

A Tribal Executive Leadership Forum

Critical Thinking about Challenges Facing Indian Tribes and the Road Ahead



June 1-2 2026 | Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
Cache Creek Casino Resort, Brooks, CA



Sage Loyema Innerarity
Citizen of Lone Band of
Miwok Indians

CONFERENCE



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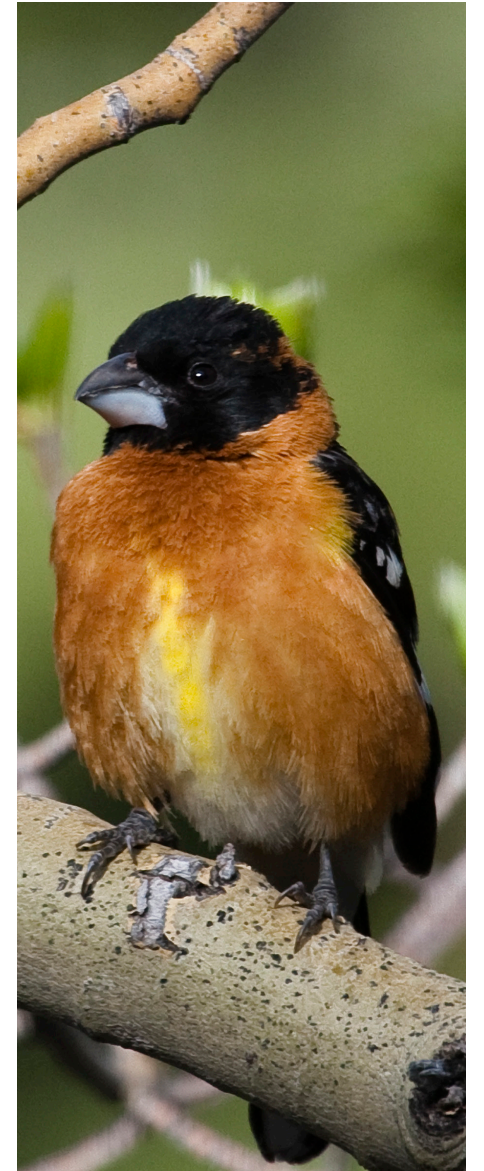
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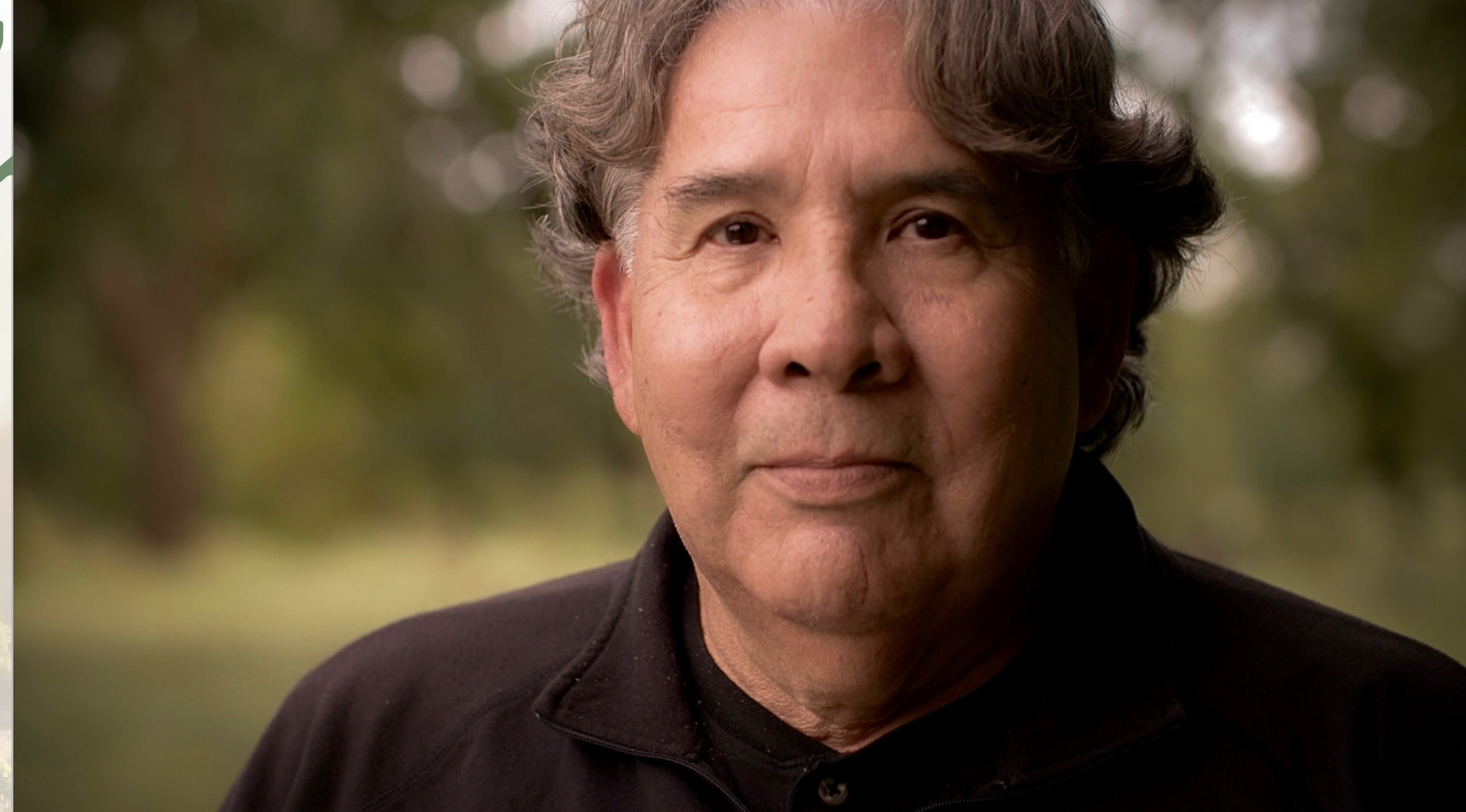
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Welcome Message

To Our Tribal Leaders, Distinguished Guests, and Steadfast Partners —

We gather on the ancestral homelands of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, a sovereign people whose enduring presence in this valley is itself a testament to what we have come here to strengthen: the capacity of Indigenous nations to hold their ground, protect what is sacred, and shape the future on their own terms.

Indian Country does not need permission to lead. We need each other — and we need the clarity, the relationships, and the strategic grounding to act with purpose in a moment that demands nothing less.



The forces bearing down on Tribal sovereignty right now are not new. But their convergence is. Federal trust obligations eroded by executive order. Water rights contested in an era of accelerating scarcity. Sacred lands threatened by mineral extraction. The digital revolution reshaping governance before Tribes have had a seat at the table. And an emerging generation of leaders who will inherit either the consequences of our inaction or the foundation of our foresight.

That is why we are here. Not to observe the crossroads — but to choose the road. This Forum brings together the finest legal minds, policy architects, and sovereign practitioners in Indian Country precisely because this moment requires more than outrage. It requires depth. Strategy. Unity. And the kind of principled leadership that is grounded in who we are as Indigenous peoples

— in our obligations to the land, to our ancestors, and to the generations whose faces we have not yet seen.

To our sponsors and allied partners: your commitment to this gathering is not philanthropy. It is an investment in the sovereign infrastructure of Indian Country's future. We are grateful for your understanding of what is at stake.

In the spirit of those who came before us, and in responsibility to those who will come after.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Brian Wallace".

A. Brian Wallace
Chief Executive Officer
Indigenous Futures Society
Nisenan Tribal Member
Former Chairman, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California



A Statement from our host Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

On behalf of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Tribal Council, we are honored to welcome Tribal leaders, legal scholars, policy experts, and distinguished guests to Cache Creek Casino Resort for this important gathering focused on the future of Indian Country.

At a time of significant change and uncertainty, forums such as this provide a critical opportunity for open dialogue, strategic thinking and collaboration rooted in our shared responsibility to protect Tribal sovereignty, strengthen Tribal homelands, and support the future generations of Native communities.

For the Patwin people, stewardship, resilience, and community have always guided our path forward. We recognize that the challenges facing Tribal nations today are complex and interconnected — from federal policy and environmental pressures to the protection of sacred places, water resources and cultural identity. Addressing these issues requires not only expertise, but also unity, partnership and the willingness to think boldly about the road ahead.

We are grateful to the Indigenous Futures Society, the American Indian Resources Institute, our speakers, and participating Tribal leaders for contributing their voices, perspectives, and experiences to these important conversations.

It is our hope that this forum strengthens relationships, sparks new ideas, and reinforces our collective commitment to advancing and protecting Tribal nations for generations to come.

With respect and gratitude,

Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Tribal Council



Monday, June 1, 2026 Treaty and trust obligations

Registration and Group Breakfast	7:30 am
Welcoming Remarks	8:30 am
Forum Overview	8:45 am
Challenges and Fulfillment of Treaty and Trust Obligations	9:00 am
Lunch Break	12:00 pm
Tribes and the Federal Trust Relationship	1:30 pm
Evening Reception at the Yocha Dehe Golf Course Clubhouse	6:00 pm

Tuesday, June 2, 2026 Homelands, water, and future generations

Group Breakfast	8:00 am
Opening Remarks	8:45 am
Tribal Homelands in a Changing Environment	9:00 am
Lunch Break	12:00 pm
Water Rights and Water Management	1:00 pm
Closing Observations	4:00 pm

The goal of this Tribal Executive Leadership Forum is to stimulate creative thinking and to discuss ideas for preserving Tribal sovereignty and Tribal homelands, as well as to provide an opportunity for Tribal leaders to engage subject-matter experts in discussions about identified challenges. The Forum will also provide the opportunity for strategic thinking about possible approaches designed to build Tribal unity, to explore intertribal collaboration, and to learn about Tribal collaborative efforts and new initiatives to address challenges facing Indian Country. To make informed decisions about a pathway forward, open dialogue amongst Tribal leaders and resource experts is essential.

Day 1 Forum Program

Monday, June 1, 2026
Treaty and trust obligations

Hon. Malissa Tayaba,
Shingle Springs Band of
Miwok Indians, Vice Chair

7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Registration

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Group Breakfast

8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Welcoming Remarks:

Hon. Anthony Roberts, Chairman,
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Hon. Leland Kinter, Treasurer,
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Forum Overview:

Brian Wallace, CEO, Indigenous Futures Society

Richard Trudell, Founder, American Indian
Resources Institute

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 pm

OPENING SESSION:

Challenges & Fulfillment of Treaty & Trust Obligations

Challenges & Fulfillment of Treaty & Trust Obligations

Once again, Indian Country is at a crossroads. Do tribes remain silent, or do they organize, mobilize, and develop focused responses to the radical changes to federal policies and programs that affect tribes? This opening session will set the stage for an open dialogue about some of the challenges facing Indian tribes.

Co-Facilitators:

Brian Wallace, CEO, Indigenous Futures Society

W. Richard West, Jr., Founding Director, National
Museum of the American Indian; President & CEO
Emeritus, Autry Museum of the American West

– PANELIST REMARKS & DISCUSSION –

“The Challenge of Developing a Plan for Indian Country’s Future that is grounded in Tribal Unity and Intertribal Collaboration”—**Hon. Mark A. Macarro**, Chairman, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians & President, National Council of American Indians

“Navigating the Federal Government as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs: The Lessons Learned”—**Kevin K. Washburn**, Professor, UC Berkeley Law, University of California; Former, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior

“Tribes as Sovereign Governments, the Federal Courts, and the Continuous Expansion and Shifting Directions of the Field of Federal Indian Law”—**John E. Echohawk**, Executive Director, Native American Rights Fund

“A Perspective on the 119th Congress, the Trump Administration, and the Midterm Elections”—**Holly Cook Macarro**, Principal, The Angle

“As AI Technologies present Risks, Responsibilities, and Opportunities, can Tribes shape Culturally-safeguarded, Human-centered Sovereignty respecting Technologies?”—**Maria Azhunova**, Burya-Mongal, Consultant, Snow Leopard Conservancy & Director, Land of Snow Leopard (LOSL) Network; Board Member, Indigenous Futures Society; **Mike Haydon**, AI & Marketing Consultant, Infinity Enterprises Consulting LLC; Former Global Strategic Marketing Consultant, Logitech

– OPEN DIALOGUE –



Day 1 Forum Program

Monday, June 1, 2026

Treaty and trust obligations

12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Lunch Break & Trailer Viewings

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Afternoon Session
Tribes and the Federal Trust Relationship

Tribes and the Federal Trust Relationship

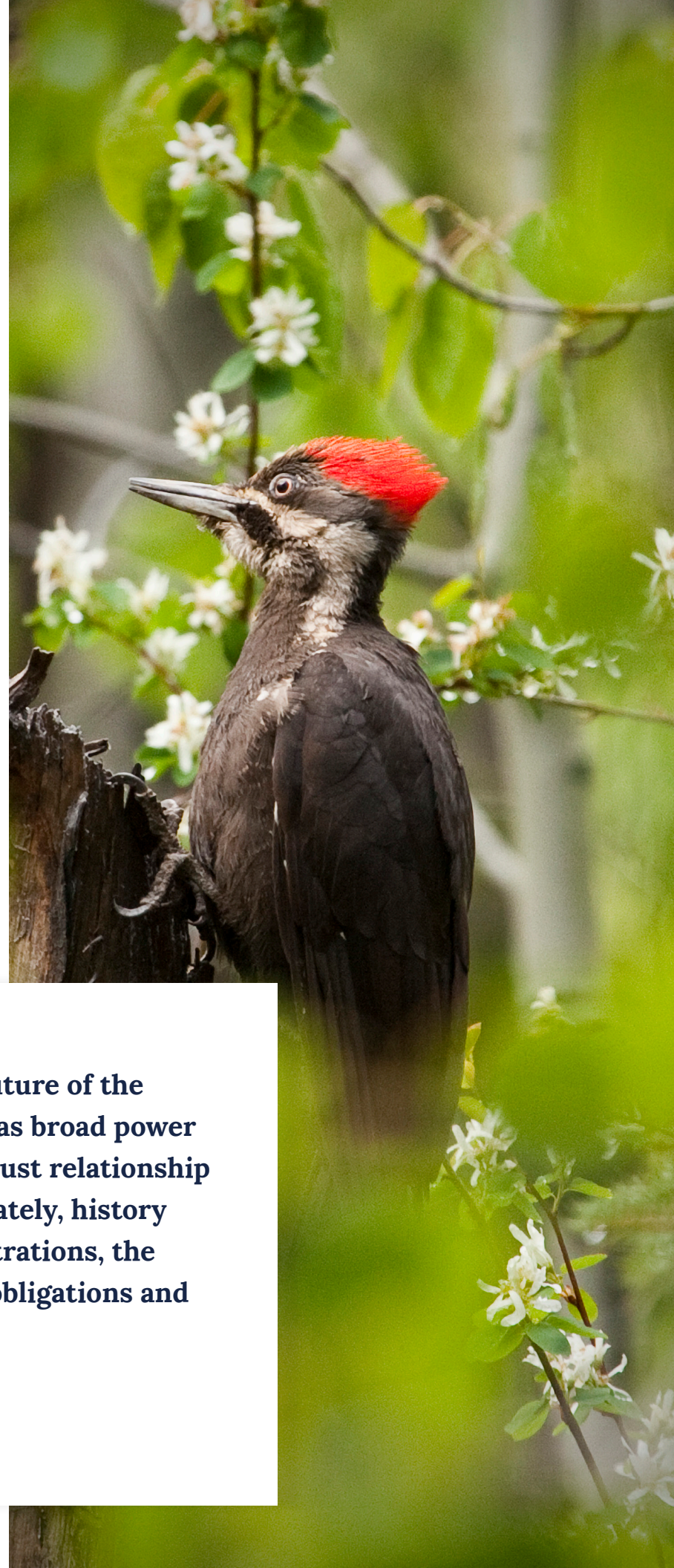
An important question for tribes is, “What will be the future of the federal-tribal trust relationship?” Although congress has broad power and authority over Indian affairs, most aspects of the trust relationship have been delegated to the executive branch. Unfortunately, history tells us that there have been efforts by various administrations, the congress, and the courts to not fulfill the federal trust obligations and responsibilities of the federal-tribal trust relationship.

