

October 4, 2021
Nevada Indian Commission
Executive Director Report

BUDGET

Nevada Indian Commission

FY2022 Starting Balance = \$ 352,074
Current balance = \$ 290,482

FY2021 Starting Balance = \$ 341,032
Ending Balance = \$ 4,465

Stewart Indian School Cultural Center & Museum

FY2022 Starting Balance = \$ 295,952
Current Balance = \$ 238,753

FY2021 Starting Balance = \$ 311,415
Ending Balance = \$ 916

Gift Fund

FY2022 Starting Balance = \$ 182,760
Ending Balance = \$ 105,510
To Be Received = \$ 73,830
Expended = \$ 3,419

Totals as of 09/24/21

The funding for NIC budget is 75% General Fund and 25% Transfer from Tourism.

The funding for SISCC&M budget is 38% General Fund and 62% Transfer from Tourism.

COVID-19

- Because of the rise in the Delta variant, NIC is participating in a bi-monthly meeting called by the Nevada Division of Emergency Management. During these virtual meetings we address the current situation on all reservations, current outreach efforts including food, vaccines, personal protection equipment supplies and collaborations for mitigation.

- In response to Walker River Paiute Chair Amber Torres' request during Governor Sisolak's Summit with Tribal leaders to have a comprehensive, culturally appropriate public service campaign to effectively communicate COVID-19 mitigation measures, the NIC assembled public health, communication, not-for-profits, and state professionals along with Tribal representatives. Through on-going efforts, this group has produced a tele-town hall with a panel of health experts and a celebrity emcee (another is scheduled for October 11, Indigenous Peoples' Day at 6 pm). The July 13 tele townhall had 1,470 attendees. Seventeen callers were able ask questions, and 10 people were screened and went live. The Facebook live recording was posted after the fact and viewed over 2.2k times. In addition, the working group has developed billboards, social media messaging and handouts using Native Artists. The full-color flyers have been shared at numerous events, plus placed on all food boxes. [1]

- Due to loss of NIC staff, the Food Bank of Northern Nevada is now leading the Tribal Task Force bi-monthly briefings with all food organizations, but the NIC continues to play a major role in dissemination of activities to Native American communities and identifies gaps to service providers.

This includes monthly calendars and daily reminders about all food distributions.

- SISCC&M is operating and implementing COVID-19 safety protocols per the Governor’s guidelines. Special Saturday events including ---- Great Basin Native Basket Weavers workshops, Remembrance Run, Carson City Studio Tours art demonstrations, and Orange Shirt Day remembrance continue to be organized and held with caution for the rise in the Delta variant. We are posting holiday hours as follows: Closed for Thanksgiving Break - November 25-26; Holiday Break - December 20-January 3
- All employees of our agency have been vaccinated.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- After tracking a few dozen bills and co-presenting or testifying on five BDRs, the 81st Nevada Legislative Session passed arguably the most impactful new laws for Native Americans of this generation including:
 - AB262 (Tuition Waiver by Anderson) to Enrollment 5/31
 - AB88 (Native Mascot, Sundowner Sirens by Watts) to Gov. 5/27
 - AB171 (Adds protection to Swamp Cedars by Watts) Signed 5/25
 - AB321 (Expands Voting Access by Frierson) to Enrollment 5/31
 - AB103 (Adds protections to our sacred burial sites by Martinez) Signed 5/25
 - AB270 (Revenue Stream for Stewart Campus preservation by O’Neil) to Enrollment 5/31
 - AB52 (Adds Native representation to Land Use Planning Advisory Council) to Gov. 5/29
 - AB72 (Adds Native representation to Board on Geographic Names) Signed 5/21
 - AB95 (Adds Native representation to Leg Committee on Natural Resources) Signed 5/27
 - AB261 (Diversity and inclusivity in School Curriculum by Anderson) Signed 5/25
 - AJR3 (Water and land protections) Delivered to SOS 5/25
 - AJR4 (Land protections) Delivered to SOS 5/19

The historic session was marked with a bill signing ceremony on Friday, June 4 at the Stewart Indian School with Governor Sisolak, the Assembly members Anderson, Watts, and O’Neil, 11 Tribal Chairs, NIC Commissioner Brian Wadsworth, and Carson City Mayor Lori Bagwell in attendance. More than 120 people celebrated this milestone with the NIC.

