

Indigenous Peoples Burning Network

Increasingly, Indigenous peoples are recognized for their ability to contribute to solutions to the mounting fire challenges we face. By providing a supportive framework, the IPBN is elevating tribal contributions in this shared journey. The IPBN has grown from a single landscape in 2015—in the combined ancestral territories of the Yurok, Hoopa and Karuk Tribes of Northern California—to include people from pueblos in New Mexico, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota, the Klamath Tribes in Oregon and the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe in Texas. Activities include strategic planning for revitalization of fire culture, fire training including both federal qualifications and culturally-based controlled burning, and promoting intergenerational learning.



Indigenous Peoples Burning Network Landscapes



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Northern California In the Yurok-Hoopa-Karuk IPBN landscape, partners used a planning process developed by aboriginal peoples in Australia to craft a five-year strategic Healthy Country Plan. The plan highlights cultural burning and intergenerational learning. This partnership is elevating tribal contributions to better address northern California's fire challenges.



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Southwest In the Rio Grande Water Fund landscape, the IPBN brings together land managers from eight New Mexico pueblos to advance forest treatments, including controlled burns. The work includes connecting people with fire training opportunities and facilitating project planning and implementation.



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Great Lakes In central Minnesota, the IPBN and Fire Learning Network are supporting collaboration between the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and the Chippewa National Forest. Against a backdrop of treaty obligations, this collaboration seeks to enable the primary parties to chart a shared path toward forest resilience and vibrant native culture.



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Pacific Northwest The Klamath Tribes joined the IPBN in 2020. A multi-year partnership in south-central Oregon with the Fremont-Winema National Forest and The Nature Conservancy's Sycan Marsh Preserve is the foundation for collaborative forest restoration underway on the national forest, co-management of fire at Sycan Marsh, and the Tribes' goal of increasing its fire management capacity to increase its impact on this landscape.



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Southeast The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas has long cared for the fire-dependent longleaf pine system with culturally-based controlled burning. Here in the Sandylands region of SE Texas, the partnership will start with TNC and the tribe assisting one another to maintain the frequent fire regime needed to sustain healthy lands and communities on TNC and tribal land.

Growing the Network Federal agencies and local TNC projects are increasing their commitments to equitable partnerships with tribes, and there is demand for expanding the IPBN. Building genuine partnerships moves at the speed of trust, though. First steps may include people from one tribe visiting another's homeland. Others engage through TREX events where cultural connections to fire are integrated into fire training. Rooted in self-determination, the IPBN leadership team is guiding network growth and adapting the network's structure to welcome new tribal landscapes.

The Indigenous Peoples Burning Network (IPBN) promotes fire-related cultural restoration—knowledge and practices—in large landscapes. Controlled burning for cultural purposes led by Native American elders and fire practitioners perpetuates traditions and supports forest resilience and hazardous fuel reduction goals.

Who We Are

The IPBN is part of the PERFECT cooperative agreement, and is led by staff from The Nature Conservancy's North America Fire Initiative. They work closely with staff from the Watershed Research and Training Center (who facilitate the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network and other strategies) and from University of California Cooperative Extension, the Conservancy's Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team, and the USDA Forest Service. Partners in PERFECT landscape and community efforts span a full range of affiliations, from federal, state, local and tribal agencies; businesses; non-profit organizations and universities to private landowners and engaged residents. Interests are equally varied, and this diversity helps build strong, resilient networks.

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Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT) is a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

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