Co-Facilitators:

Brian Wallace, CEO, Indigenous Futures Society

Richard Trudell, Founder, American Indian

Resources Institute



– PANELIST REMARKS & DISCUSSION –

“A Perspective on the Federal-Tribal Trust Relationship: A View from Inside and Outside of the U.S. Department of the Interior”—**Robert T. Anderson**, Oneida Indian Nation Visiting Professor, Harvard Law School; Professor of Law Emeritus, University of Washington School of Law; Former Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior

“Analyzing the Impact of the Legislative Process and Judicial Rulings on the Federal-Tribal Trust Relationship”—**Eric D. Eberhard**, Professor from Practice & Associate Director, Native American Law Center, University of Washington School of Law

“Could the Present be Prologue for the Future of the Federal-Tribal Trust Relationship?”—**Monte Mills**, Charles I. Stone Professor of Law & Director, Native American Law Center, University of Washington School Law

“The Role of Trust Relationship in 21st Century Nation Building and the Challenge of Preparing the Next Generation of Tribal Leaders”—**Hon. Sara A. Dutschke**, Chairwoman, Ione Band of Miwok Indians; Partner, Kaplan Kirsh LLP

– OPEN DIALOGUE –

4:15 p.m.

Day 1 Forum Adjourns

5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Bus to Evening Reception
at The Bahtenta -
The Yocha Dehe Golf
Course Clubhouse



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Evening Reception

at The Bahtenta -
The Yocha Dehe Golf Course Clubhouse
5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

With Tribal Host the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
Welcoming Remarks:
Honorable Mia Durham
Tribal Secretary, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Guest Speakers



Amy Bowers Cordalis

Author of *The Water Remembers: My Indigenous Family's Fight to Save a River and a Way of Life* and Co-Founder & Executive Director, Ridges to Riffles Indigenous Conservation Group discusses her work to protect the Klamath.

Book signing to follow.



Brad Munoa & Nico Magee

Creators & Executive Producers:

"People of the West" – A Ten-Part Docuseries produced by Pechanga Studios on the History of California Indians



Day 2 Forum Program

Tuesday, June 2, 2026
Homelands, water, and future generations

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Group Breakfast

8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Opening Remarks:
Hon. Mia Durham, Tribal Secretary,
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
Brian Wallace, CEO, Indigenous Futures Society

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 pm

Morning Session:
Tribal Homelands in a Changing Environment

Tribal Homelands in a Changing Environment

Will tribal homelands be there for future generations? Given the uncertainty of the current political environment, this question is more important today than ever. In this session, issues and challenges related to tribal homelands—the future of tribal reserved water rights, supply, and quality; protection of tribal natural resources; impacts of climate change, such as fires, drought, floods, and extreme weather patterns; environmental quality in tribal communities; the protection of scared sites and monuments; the value of traditional ecological knowledge—will be discussed.

Co-Facilitators:
Brian Wallace, CEO, Indigenous Futures Society
Chuck Striplen, Program Officer, International Indigenous Conservation, Resources Legacy Fund

– PANELIST REMARKS & DISCUSSION –

“A Perspective on the Future of Tribal Lands, Sacred Places, and Conservation”—**Jim Enote**, CEO, Colorado Plateau Foundation; Zuni Tribal Member and Traditional Farmer

“Climate Change and the Challenges Facing Indigenous Land Stewardship”—**Don L. Hankins**, Ph.D. Professor of Geography & Planning, California State University, Chico

“Resourcing the Return-Sovereign Strategies for Land, Water, and Data”—**Stephanie Hicks**, Director of Philanthropy, Yurok Foundation

“Legal Implications for Tribes from Mining Minerals—like Lithium and Copper—on Western Public Lands”—**Roger Flynn**, Founding Director & Managing Attorney, Western Mining Action Project; Adjunct Professor, University of Colorado Law School