2020 CENSUS

- Worked with Elko Band Council Chair Davis Gonzales and the Complete Count Census Committee and our Tribal Partnership Specialist, the NIC identified that per the 2020 Census Redistricting Data, 105,790 people were counted as American Indian or Alaska Native alone, or in combination with another ethnicity. This number was extracted from the 2020 Census Demographic Data Map Viewer.

	2010-2020			
	2020	2010	Numerical Increase	Percent Increase
AI/AN	43,932	32,062	11,870	37.0%
AI/AN combo	105,790	55,945	49,845	89.1%

American Indian or Alaska Natives make up 1.4% of Nevada's population.

American Indian or Alaska Natives along or in combo makes up 3.4% of Nevada's population.

NATIVE VOTE

- Since the 2020 election, the NIC has participated/organized three meetings specific to voting access for our Tribal Nations and Urban Indians. These meetings included a combination of stakeholders including the Nevada Secretary of State's Office Tribal Liaison and Deputy Director and representatives from: All Voting Is Local, Native American Rights Fund (NARF), Tribal Minds, Nevada Native Vote Project, and Native Voters Alliance Nevada. We have made progress on *four* major asks of the SOS Office, with one being implemented.
 - 1) In addition to the Nevada law which established a special process allowing any Tribe to request a polling place the addition (and/or) of a ballot drop box on Tribal land is now an option. Further, early voting locations, an Election Day polling place, and a ballot drop box are available individually or in combination. **ESTABLISHED**
 - 2) We also requested the Secretary of State's office exhaust all avenues to add Tribal IDs to the online voter registration system. Given the low percentage of Native voter registration in the state (%), we hope to increase this number as all 27 Nations authorize IDs to their enrolled members. **The vast majority of these IDs are an accepted form of ID in the State of Nevada. NIC has a draft resolution for ITCN to provide a sample ID to the NIC to share with the SOS office, who will share with County Clerks.**
 - 3) We also requested a public list of Tribal polling locations on the Secretary of State's website. We want to make sure that our communities are informed about their right to request a polling location for election day and early vote and/or a drop box on their Reservation, and this list will help provide outreach and oversight with county clerks. **IN PROGRESS**
 - 4) We also requested the SOS provide County Clerk Training and Oversight as many clerks and voting officials and volunteers are not familiar with our Tribal ID's. **IN PROGRESS**
- After the Walker River Paiute Reservation's Precinct #11 in Mineral County, Nevada recorded that county's highest voter turn-out at 80.74%, the NIC is confident other Tribal Nations will take advantages of State outreach, support, and services in upcoming elections. Further, the NIC has a commitment from NARF to assist any Tribal Nation in Nevada seeking to establish voter services in selecting an appropriate site and navigating other applicable regulations.

CONSULTATION (AB 264)

We continue to collect feedback for the written draft policy including the executive director speaking at the Annual Native American Ag Summit. Currently, three Chairs have committed to submit comments on the draft presently.

- Dr. Debra Harry (Pyramid Lake Paiute), an associate professor at the University of Nevada and Lynn Manning-John (Duck Valley Shoshone Paiute), the Owyhee Combined School Vice-Principal, have

held two planning sessions to prepare the mandatory training for Nevada employees who interact with our Tribal communities on a regular basis. Currently, this professional development intended to provide a historic and contemporary look at our Indigenous history, Tribal governments, cultural impacts and effective methods for collaboration and effective communication will be held on Friday, November 5 at the University of Nevada with technology enabling participants to join virtually.

- The Confederated Tribes of Goshute have requested formal consultation regarding quantification of its federally reserved water rights. The NIC is working to accommodate the CTGR's Business Council ask for an in-person meeting as soon as possible.

NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT (NAGPRA)

- Promoted by public comments made by Marissa Weaselboy (Yomba Shoshone) during the December 10, 2020 NIC Commissioners' meeting, I met virtually with University of Nevada President Brian Sandoval, some faculty from the College of Liberal Arts, as well as concerned Indigenous faculty and staff to address the University's violation of NAGPRA.
- This introductory meeting led to a well-attended in-person meeting with a virtual option including 11 Tribal leaders, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs), cultural experts, and several representatives from the University of Nevada, including President Sandoval, representatives from the College of Liberal Arts.
- Last week, a consulting firm hired by UNR: the Cogstone Resource Management Inc., which specializes in paleontology, archaeology, and history, provided our Tribal leaders with a written "case list" (22 ancestors) and a timeline for those remains and funerary objects to be repatriated. In fact, Tuesday, September 28 funerary items were returned to Chair Warren Graham of the Duckwater Shoshone Nation. Considering the complex nature of NAGPRA, the urgency and quick action the University has arranged for our ancestors looks promising for all cultural items to be returned quickly. The University also is seeking a full-time NAGPRA coordinator and a full-time Tribal Liaison.

