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## PENOBSCOT INDIAN NATION



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<b>Project Title:</b>	Penobscot Nation Assets Management Project
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$301,218
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Social and Economic Development Strategies
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2009 – Mar. 2011
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

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### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 6 full-time equivalent jobs created
- \$11,997 in resources leveraged
- 7 individuals trained
- 7 partnerships formed

### BACKGROUND

The Penobscot people originally inhabited the entire Penobscot River Watershed in Maine, an area spanning over 10 million acres. By the mid-1830s, the tribe's land base had been reduced to 4,445 acres by illegitimate land claims made by the states of Massachusetts and Maine. In 1980, the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act resulted in an \$81.5 million settlement to the Penobscot Nation. By 2009, using the settlement and motivated by the community goal of acquiring and exercising sovereign jurisdiction over land in the watershed, the tribe had acquired 93,451 acres.

In the mid-1980s, as construction projects increased on tribal land and as buildings and water, sewer, and road systems began to require upgrades, the tribe recognized an important facet of sovereignty was systematic, government-wide management of assets. Without a system for tracking and

valuing assets, the tribe was often unaware of the replacement costs, repair and maintenance needs, capacity, and the economic value of existing infrastructure, making it difficult to manage commercial and residential growth.

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project was to foster effective self-governance of tribal infrastructure and other physical assets, as a basis for ensuring long term economic self-sufficiency. The project's objective was for the project staff and an Assets Advisory Group (AAG) to successfully establish a comprehensive database for management and valuation of all tribal infrastructure assets on reservation and trust lands.

Prior to this project, the tribe established an AAG as an inter-departmental tribal government effort to coordinate the improvement of assets management. Formed of the directors of eight tribal departments, the AAG met frequently prior to the project's commencement to discuss the use of the assets management software and database they had purchased. This tool, called Cartegraph, is a suite of software applications incorporating Geographic Information Systems GIS data and

facilitating infrastructure management and workflow management. In order to effectively use Cartegraph, project staff purchased additional equipment and software, including network switches to improve connection speeds, GPS locators, and additional modules of the Cartegraph software.

While obtaining and updating the infrastructure management equipment, the project director hired a computer technician, an archeology field technician, and a trust responsibilities data clerk to support the project. The project director encountered some initial difficulty in hiring these project staff, and due to this late start, several other key project activities were delayed, including the installation of hardware and staff training. To complete project activities, the project director requested, and was granted, a 6-month no-cost extension.

With the additional time, project staff received ongoing training in using the GPS locators and the Cartegraph system. Seven staff members used knowledge gained from the trainings to gather mapping data on road and pipe infrastructure and inspect sewer lines. Staff also gathered necessary archeological and historical data to create maps displaying archeological and historic assets, as well as property and deed data to map reservation and trust land parcels. Once all of the data was collected, project staff began the time-intensive process of entering it into the GIS and Cartegraph data storing systems. By the end of the project, staff learned how to develop database reports and make GIS mapping data file structures compatible with the Cartegraph database. Project staff continue to work with various tribal departments, gathering the requisite data needed to map infrastructure assets on the tribe's reservation and trust lands.

## **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

Through this project, the tribe significantly increased its capacity to collect, organize, and map data on tribal assets. With the increased knowledge of where such assets are located, the introduction of a central data repository, and a well-maintained record of current infrastructure, the tribe will be better equipped to make collaborative, cross-departmental decisions in assets management.

Additionally, according to project staff, the project has given the tribal community a better understanding of where tribal artifacts are located, which they believe will aid the tribe in preserving and promoting Penobscot heritage. Moreover, the community has increased its knowledge of how tribal land is fractionated, which will be useful in resolving future land disputes.