“Co-Stewardship & Co-Management: Tools to Use in Developing Agreements”—**Monte Mills**, Charles I. Stone Professor of Law & Director, Native American Law Center, University of Washington School Law

– OPEN DIALOGUE –



Day 2

Forum Program

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Homelands, water, and future generations

12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Afternoon Session:
**Water Rights & Water
Management**

Water Rights & Water Management

California manages water as a commodity. Tribal nations have always governed water as covenant. That gap is not a philosophical disagreement — it is an active, ongoing harm. A confrontation with power — with who controls water, who is excluded from that control, and what that exclusion costs a people across generations. This session explores Indigenous water knowledge, sovereignty-grounded governance, and the conviction that the next generation of Tribal water leaders deserves a foundational experience that matches the scale of what they are inheriting.

Co-Facilitators:

Brian Wallace, CEO, Indigenous Futures Society
Richard Trudell, Founder, American Indian Resources Institute



– PANELIST REMARKS & DISCUSSION –

“Strategic Thinking about Tribal Water Policymaking: Protecting and Asserting Indian Water Rights, Developing the Water Management Capability, and Planning for Sustainable Water Use and Supply”—**Lycia Ortega**, Vice President, Thunderbird Strategies, LLC

“Planning a Sustainable Tribal Water Future: The Yocha Dehe Wintun Experience”—**Marc Fawns**, P.G., Water Quality Manager, Sustainable Water Protection, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

“Land and Water in Payahuunadu”—**Noah Williams**, Tribal Partnership Program Manager, Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT); Former Water Program Coordinator, Eastern Sierra Land Trust

“Native American Rights Fund’s Tribal Water Institute: Its Mission and Activities”—**Daniel Cordalis & David Gover**, Staff Attorneys, Native American Rights Fund

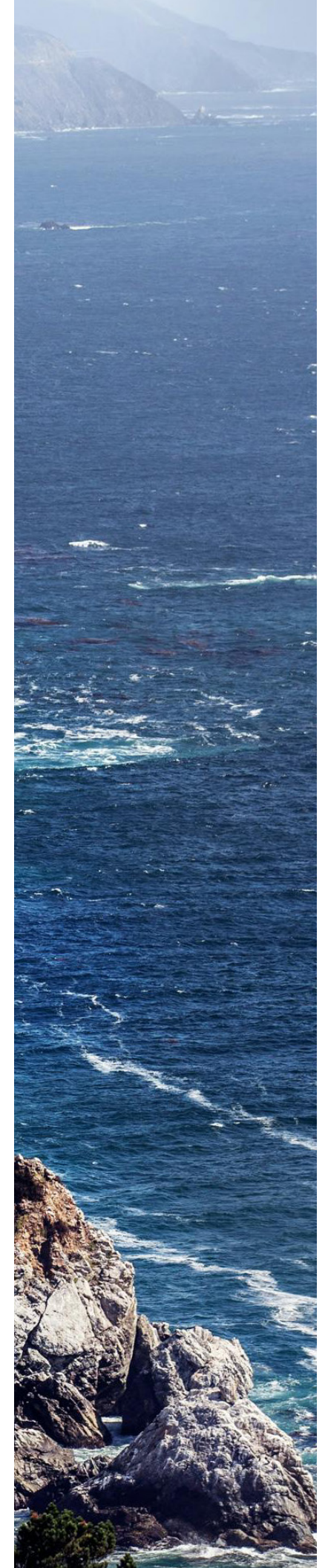
“Developing a Plan for Implementing and Enforcing Tribal Reserved Water Rights, Policies and Programs”—**Lycia Ortega**, Vice President, Thunderbird Strategies, LLC

– OPEN DIALOGUE –

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Closing Observations

END OF FORUM





FORUM LEADERSHIP

YOCHA DEHE TRIBAL COUNCIL SPEAKERS



Richard Trudell

Founder, American Indian Resources Institute
Santee Sioux Nation

Trudell was the founder and executive director of the American Indian Lawyer Training Program (AILTP) and its American Indian Resources Institute (AIRI). Trudell has organized and facilitated over 25 Tribal leaders' forums around the country and in the United States Senate, with the goal of shaping a legislative framework for developing an agenda for Indian Country.

