improve culturally appropriate response for all emergencies, regardless of hazard, size, and complexity for tribes.



E/L0581: Emergency Operations for Tribal Governments

- Provide tribal governments with new skills and strategies for improving overall emergency operations.
- Enable tribal governments to be more capable and self-sufficient during emergency operations.
- Promote the integration of emergency operations across all functional lines.
- Enhance the tribes' overall response to all emergencies, regardless of hazard, size, or complexity.
- Assist tribes to determine benefits and limitations of the direct declaration process.
- Enable a more successful transition from response to recovery.



E/L0582: Resilience for the Next 7 Generations: Mitigation and Recovery for Tribal Governments

- Provide tribal governments with a broad overview of mitigation projects, programs, and funding mechanisms.
- Provide tribal governments with a broad overview of recovery planning and strategies.
- Promote the inclusion of mitigation and recovery principles across all phases of emergency management.
- Enable tribal planners to develop a Mitigation Plan and understand the basics of Recovery.



Questions?

For more information:

Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Emergency Management
<https://www.bia.gov/oem>

DHS Tribal Government Affairs
<https://www.dhs.gov/tribal-government-affairs>

FEMA Tribal Affairs
<https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribes>



TRIBAL AFFAIRS CAUCUS

- The IAEM-USA Tribal Affairs Caucus formed in 2000, to facilitate emergency services and program awareness in Indian Country.
- Native American communities, commonly found in remote areas, are among the most vulnerable to natural disasters and emergencies due to their unique cultural and historical circumstances.
- Native American emergency management and relief efforts face unique challenges due to historical and systemic factors, as well as limited resources and staffing.

Accomplishments: > Added National partnerships > Provided support to membership through partnership engagements and IAEM/AEM/CEM sponsorships > Coordinated stakeholder presentations to enhance awareness of programs in direct support of Tribal Emergency Manager's > Increased outreach to tribes

Future Projects: > Engaging tribal governments and Emergency managers in information-sharing and coordination > Continue increasing membership > Continue increasing partner engagement > Presentations at future conferences

Caucus Chair: Angie Ramos Caucus Vice Chair: Lisa Figueroa, CEM Board Liaison: John Osborne

- > IAEM Conference meeting Wednesday, November 8th at 4p
- > Quarterly Zoom meeting December 15th, 1 pm EST



The background features a light gray base with several abstract shapes: a large reddish-brown shape on the left, a large olive-green shape on the right, and a white outline of a leaf on the far right. In the top left, there is a faint illustration of a leafy branch.

Thank you

Lisa Figueroa

lfigueroa@redmond.gov

425-556-2219