

# TRIBAL FOCUS GROUP: KEY TAKEAWAYS

JUNE 11<sup>TH</sup> 2025

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL LAND EQUITY TASK FORCE (ALETF)



Participants included fifteen Tribal members from diverse regions and affiliations.



All respondents stated they represented groups geographically located in lands Indigenous to the lands and/or territories of current day California



Generally speaking, participants characterized the current state of land access in California, as it pertains to Indigenous and Native American community members’ ability to access land, implement cultural practices and ceremonies, as:



62% insufficient land access and their community faces major barriers



23% insufficient land access and their community faces some barriers



8% neutral



8% sufficient land access with some barriers



0% participants stated here that there is sufficient land access and their community faces some or major barriers

## Key Barriers Identified

## Participant Recommendations

## Related ALETF Recommendations

Non-federally recognized Tribes are excluded from programs, funding, and land rights. Blood quantum and recognition processes perpetuate colonial structures.

Create a CA-based recognition process, respect diverse Indigenous identities, provide pathways for access to land and rights for all Indigenous communities.

Return ancestral lands to CA Tribal Nations; recognize and remove barriers to sovereignty.







Key Barriers Identified

Participant Recommendations

Related ALETF Recommendations

Public domain allottees face heavy restrictions from Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); cultural burns and stewardship projects delayed by complex permits and understaffing. Regulations do not align with Indigenous governance.

Fix BIA staffing, reform land titling, expand eligibility for land transition programs, simplify permitting for cultural practices.

Recognize and remove barriers to sovereignty; increase fair access to public funding.

High insurance and liability costs, unclear land-sharing agreements, limited capacity to navigate legal risks, costs deter stewardship.

Develop state-backed insurance options, offer tax breaks to landowners who lease land to Tribes, standardize land-sharing templates, support technical assistance.

Increase fair access to public funding and technical assistance; support co-management and safe access without financial burden.

Long travel distances, lack of facilities (water, ADA), harassment during ceremony, environmental threats, displacement, and loss of tribal ecological knowledge.

Guarantee year-round access, develop infrastructure (restrooms, water, ADA), expand public land sharing, protect Indigenous practices through law and partnerships.

Engage Tribes as true partners in land policy; prioritize Native access to public lands.



Next Steps

- These notes were shared with participants who provided comments and edits
- UC ANR researchers will share notes from five sets of focus groups with the ALETF
- ALETF is working with partners to integrate these insights into recommendations for equitable land policy, ensuring Tribal voices shape state frameworks for land access.