

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Understanding and Implementation

The Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) is focusing on Indigenous Knowledge in the Section 106 process to help practitioners more fully understand it and its role in the process. While there is no legal definition of Indigenous Knowledge in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), ONAA is working with Indian Tribes, *kanaka maoli* (indigenous people of the Hawaiian Islands) and Native Hawaiian organizations (NHOs) to develop appropriate means to explain the importance and role of Indigenous Knowledge has in all four steps of the Section 106 process. Traditional Knowledge and the Section 106 Process: Information for Federal Agencies and Other Participants, an outcome of this collaboration, explores the concept of Indigenous knowledge and begins to clarify its role in the Section 106 review process.

In preparing this paper, the ACHP worked with representatives of Tribal Nations and *kanaka maoli* (the indigenous people of the Hawaiian Islands) to develop appropriate ways to discuss Indigenous Knowledge. The paper includes appendices with a small sample of information about Indigenous Knowledge shared by Tribal and *kanaka maoli* experts. The ACHP is grateful to all those who helped write this paper and contributed their knowledge.

Why Indigenous Knowledge is Important

Section 54 U.S.C. 302706 of the NHPA clarifies that properties of religious and cultural importance to an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization may be determined eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, these properties must be considered in the Section 106 review process. The special expertise, or Indigenous Knowledge, brought to the process by Tribal and Native Hawaiian participants is frequently the basis for identifying these locations, evaluating them for National Register eligibility, and resolving any potential adverse effects.

Outreach

ONAA's discussions with Indian Tribes, *kanaka maoli*, and other Indigenous peoples about Indigenous Knowledge included participation in the eighteenth session of the United Nations' Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UN PFII) entitled, *Traditional knowledge: Generation, Transmission and Protection*. During the session, the U.S. government offered a statement about its efforts to protect Indigenous Knowledge, which the ACHP helped draft. The ACHP, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Mission to the U.N. also hosted a side event on Indigenous Knowledge, in conjunction with the UN PFII session. The side event was intended to begin a discussion with U.S. indigenous representatives about how the U.S. government should work with Indigenous Knowledge. Key recommendations, questions, and comments raised by attendees at the side event are available here.

The ACHP also regularly hosts webinars and participates in panel presentations to further educate parties about Indigenous Knowledge and its role in historic preservation.

Developing an ACHP Policy Statement on Indigenous Knowledge and Historic Preservation

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) is hosting a series of staff-led listening sessions with Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiians regarding the intersection of Indigenous Knowledge and historic preservation. These listening sessions are an opportunity for Tribes and Native Hawaiians to help shape the development of an ACHP policy statement that will further inform the role Indigenous Knowledge has in the Section 106 process. This policy statement will build on the recently released government-wide Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge in an effort to tailor many of those messages to the needs of the historic preservation community. The policy will also be informed by concepts discussed in ACHP's existing information paper *Traditional Knowledge and the Section 106 Process: Information for Federal Agencies and Other Participants*. For additional information on this effort please see here.

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Resources

Executive Office of the President, Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Council on Environmental Quality
Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge

DOI BIA

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Guidance Document Pursuant to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA)

DOI BOEM Alaska Region

Traditional Knowledge

DOI BOEM and the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management

Traditional Knowledge Implementation: Accessing Community Panels of Subject Matter Experts

DOI NPS

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

US FWS

Traditional Ecological Knowledge for Application by Service Scientists

The United Nations Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) on Indigenous Issues

The Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Policies for Sustainable Development: Updates and Trends in the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People

United Nations: Human Rights Council, Thirtieth session

Promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples with respect to their cultural heritage

Study by the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples