

Cultural Awareness and Language Access Panel Presentation

Pala Band of Mission Indians



**PALA BAND OF
MISSION INDIANS**



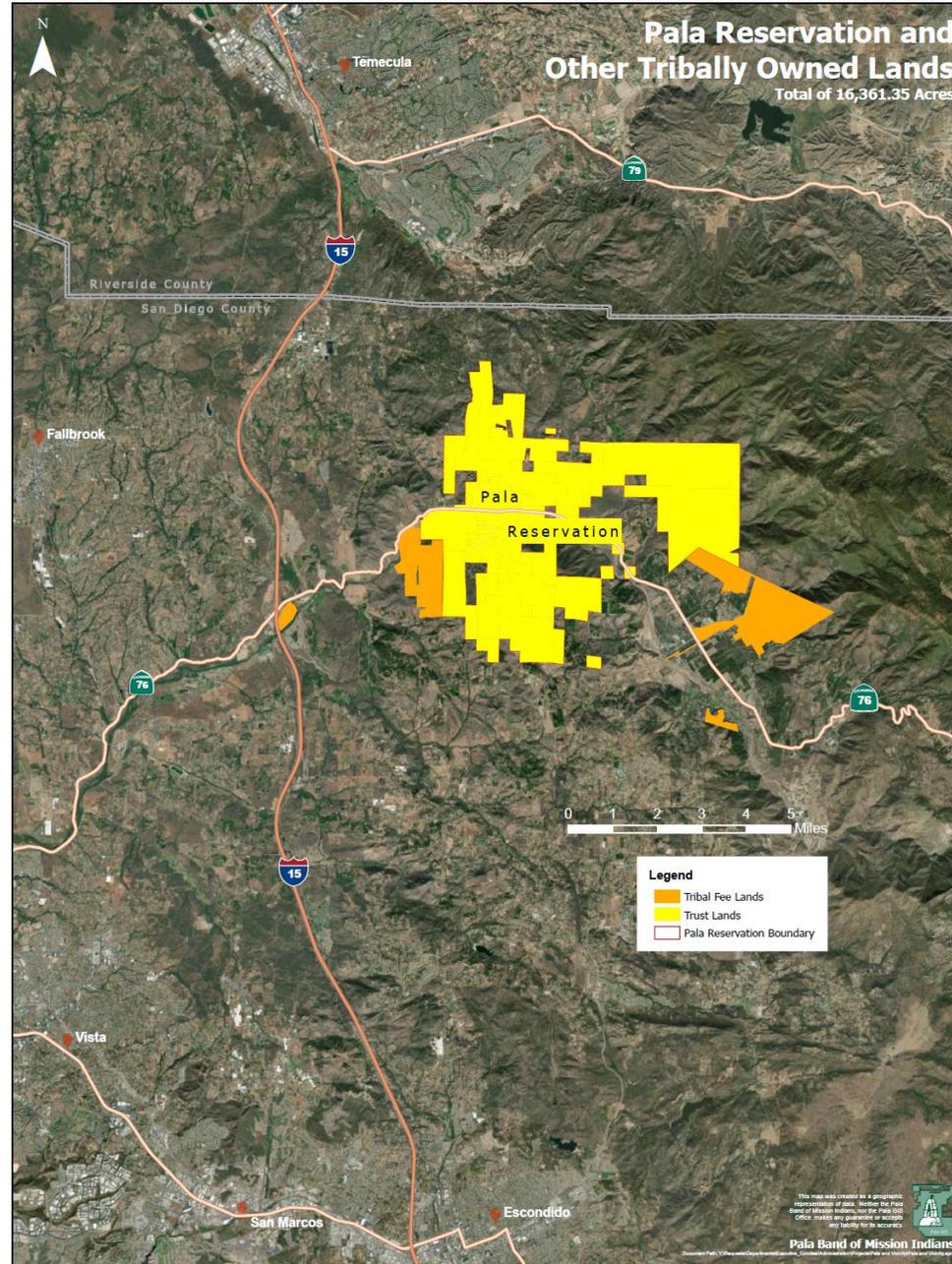
Pala Indian Reservation

- The Pala Indian Reservation is located in northern San Diego County and is home to a majority of the 936 enrolled members.
- Pala community facilities include – the Pala Youth Center, Child Care Center, Learning Center, Fire Station, Jim Banks Sports Complex, Gym, Transfer Station, Skate Park, and more.
- In addition to gaming, the Tribe operates the Pala Fox Raceway, manages avocado groves, citrus groves, a vineyard, an alfalfa field, shooting range, and RV park all within reservation boundaries.
- Today, the Tribes has over 16,000-acres of trust and fee lands.





Tribal Lands





American Indian/Alaska Native Population and Tribal communities in California

- California has the highest American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population in the country.
- According to the 2010 U.S. Census, California represents 12 percent of the total AI/AN population (approximately 720,000) identified themselves as Native American.
- There are 109 federally recognized Tribes in California and 78 petitioning for recognition.



Tribal Sovereignty

What is Tribal Sovereignty?

