



University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension

Native American Taskforce

Taskforce Plan of Work and Position Paper

**Compiled by the Native American Taskforce
2010 - 2013**

SITUATION:

The University of Wisconsin Native American Task force was established, April 1994 by former Dean Ayse Somerson. The mission of the Taskforce is to build relationships and partnerships between UW Extension and Native American communities and organizations. Brian Gauthier, Lac du Flambeau UW Extension CNRED Educator and Donna Hora-Schwobe are presently co-coordinators of the Taskforce.

The State of Wisconsin has eleven federally recognized Tribes within its boundaries. Six are of the Ojibwe Nation: The Bad River Band, Lac Courte Oreilles Band, Lac du Flambeau Band, Red Cliff Band, Sokaogon (Mole Lake) Band and the St. Croix Band. The other recognized Tribes in Wisconsin are: Forest County Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk Nation, Menominee Nation, Oneida Nation, and the Stockbridge-Munsee Nation. The largest concentration of the Native American people in the state is Milwaukee County, based on the 2000 census.

With this in mind the Native American Task force will work at general program development efforts, relationship building and partnership building. The group is also involved with developing tools, materials and processes to help others build relationships and programs in Native American communities including Native American Associations and nonprofit groups. These tools include: understanding Tribal governing structures, understanding culture, contact list, video tapes, publications, in-services and mentoring. These tools will assist staff in doing their job more effectively in Native American Communities.

In order for Cooperative Extension to be successful in reaching tribal communities, a relationship needs to be developed. It must be noted that this trust and relationship is not the same as in other multicultural issues. It begins with the understanding of trust responsibility through the federal and state governments. There is an official government to government relationship that connects the University and its resources to the tribes of Wisconsin.

President Obama's Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on Tribal Consultation states:

"The United States has a unique legal and political relationship with Indian tribal governments, established through and confirmed by the Constitution of the United States, treaties, statutes, executive orders, and judicial decisions. In recognition of that special relationship, pursuant to Executive Order 13175 of November 6, 2000, executive departments and agencies (agencies) are charged with engaging in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have tribal implications, and are responsible for strengthening the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Indian tribes."

The state of Wisconsin has an initiative that states:

Our Mission

The State Tribal Relations Initiative at the Department of Administration recognizes the sovereignty of the Wisconsin Tribes and affirms the government to government relationship and principles identified in Governor James Doyle's Executive Order #39. This Office will ensure that all cabinet agencies adhere to the fundamental principles of the Order and act as a facilitator between state government and the Tribes of Wisconsin.

The trust responsibility is the federal and state government's obligation as defined in treaties. It is our responsibility as educators to honor this situation and continue to build a bridge between the Tribes of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension and the non-tribal community at large. This can be done by building trust, developing relationships and assuring participation. These three principals will be accomplished not by words but by action. Leadership will come from the taskforce and Cooperative Extension administration.

PURPOSE OF THE TASK FORCE AND MISSION:

“To build relationships and partnerships between UW-Extension and Native American communities and organizations.”

To help UW-Extension staff, become better prepared to conduct meaningful educational programs with Native American communities and to help the Native American communities link to needed research, knowledge and other resources such as the UW system, USDA, and Tribal Colleges, Institutions, and 1994 land grant colleges.

Native American Task Force Members

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GOALS:

The main goal and vision of the taskforce is to create a partnership with each tribal community in the state of Wisconsin and establish at least one Cooperative Extension position and office in each community where applicable. In doing this we create a long term partnership and commitment by all parties involved. This in turn will assist in developing a team of specialist able to develop unique educational programming and outreach.

A. To help county and state UW-Extension staff work more effectively with Native American communities, Tribal Governments and Tribal Institutions.

1. Develop a plan to link existing resources to the tribes and Extension staff.

B. To build bridges and understanding between the Native American communities and broader communities, including UW-Extension.

1. Assure existing initiatives take into account tribal issues and outreach.

C. To facilitate communication related to task force activities with Native American audiences and entities.

1. Develop a plan to communicate the needs of tribes and taskforce to administration.

D. To build a working relationship between UW-Extension Administration and Tribal Colleges and 1994 Land Grant Institutions.

1. Develop a coordination and communication plan for existing tribal organizations and associations.

Special Projects

There are special projects the taskforce will also focus on during the next three years. The projects are as follows:

- **Great Northern Wisconsin American Indian Science and Engineering Society project (attached)**
- **Green Economy and Sustainability in tribal communities project**
- **Working Effectively with Tribal Communities in-services and workshops**

It must be stated that all of the above mentioned goals and objectives are being accomplished by a “roll up your sleeves” group of educators doing full time work in other communities. It is because of their hard work and dedication that the taskforces has been successful over the years.