

We are writing on behalf of the Merrill-Lynch Community Foundation, the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, and the Native American Land Conservancy (NALC) to invite you to the upcoming conference, *Stewarding Sacred Lands*. The event will be held February 8-9, 2007 at the Sycuan Resort in El Cajon, California.

The goal of the conference is to promote understanding and collaboration between diverse groups and communities engaged in the identification, acquisition, management or co-management of Native American sacred sites, areas, and culturally sensitive species. The broader purpose, however, is to address an issue of both immediate and long-term importance to sacred land conservation. We believe protective land management—in terms of critical habitat, sensitive species, and Native American sacred sites—has entered a new era of challenges and opportunities. How well we succeed in preserving these resources for future generations will more than ever depend on whether we can form meaningful and enduring partnerships between communities of interest that include tribes, conservation organizations, federal and state agencies, the scientific community, and philanthropic organizations.

We recognize there have been similar efforts in the past that have met with varying degrees of success. However, this conference is unique in several ways. First, it covers a broad range of topics including research methods, land management strategies, traditional Native American knowledge, and models of partnership including tribally-controlled land conservancies. It also includes the participation of groups and organizations from each of communities of interest, and encourages both a structured and an open-ended dialogue between them. Finally, it is our hope that this is the first in a series of events over the next five years that will build a bridge of understanding for the benefit of endangered lands and resources.

If you have any questions regarding the event, or would like to be listed as a presenter, we would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience. Please feel free to contact me at 1-800-670-6252 or via email at [frkvalues@aol.com](mailto:frkvalues@aol.com). While there is no fee for attending the event, we will be asking for individuals to provide us with a RSVP.

We sincerely hope you can attend and participate in the conference.

Respectfully yours,

Kurt Russo, Executive Director  
Native American Land Conservancy

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Merrill-Lynch Community Foundation

# Stewarding Sacred Lands

## I. Purpose

To promote understanding and cooperation between diverse groups and communities engaged in the identification, acquisition, management or co-management of Native American sacred sites, areas, and culturally sensitive species.

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## II. Background

The Native American Land Conservancy is an intertribal 501(C)(3) organization dedicated to the protective management of endangered Native American sacred sites and areas. Founded in 1998, the NALC has acquired threatened cultural landscapes, formed cooperative agreements with tribes, public agencies and conservation groups, and organized conferences to promote the preservation of Native American sacred lands.

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## III. Scope

The conference begins with *Panel 1* and an examination of the broad challenges of stewarding sacred sites and areas that vary in size (specific sites to large areas), composition (historic to contemporary use properties), and location (terrestrial and submerged). Many of these sites and areas contain culturally sensitive species that are rare or endangered, presenting another dimension of stewardship. The *Panel 1* discussion will be followed by a review of methods currently employed to provide protective management for cultural resources (*Panel 2*), and efforts underway to identify and preserve sacred sites and culturally sensitive species (*Panel 3*). Across the United States, Native as well as non-Native groups are working on programs that recognize the healing agency of the land. *Panel 4* will provide examples of diverse healing landscapes programs from Hawai'i to the eastern seaboard. This will be followed by a concurrent session that will provide an opportunity for the participants to combine their expertise with information shared at the conference to examine management approaches for the three main areas of interest to the conference: terrestrial resources, marine resources, and healing landscapes. *Panel 5* will focus on the important area of partnerships and how tribes, conservation groups and the philanthropic community can work together to achieve their common goal of preserving endangered cultural lands and resources. In the concluding presentation, "Inheriting Future," Chelsea Tortes and Native American youth who participated in the NALC's 2006 Healing Landscapes program will reflect on their experience in the Old Woman Mountains Preserve and what it means to them as inheritors of the future.

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## IV. Structure

The conference includes keynote speakers, panel discussions, question and answer sessions, a roundtable discussion, and open sessions. The open sessions, distributed throughout the conference agenda, are designed to provide an unstructured, at-large dialogue among the participants.

## V. Outcomes

Conciliating Knowledge—The conference will bring together participants from diverse cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds in order to examine common and uncommon ground between traditional Native American understandings of the natural world and conventional scientific management regimes.

Cooperative Management—The event will result in an exchange of experience, ideas, and expertise on a wide range of problems and solutions unique to the appropriate stewardship of sacred sites, areas, and resources.

Communication—Clear and complete communication is the key to successful stewardship of sacred lands and resources. The conference will promote cross-cultural understanding of the meaning of these sacred lands and how tribes, agencies, conservation groups, and the philanthropic community can overcome barriers to communication and work together to enhance these partnerships.

Crossing Generations—The prospects of our efforts today will be determined by those who inherit the future. The conference will provide students from high school through college the opportunity to learn from and interact with a wide range of professionals currently engaged in the protective management of endangered sacred lands and resources.

Community Networks—The conference will provide the participants with the opportunity to network their issues and concerns in a multi-sectoral and culturally diverse community of common interest. In addition, the NALC will provide on an at-cost basis the results of the conference as well as a participant contact list.

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**VI. Participants** The conference is designed to include 175 participants. The invitation list includes the following governments, groups and organizations:

### Tribes

**(Arizona)** Hopi Nation, Navajo Nation, Pima-Maricopa Band, Tohono O’Odham Tribe, Colorado River Indian Tribes, Mojave Tribe, Chemehuevi Tribe **(California)** Kumeyaay/Digueño Unity Bands, Agua Caliente Tribe, Barona Band of Mission Indians, Cabazon Tribe, Cahuilla Band of Mission Indians, Chumash Tribe, Hoopa Tribe, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, Morongo Tribe, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Tribe, Twenty-Nine Palms Tribe **(Nevada)** Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California **(Oregon)** Grande Ronde Tribe, Siletz Tribe, Umatilla Tribe, Warm Springs Tribe **(Washington)** Lummi Nation, Yakama Indian Nation

### Groups and Organizations

Anza-Borrego Foundation, Archaeological Resource Institute, Audubon California, California Native American Heritage Commission, California Bat Conservation Fund, Chiricahua Apache Alliance, Cultural Conservancy, Desert Bighorn Sheep Institute, Conservation International, Desert Research Institute, Ecotrust, Land Trust Alliance, Lee and Associates, Pele Defense Fund, Planning and Conservation League, Salt Song Project, San Bernardino County Museum, Salton Sea Coalition, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, Sterling Forest Partnership, Sweeney-Granite Mountain Research Center, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands, Udall Center, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, Wildlands Conservancy, Wishtoyo Foundation.

### State and Federal Agencies

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Parks (Ocotillo Wells SVRA), Congressman Nick Rahall (Assistant Marie Howard), Environmental Protection Agency, Joshua Tree National Park, Mojave National Preserve, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, National Park Service (Western Region), United States Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Forest Service (San Bernardino National Forest)

### Colleges and Universities

University of Arizona, University of California (Los Angeles), University of California (Riverside), University of California (San Diego), Northwest Indian College

### Philanthropic Community

Cabot Fund, Flintridge Foundation, Fund of the Four Directions, Foundation for Deep Ecology, Hewlett Foundation, Land Tenure Fund, Merrill-Lynch Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Northwest Area Foundation, Packard Foundation, Paul G. Allen Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and Family Fund, Seventh Generation Fund, Tides Foundation

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## **VII. Contact Information**

For more information about the event, for directions to the conference and reception site, and other questions or comments, please contact:

Kurt Russo  
1-800-670-6252  
Email: [frkvalues@aol.com](mailto:frkvalues@aol.com)

## Thursday, February 8 (Sycuan Hotel and Resort, El Cajon, California)

- 8.00 Invocation (Bird Singers)  
Welcome and Opening Remarks (Chairman, Sycuan Band of Kumeyaay Indians)
- 8.30 **Panel 1: Challenges to Stewardship**
- Kumeyaay/Digueño Land Conservancy  
Scott Aikin, Tribal Liaison, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Portland, Oregon)  
Dr. Patricia Masters, Scripps Institution of Oceanography (UCSD)  
Mark Jorgensen, Superintendent, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
- 9.45 Question and Answer/Discussion
- 10.15 Break
- 10.30 **Panel 2: Research Methods for Protective Management**
- Gerald Braden, Biological Sciences Division, San Bernardino County Museum  
John Hale, Archaeologist, Twenty-Nine Palms Marine Base  
Dr. Mary Cablk, Desert Research Institute  
Jill Sherman, Environmental Director, Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians
- 11.45 Question and Answer
- 12.00 Lunch (No Host)
- 1.30 Keynote Speaker: Dr. Fred York, Regional Anthropologist, Pacific West Region, National Park Service (Seattle, Washington)
- 2.00 Question and Answer/Discussion
- 2.30 **Panel 3: Identifying and Protecting Traditional Cultural Sites and Areas: Coordination, Cooperation, and Confidentiality**
- Viejas Band of the Kumeyaay Nation  
Mike Connelly, Campo Tribe  
Alfreda Mitre, Chairperson, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe  
Charles Wood, Chairman, Chemehuevi Tribe
- 3.45 Break
- 4.00 Question and Answer/Discussion
- 4.30 Orientation to Day Two and Wrap-Up
- 6.00-7.30 Dinner (No Host)
- 8.00-9.00 Film and Presentation from the Cultural Conservancy and the Salt Song Project: "The Salt Song Trail: Bringing Creation Back Together" (Conference Room)

**Friday, February 9, 2007 (Sycuan Hotel and Resort, El Cajon, California)**

8.00 Orientation to Day Two (Dean Mike, Vice-Chairman, NALC)

8.15 Chiricahua Apache Alliance, "Preserving Sacred Sites in Red Paint Canyon (New Mexico)"

8.45 Question and Answer<sup>1</sup>

9.00 **Panel 4: Perspectives on Healing Landscapes**

Paul Dolan, Sterling Forest Partnership of New York  
Emmett Aluli and Kalipaku Dedeman, Pele Defense Fund of Hawai'i  
Dr. Clifford Trafzer, Native American Land Conservancy  
Matt Leivas, Salt Song Project, Chemehuevi-Opata

10.30 Discussion

11:00 "Cultural Geography and Land Stewardship," Dr. Douglas Deur,  
University of Washington

11.30 Open Session

12.00 Lunch (No Host)

1.30 Keynote Speaker: Cheryl Crazy Bull, President, Northwest Indian  
College

2.00 **Panel 5: Stewarding Partnerships**

Chris Peters, Executive Director, Seventh Generation Fund  
Angela Mooney-D'Arcy, Wishtoyo Foundation  
Chuck Sams, Director, Tribal Lands Program, Trust for Public Lands  
Dave Van Cleve, The Nature Conservancy of San Diego

3.15 Break

3.30 Question and Answer/Discussion

4.00 "Inheriting the Future," Chelsea Tortes (Soboba Tribe) and the Native  
American Youth Council

4.30 Wrap-up  
Closing Ceremony

5.00 End of Day Two

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<sup>1</sup> Native American Youth Council "ushers" will gather questions during the presentations on Day 2 and give them to the moderator.