Tribal sovereignty refers to the inherent authority of American Indians and Alaska Natives to govern themselves. The U.S. Constitution recognizes Indian Tribes as distinct governments and they have, with a few exceptions, the same powers as federal and state governments to regulate their internal affairs.

- Sovereignty:
 - Constitutes a legal, political status, and acknowledges the right of self- government.
 - Recognizes tribal governments as distinct, independent entities with unique authority.
 - Means that rules, customs, cultures, and protocols among tribes and communities will vary.

Interaction with federally recognized Tribes must be conducted on a government-to-government basis. This is in addition to and goes beyond any public involvement and community outreach efforts.



Tribal Sovereignty and Outreach

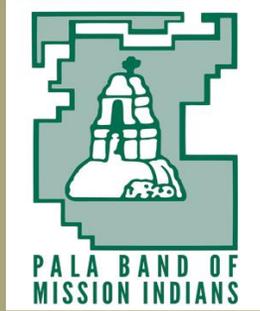
Each Tribe is independent with unique customs, cultures, laws and protocols. Below are some procedural and cultural considerations to keep in mind when working with Tribes throughout the state:

- Tribal Councils need to be consulted before any work is to be done.
- Give some time for the Council to make decisions. Often, there are multiple steps in the decision making process. Many times different committees and departments are consulted before a final decision is made.
- Respect confidentiality and the right of the tribe to control information, data, and public information about services provided to the tribe.
- Try to learn how the Native community refers to itself as a group (Tribal name).
- Be honest and clear about your role and expectations—and be willing to adapt to meet the needs of the community. Show respect by being open to other ways of thinking and behaving.



Trusted Messengers

- It's not uncommon to come across Native Americans who have a low level of trust in government. This is expected due to the policies enacted over time by local, state, and the federal government intended to disenfranchise or even terminate Tribal communities.
- It is recommended that outside entities work with Tribal Leadership (or Tribal Organization Leaders) to identify trusted messengers who can serve as community access points.
- Trusted messengers are active in the community and know how to engage with others in a respectful and genuine manner.
- Working with trusted messengers helped increase census participation rates. We know it works. If you spend the time to educate the messenger, we know they can refine the message in a way that connects with the community. Without trusted messengers then there will be very little, if any, community participation.
- Trusted messengers, along with the Tribal Council, will help develop the appropriate materials to distribute, if necessary.
- In addition to trusted community members, messengers can also be Tribal Organizations. TO's in our area include:
 - Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association
 - California Indian Manpower Consortium
 - Indian Health Council, Inc.
 - California Native Vote Project



SCTCA: Trusted Messenger



- The Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) is a multi-service non-profit corporation established in 1972 for a consortium of federally-recognized Indian Tribes in Southern California (Currently, there are 24 member Tribes).
- The primary mission of SCTCA is to serve the health, welfare, safety, education, cultural, economic and employment needs of its Tribal members and descendants in the Southern region of the state. A board of directors comprised of Tribal chairpersons from each of its member Tribes governs SCTCA.
- Pala Tribal Chairman, Robert Smith, currently serves at the SCTCA Chair.
- SCTCA allows guests speakers to attend their meetings. Meetings are held once a month. SCTCA is a trusted organization in both San Diego and Riverside Counties and help connect non-tribal organizations to Tribal groups throughout the region.
- Recently, the California Tribal Chairperson's Association was formed and is comprised of representatives from SCTCA, Central CTCA, and Northern CTCA.



Language Access

- Every since first contact with early colonizers, efforts have been made to eradicate indigenous languages.
- We all have family members who attended Indian Schools or Christian Schools and were punished for speaking their languages.
- Many of our ancestors chose not to pass on our indigenous language in order to protect future generations from racism and discrimination.
- As a result, many languages in California are “sleeping.”
- Efforts are being made to teach new generation of speakers, some revitalizations programs are really taking off.
- It is recommended to ask each Tribe individually, as a sovereign nation, if they would like any outreach conducted in their languages. Some Tribes may not want to share their language just yet and others may dispute its written form.
- The decision needs to be made by the Tribe or Tribal group. Language can be a sensitive topic so it needs to be approached delicately. It's important to acknowledge that California is home to over 90 indigenous languages and hundreds of dialects, a fact that's often forgotten.



Barriers

- Some Tribes might not have the manpower or resources to actively engage with their community members the way they want to. Let Tribes know what resources are available for them.
- It's difficult to visit each tribe individually, especially since we're so spread out. It would help if public hearings can take place on or near Tribal lands, that is if the Tribe agrees to it.
- You may be met with some resistance (again, some find it hard to trust non-tribal groups) but in that case try working with organizations like SCTCA.
- Broadband is an issue. Most Tribes are located in rural areas with limited broadband access. Satellite internet service can be expensive and unreliable.



Education is Key

We worked with the State Census Office to ensure an accurate and complete count. The state educated and trained our trusted messengers who then took that info back to their communities. It proved to be a success!

The same can be done for redistricting efforts.



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(thank you)

- QUESTIONS?