

The Native American Rangeland Management Training Project

We are excited to announce the launch of the Native American Rangeland Management Training Project! The Society for Range Management is collaborating with tribal partners and federal agencies to implement a long-term initiative that addresses several critical disconnects that impact the sustainable management of tribal rangelands. The idea was developed through the SRM's Native American Rangeland Advisory Committee, who agreed that it was essential to train and support tribal staff in their efforts to manage natural resources for tribal members and on tribal lands. In addition, this effort will provide support for federal and local agency staff who work with tribes in natural resource management, and also facilitate learning and collaboration between tribes, agencies, and academic institutions.

The project is funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the US Forest Service, and further strengthened by the SRM's partnership with the Intertribal Agriculture Council, the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society, and Animo Partnership in Natural Resources.

In this long-term effort we address areas such as recruitment, education, capacity building, applied research, and outreach through sound science and strong consideration of tribal traditional and cultural values. This is a four-pronged approach that includes the following activities:

- Train-the-Trainer" rangeland management online courses and workshops tailored for tribal/regional needs;
- Rangeland management tool-kits for outreach in both Native American and Hispano land-based communities;
- Inter-tribal informational website on natural resources; and
- Evaluation for an accredited online soil and rangeland ecology course for tribal students.

In the next two weeks, tribal staff will receive a survey to request input on their specific training needs and invite them to enroll. We will launch the first online course this winter, and individually tailored workshops will begin in late spring of 2019. We will use a model where advisory teams are created from local ecological and cultural experts/leaders that can develop a close working relationship with the tribes participating in the program. Along with the training, those same teams will be able to support tribal efforts in community-relevant research and provide assistance with long-term management strategies and problem-solving.

We are currently developing a partnership website that will serve as an informative hub about tribal natural resources with downloadable materials, funding and collaboration opportunities, calendars, and links that will help tribal staff network and obtain support. The website will be launched in spring of 2019. In addition, with the help of federal agencies and cultural film experts, we will be hosting several youth workshops in summer of 2019 to develop short films about career paths and rangeland conservation in tribal communities. Other outreach materials include coloring books of native plants with native languages, downloadable presentations for tribal rangeland manager community outreach, and outlines/printed material for community and producer workshops. The evaluation for the accredited online soil and rangeland ecology course is already in progress, and will be tested on a group of students in 2019. If accreditation is achievable, we will then move forward to secure long-term funding to launch the course on servers at a tribal college that will host the course for students enrolled at other tribal colleges.

For more information about this project or if you know of a tribe that is interested in enrolling, please contact Diana Doan-Crider (link diana@animopartnership.org).