A. Brian Wallace

CEO, Indigenous Futures Society
Nisenan | Washoe

Wallace is the visionary of the Indigenous Futures Society, inspiring groundbreaking Indigenous-led programs for the Sierra Bioregion. He served as an elected official of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California from 1979-2006, which included four terms as Tribal Chairman and one four-year term as Vice Chairman



Hon. Anthony Roberts

Tribal Chairman,
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Anthony Roberts has been an active and steadfast leader within the Yocha Dehe community for decades. Since his election to the Tribal Council in 2000, he has served in multiple leadership roles and is now in his third term as Tribal Chairman. **Full bio available online.**

Hon. Leland Kinter

Tribal Treasurer,
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

First elected to the Tribal Council in January 2012, Leland Kinter has played an active role in Tribal leadership and governance. Throughout his tenure, Leland has served in every capacity on the Tribal Council. He is now proudly serving his second term as Tribal Treasurer. **Full bio available online.**



Hon. Mia Durnham

Tribal Secretary,
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Mia Durham has lived her entire life in the Capay Valley and has dedicated much of that time to serving her community and Tribe. Elected to the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Tribal Council in 2009 as a Council Member, she is currently serving her first term as Tribal Secretary. **Full bio available online.**

Robert T. Anderson

Oneida Indian Nation Visiting Professor, Harvard Law School; Professor of Law Emeritus, University of Washington School of Law; Former Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior

Bois Forte Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe



Eric D. Eberhard

Professor from Practice & Associate Director, Native American Law Center, University of Washington School of Law

Maria Azhunova

Consultant, Snow Leopard Conservancy & Director, Land of Snow Leopard (LOSL) Network; Board Member, Indigenous Futures Society

Buryat-Mongol



John EchoHawk

Executive Director, Native American Rights Fund; Attorney

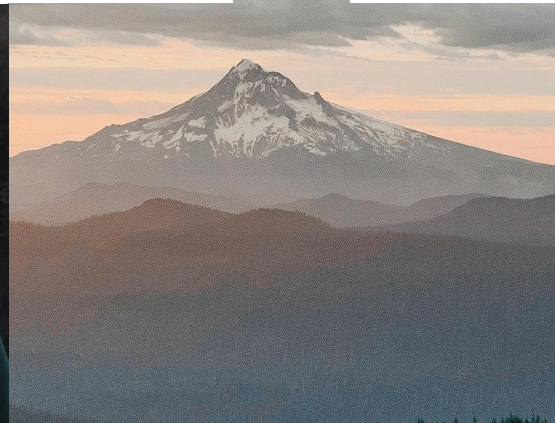
Pawnee



Amy Bowers Cordalis

Executive Director of the Ridges to Riffles Indigenous Conservation Group; Author of *The Water Remembers*; Champions of the World Laureate; Attorney

Yurok Tribe



Jim Enote

CEO, Colorado Plateau Foundation; Zuni Tribal Member and Traditional Farmer

Zuni Tribe

Daniel Cordalis

Staff Attorney, Native American Rights Fund

Navajo Nation



Marc Fawns

P.G., Water Quality Manager, Sustainable Water Protection, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

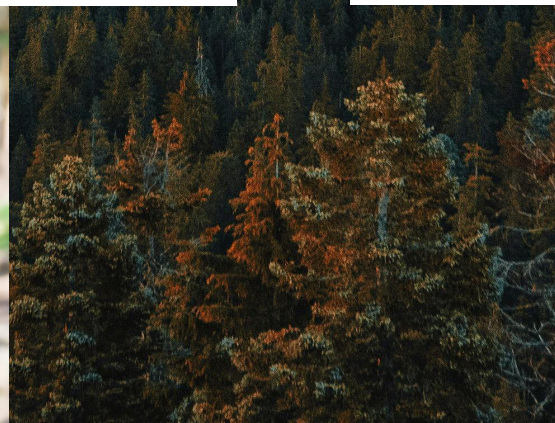
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation



Hon. Sara Dutschke

Chairwoman, Ione Band of Miwok Indians; Partner, Kaplan Kirsh LLP

Ione Band of Miwok Indians



Roger Flynn

Founding Director & Managing Attorney, Western Mining Action Project; Adjunct Professor, University of Colorado Law School

Daniel Gover

Staff Attorney, Native American Rights Fund

Pawnee/Choctaw



Hon. Mark Macarro

Chairman, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians; President, National Congress of American Indians

Pechanga Band of Indians



Don Hankins

Ph.D. Professor of Geography & Planning, California State University, Chico

Miwko?

Nico Magee

Executive Producer: "People of the West" Docuseries

Pechanga Band of Indians



Mike Haydon

AI & Marketing Consultant, Infinity Enterprises Consulting LLC; Former Global Strategic Marketing Consultant, Logitech

Wintun & Modoc



Monte Mills

Charles I. Stone Professor of Law & Director, Native American Law Center, University of Washington School Law



Stephanie Hicks

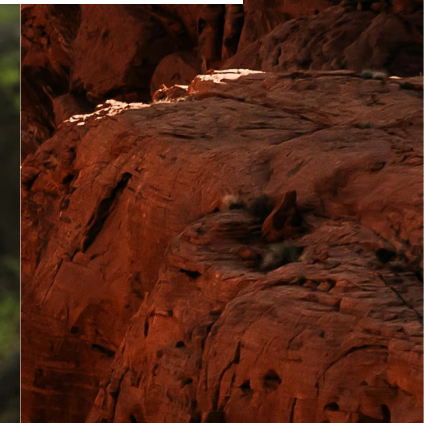
Director of Philanthropy, Yurok Foundation

Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe

Brad Munoa

Creator and Executive Producer: "People of the West" Docuseries

Pechanga Band of Indians



Holly Cook Macarro

Principal, The Angle

Red Lake Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota



Chuck Striplen

Program Officer, International Indigenous Conservation, Resources Legacy Fund

Mutsun

Jimmy-John Thompson
Director: "We're Still Here" Documentary
Timbisha Shoshone



Lycia Ortega
Vice President, Thunderbird Strategies, LLC
Ft. Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe



Kevin K. Washburn
Professor, UC Berkeley Law, University of California; Former, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior
Chickasaw Nation



W. Richard West Jr.
Founding Director, National Museum of the American Indian; President & CEO Emeritus, Autry Museum of the American West
Southern Cheyenne



Noah Williams
Tribal Partnership Program Manager, Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT); Former Water Program Coordinator, Eastern Sierra Land Trust
Bishop Paiute Tribe

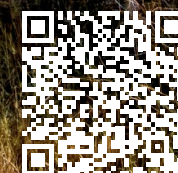


Thank You,



American Indian
Resources Institute

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Speaker Bios





Ursula Jones
Miwuk/Pomo

About Us



**INDIGENOUS
FUTURES
SOCIETY**

The Indigenous Futures Society is an Indigenous-led and -governed nonprofit dedicated to **Igniting Indigenous Guardianship in the Sierra Nevada Bioregion.**

We envision a future where: All people respect Indigenous cultural ecologies of the Sierra Nevada. Indigenous voices, leadership, and knowledge are centered in the movement to restore resiliency to our environment and communities. □ Rights of Nature are honored,



and everyone understands their inherent caretaking responsibility to be a guardian. Indigenous peoples restore and protect the land through practices that have sustained the region for generations. □ Indigenous peoples' cultures, lands, and languages thrive. All of our relations (humans and more than humans) are given equal voice. Women's voices as cultural keepers are centered. All peoples learn from the land, intergenerational transmission of knowledge, and cultural wisdom.

Contact Us: info@indigenousfuturesociety.org
indigenousfuturesociety.org
(530) 265-8454





Artwork by Koppa Enos (Nisenan)

*Thanks to JDelso Photography,
Ariel Elliott, and Dereck Goodwin
for many of the photos featured
in this program and Laura
DeJaneiro for the Design.*



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