EDUCATION

- With the passage of the Native American Fee Waiver, at least ***80** learners have taken advantage of this cost savings. **WNC, UNR, NSC, reporting.*
- To inform learners and their families about the availability of the Fee Waiver as well as how to apply, the NIC collaborated with Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) and other stakeholders on an informational webinar. Most recently, we collaborated with the Nevada Department of Education on a second webinar for Tribal Education professionals and Tribal Enrollment (July 16) representatives as these two groups are highly involved in the application process.
- Per the NRS, data regarding how many Fall 2021 students applied for the waiver, how many used the waiver, how many were eligible for the waiver will be provided at the end of the academic year by NSHE.

- The 1-year Nevada residency requirement has disqualified at least 15 Native American learners from taking advantage of the fee waiver. These students are enrolled in a Federally recognized Tribal Nation with land in the state of Nevada, who have not lived in the state for one-year prior to enrolling in an NSHE institute. I have a pending meeting with Assembly member Anderson to discuss addressing this oversight with an amendment in 2023.

U.S. SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S INITIATIVE INTO INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

- In June at the National Congress of American Indians 2021 Mid-Year Conference, Deb Haaland, the United States Secretary of the Interior, announced the creation of a Federal Indian Boarding School initiative.
- As the Nevada Indian Commission currently operates out of the Stewart Indian Boarding School, and as every Paiute, Shoshone, and Washoe person in our state either attended Stewart or is a direct descendent, this initiative is vital to our agency.
- Secretary Haaland will oversee an investigation about the loss of human life and the lasting consequences of residential Indian boarding schools. Her primary goal will be to identify boarding school facilities and sites; the location of known and possible student burial sites located at or near school facilities; and the identities and Tribal affiliations of children interred at such locations.
- To prepare, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak scheduled a September 13 meeting (postponed) with all Tribal Chairs to learn how our leadership would proceed as the original 240 acres campus was divided after the Federal Government operations at Stewart. Today, 136 acres are under the jurisdiction of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California—including the Dat-So-La-Lee Cemetery which was long associated with Stewart.
- Per records, 137 of the 233 burial spots at the Dat-So-La-Lee Cemetery are identified. Further, early research at some Indian boarding school and residential schools have discovered unmarked or even mass graves in other parts of campus or even just off the original school grounds.
- In order to share Secretary Haaland's memo, and in order to collect stories and records pertaining to Stewart, I have met with the Washoe Nation's leadership (August 20), the Washoe Burial Committee (June 28 and August 31) and the Washoe Cultural Resources Advisory Council (September 7).
- As the Federal Government and other agencies grapple with the acknowledgement, the recompense, and the reconciliation for the forced assimilation, the NIC will encourage our alumni and their families to work with our staff to record their boarding school experience and stories for permanent keeping in our state-of-the-art cultural center.
- Moreover, the NIC will focus on programs and resources which will help our alumni and their families deal with the historical trauma inflicted by Indian boarding schools, and the social ills which

plague our people as a direct result, e.g., The Remembrance Run, Orange Shirt Day, and Talking Circles

RED ROAD TO DC

- A 25-foot totem pole, hand-carved and painted by Native Americans, was delivered to our nation's capital on July 29 after a two-week cross-country journey from Washington state, as part of a campaign to protect sacred Tribal lands.
- The NIC secured an opportunity for PeeHee Mu'huh or Thacker Pass to be a virtual stop on the Red Road To DC (July 13) <https://redroadtodc.org/>
- Brian Thomas, Vice Chair of the Shoshone-Paiute Nation of Duck Valley, and I were invited to be part of the welcoming group on the Washington Mall when the totem was presented to U.S. Secretary Haaland.
- I was asked to be in the delegation of Tribal and traditional and community organizers who met with U.S. Secretary Haaland on the urgent action to protect sacred places and the need not just for consultation, but for priority informed consent.
- Further, during my three days in DC, I also met with Congressman Mark Amodei, Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto, Senator Jacky Rosen, and staff from Cassidy and Associates, the government relations firm which represents Nevada on federal issues. In these important meetings, we discussed consultation / informed consent, voting access, the NAS Fallon and Nellie Airbase withdrawals, and the operation of our cultural center and the preservation of the Stewart campus.

NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION (NTIA) GRANT APPLICATION

- Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN), the Nevada Governor's Office of Science and Technology and the NIC assisted 10 of our Tribal Nations with a \$65.4 million grant application for the NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.
- Besides this consortium, these partners assisted another five Nations apply individually with applications totaling about \$7 million.

The Governor's Office as well as the NIC are engaging our Congressional delegation to support our applications.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS / ONGOING PROJECTS

- * Identified and nominated Dr. Debra Harry to serve on nation committee re: Missing & Murdered Indigenous People efforts
- * Met with Tribal Government Relations Specialist Terry Bentley (Karuk) of the Western Region Veterans Affairs; Deputy Assistant Secretary Raphael Chavez Fernandez of the U.S. Department

Of Veterans Affairs; and Senior Advisor the Executive Director Henry Huntley of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (September 13)

- * Repainted the “S” with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, the Division of Forestry visiting firefighters, family of Stewart Alumni and volunteers. NIC paid reduced rate for white paint (March 31)
- * Participant in virtual Roundtable with Sen. Cortez Masto on the Epidemic of MMIW
- * Meeting with NV DHHS legal about labeling quarterly meetings as consultation
- * Election / Voting Rights Signing Ceremony in Las Vegas (June 11)
- * Attended Lake Tahoe Summit at which U.S. Secretary Deb Haaland provided keynote (August 19)
- * Attended Nevada Gold Mines Shoshone Scholarship Fund Graduation Celebration in Elko, Nevada
- * Attended Rez Tour Townhall event on Walker River Paiute Nation with Assembly member Sara Peters, former Assembly member Shea Backus, and other dignitaries (September 3)
- * Building relationship with San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (SMBMI) who recently purchased the Las Vegas Palms Casino. SMBMI is looking for philanthropic causes to support Urban Indians and Tribal Nations in Southern Nevada.
- * Model for MMIW art installation for Art Town
- * In-person meeting with Buildings and Grounds Director regarding bat hazard in building #1, #3 and throughout campus
- * Conference Call with Nevada Department of Motor Vehicle staffers Karen Stoll, Tax Program Supervisor II and John Neese, Administrator, to learn about Tribal Fuel Tax Exemption
- * Introductory meeting with DuAne Young, newly appointed Policy Director for the Governor's Office
- * Attended Veterans Administration President’s Reception (September 12)
- * Participated in Virtual Symposium: Missing or Murdered American Indians hosted by Lady Justice
- * Honor Flight Nevada Fundraiser Luncheon Honoring World War II Veterans
- * Toured Nuwu Art Center in Las Vegas: <https://www.nuwuart.com>
- * Participated in Nevada Treasurer’s Nevada Recovers Listening Tour to gather suggestions on how to spend \$6.7 billion as part of the American Rescue Plan (September 22)
- * Participated in Orange Shirt Day to remember those children who did not return from Indian boarding school (September 30)

STANDING MEETINGS

- * Governor's Cabinet
- * National Delegation Staffers (Senator Catherine Cortez-Mastos and Senator Jacky Rosen)
- * Naval Air Station-Fallon Withdrawal Updates
- * Intergovernmental Executive Committee meetings regarding Naval Air Station-Fallon
- * Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN)
- * Governor's Interstate Indian Commission (GIIC)
- * Nevada State-Federal Tribal Liaison Working Group Meeting
- * Western Governors' Association - State Tribal Officials
- * Internal Executive Branch on Lithium Topics
- * Budget Reviews with the Finance Manager for the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs
- * University of Nevada NAGPRA Working Group

PRESENTATION ON SISCC&M or NIC

- * National Organization of Women (NOW)
- * U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Nevada Advisory Committee Web Hearing:
Education Equity in the Virtual Environment
- * Unitarian Universalist Sunday Forum
- * University of Nevada Social Work
- * Native American Ag Summit
- * Staff from NAS Fallon
- * Easter Navajo Land Commission Tour and Meeting
- * 2021 Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class
- * Yerington Paiute Nation Health Fair
- * California Preservation Foundation's : Sites of Conscience Webinar
- * State Historic Preservation Officer's Interns
- * National Indian Education Association Southwest Regional Meeting
- * Assembly Members Howard Watts and Lesley Cohen
- * Government Relations Firm contacts from Cassidy and Associates
- * South Washoe DEMS
- * Nevada Science Center Co-Owners, Dr. Matt Bonde (Te-Moak Shoshone)

9/27/21_ 9 pm