

## Coeur D'Alene Tribe



<b>Project Title:</b>	Coeur d'Alene stqhesiple' Land Tenure Restoration Strategy
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$85,280
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Environmental
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2008 – Dec. 2009
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 1 job created
- \$5,536 in resources leveraged
- 1 individual trained
- 2 partnerships formed

### BACKGROUND

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe, with 1,800 enrolled members, is located on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, bordering the southern shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene. In the last 130 years, the tribe has witnessed enormous changes in the natural environment, resulting from changing patterns of land ownership and economic activity. In the last century, fractionation of individual land allotments, checkerboard ownership patterns, and complex relationships with government agencies and private land owners have limited the tribe's capacity to manage growth and protect the environment on tribal lands. In recent years, suburban sprawl from nearby Coeur d'Alene and Spokane has compounded the problem; tribal land use planners believe the rural character and environmental integrity of the reservation are under increasing threat.

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to increase the capacity of the tribe to manage tribal resources, determine and control its future development, and protect the natural and cultural environment of the reservation. To accomplish this, tribal planners devised a one-year project with one objective: to develop a tribal land tenure restoration strategy. The strategy would establish land tenure restoration priorities for land parcels on the reservation, identify and prioritize possible tools that could be employed to restore land tenure on high priority parcels, and provide tribal leaders with tools to facilitate informed decision making on land tenure issues.

Project staff began the project by forming a land tenure technical workgroup, comprised of staff from various departments, including the Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife, Land Services, Education, Culture, and Public Works departments. Over the project's 15 months, the group met a dozen times, discussing community needs, the needs of the tribe, and the needs of each department as they related to land tenure issues. During the first quarter of the project, staff members devised a land parcel

classification system, enabling them to analyze tribally-owned reservation land parcels according to their ecological, cultural, and economic significance. After devising this system, they worked with the tribe's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technician to assemble a GIS database and maps showing layers of resources present on the parcels. The database and maps, completed during the project's fourth quarter, provided staff and workgroup members with new information on the reservation's topography, hydrology, land use patterns, soils, infrastructure, and other features, giving them a more complex and accurate grasp of how the layers were arranged and interrelated.

Throughout the project period, staff made efforts to identify and document existing and potential new methods for restoring tribal land tenure on the reservation. They conducted case study research on previous land tenure and land use regulation agreements between tribal and non-tribal governments, carefully analyzing successful agreements to determine what did and did not work. They also identified and evaluated opportunities and barriers for reducing fractionation of individual Indian trust property. From this research, they developed analytical frameworks and strategies tribal leaders could potentially use in the future to give the tribe a greater modicum of control over its lands.

#### **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

Project staff has gathered comprehensive data they believe will enable tribal leaders and administrators to make land tenure decisions based on accurate information. They have developed strategies and frameworks that may give tribal leaders more influence in managing future development on the reservation.

One workgroup member stated, "The GIS maps developed by the project have really

allowed us to visualize the locations, layers, and true extent of tribal resources. They have helped us to understand our problems with what I'd call a 'landscape-level continuity.' Now we have a better idea of how to go about tackling these issues."

Project staff members feel the land tenure restoration strategy they have developed will assist tribal leaders in coordinating land use and development patterns between the tribe, government agencies, and private land owners, benefiting tribal members and the general public. They believe the strategy will assist in maintaining the reservation's rural character, preserving land use for subsistence and cultural activities, restoring and maintaining species and habitats, and increasing tribal involvement in development projects and environmental changes on the reservation.

## Nez Perce Tribe



<b>Project Title:</b>	Nimiipuu Language Assessment Project
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$100,000
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Language
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2009
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 3 jobs created
- 1 Native American consultant hired
- 30 elders involved
- 50 youth involved
- \$6,221 in resources leveraged
- 1 individual trained
- 17 partnerships formed
- 3 language surveys developed
- 147 language surveys completed

### BACKGROUND

The Nez Perce Tribe is located in northern Idaho and counts approximately 3,400 enrolled members. The traditional name for the Nez Perce people and their language is Nimiipuu, meaning ‘The People.’

In 1996, the Nez Perce Tribe developed a language program in an effort to revitalize the Nimiipuu language. With oversight and guidance from an Elder Advisory Board, language staff has coordinated and led weekly language classes and held youth culture camps during the summer months. In 2005, staff conducted a survey to learn

the status of the Nimiipuu language within the Nez Perce community. Their findings indicated that only 52 speakers remained, and of these only 27 were fully fluent.

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The project’s purpose was to complete a comprehensive report on the current status and future plans of the Nimiipuu language program in the Nez Perce community.

The project’s first objective was to procure community participation and input to assess the efforts of the Nimiipuu language program. To complete the objective, language staff utilized a three-pronged approach consisting of field research, focus groups, and fluency level testing. Staff conducted field research by interviewing 13 elders to document the history of language preservation efforts within the tribe and to obtain guidance on moving the successful strategies forward. As many of the elders spoke in Nimiipuu, staff video-recorded the interviews to develop them as a future language resource. Staff held focus groups in 3 Nez Perce communities, which provided an opportunity for the 70 participants to share thoughts on the state of the Nimiipuu language and to discuss ideas

on the types of language programs they would like implemented. Finally, staff collaborated with a linguist to develop a fluency test to gauge the ability of the current language program to produce Nimiipuu speakers. Each test consisted of five writing and speaking sections. Overall, 64 community members took the fluency test. Results indicated that the majority of language students are at the novice level and the language program has not yet produced a new fluent Nimiipuu speaker.

The project's second objective was to compile and analyze the results of the language program assessment to aid the Nez Perce Tribe in understanding the status of their language and to plan strategies for language preservation. The analysis completed by staff disclosed findings in three major areas: language use; language learning; and fluency. On the issue of language use, assessment results indicated that the Nimiipuu language is used mostly in the home, and its use increases with higher intergenerational representation. With this information, language program staff plans to develop family-oriented curriculum to foster intergenerational language transmission. On the issue of language learning, the assessment revealed that current language students are committed to learning Nimiipuu even though support and resources have been limited. Language staff therefore plans to strengthen their partnerships with community leaders to advocate and promote language preservation efforts to the Nez Perce community. Finally, assessment results indicated an estimated 40 Nimiipuu speakers remain, of which 25 are considered fluent. With the decreasing number of speakers, staff plans to shift the language program's current emphasis on developing basic linguistic competency towards developing discourse competency through immersion activities. Staff collaborated with a consultant to author the Nez Perce

Language Assessment Report, which detailed all the findings, analysis, and action steps developed during the project timeframe.

#### **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

For the Nez Perce tribal community, participation in the language program assessment fostered an environment of empowerment, as they were provided an opportunity to give guidance on language program initiatives. Their involvement apprised staff of the community's language program needs, such as intergenerational learning activities and immersion experiences. A policy implementation and program development plan has therefore been successfully built through the work of this project.

To sustain the project's momentum, staff secured a two-year ANA grant to plan and develop curriculum that focuses on conversational fluency and intergenerational learning.