



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

September 27, 2021

Dear Tribal Leader,

On May 6, 2021, the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce, and the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality issued the [Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Report](#). The report provides a framework for how we can achieve our first national conservation goal, which includes conserving at least 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030. Conserving and restoring the lands and waters that support and sustain us is an important aspect to addressing climate change, the loss of nature, and environmental injustice. The report sets forth a series of eight principles for engagement on conservation, including pursuing a collaborative and inclusive approach to conservation, honoring Tribal sovereignty and supporting the priorities of Tribal Nations, honoring private property rights and supporting the voluntary stewardship efforts of private landowners and fishers, and rooting conservation initiatives in the best available information, including science and Indigenous Knowledge.

The report identifies six focus areas for early action and progress, including supporting Tribally led conservation and restoration priorities. The report notes that Tribal governments have often struggled to access federal funding and assistance to support conservation efforts, because Tribal governments are not written into legislation or because federal bureaucracy may prevent them from participating in programs where they are eligible. The report also calls for improved engagement with American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians on the care and management of public lands and waters, particularly regarding sacred and ceremonial sites, and trust and treaty rights. Finally, the report calls for prioritizing restoring Tribal homelands and improving the land-into-trust process. Since the issuance of the report, additional calls for use of co-management were made – both through existing authorities and expanded authorities.

Questions for Consultation

To garner input on the America the Beautiful initiative, in particular the focus area of supporting tribally led conservation and restoration priorities, we are scheduling the following consultation sessions. While we welcome all input on all aspects of the America the Beautiful initiative, we would specifically seek input during the consultation sessions or in writing on these questions:

- 1) How can the federal government better account for the conservation and climate contributions of Tribally managed lands and waters?
- 2) The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), Tribal leaders and other Native advocacy organizations have supported the expanded use of Tribal co-management of federal lands.

- a) How do you define co-management? What do you envision for co-management agreements with the federal agencies?
 - b) What do you expect of federal agencies when you seek co-management and how can federal agencies best support the America the Beautiful initiative through Tribal co-management?
 - c) What types of operations and discrete spatial areas should we focus on for expanded co-management or conservation actions?
- 3) Access to plants, animals and other natural resources off-reservation for Tribal members is identified in a number of Tribal treaties and other agreements. What steps can the federal government take towards honoring those treaties and expanding conservation of critical areas for these resources?
 - 4) What can the federal government do to improve Tribal access to and use of existing conservation programs? Are the identified changes legislative or administrative?
 - 5) How can we better incorporate and improve the use of Indigenous Knowledge into conservation of our public lands and waters?

Consultation Sessions

Option 1:

October 26, 2021

10 AM-1 PM ET

Please register in advance at:

https://pitc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_hbpXbieCQQeL9K5zWqkeSQ

Option 2:

October 28, 2021

3-5:30 PM ET

Please register in advance at:

https://pitc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_2KQVsng6Q3G2QgkA861Ubw

In addition to or instead of joining these sessions, you may provide your written input to conservation@ceq.eop.gov by **November 23rd, 2021**. If you have any questions regarding this effort, please feel free to contact Stephenne Harding, Senior Director of Lands, at Stephenne.S.Harding@ceq.eop.gov, or at (202) 881-9419.

Thank you for sharing your insight, knowledge, and ideas with us as we work to improve and expand conservation actions in partnership with Tribes. These consultation sessions are designed to complement place-based consultation on specific projects conducted by agencies as actions are proposed and developed. We look forward to receiving input both in writing and in the consultation sessions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Mallory". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brenda" and last name "Mallory" written in a single continuous stroke.

Brenda Mallory
Chair,
White House Council on Environmental Quality