

UC ANR Indigenous Communities Cluster Hire Proposal, UC ANR Position call 2021

Rationale: California is home to the highest number of Native Americans in the U.S., with a population of 757,628. There are currently 109 federally recognized tribes, and around 45 tribal communities of formerly recognized tribes that were either terminated as part of the United States' termination policy in the 1950s or were never recognized by the federal government. Only 3% of all Native Americans in California live on reservations or rancherias. California Native Americans have a rich cultural and ecological history, having lived in relationship with the land and the California landscape since time immemorial, yet their communities are still recovering from the devastation wrought by settler colonialism including government-sanctioned genocide¹, forced removal from their lands, unratified treaties, and forced assimilation including removal of their children to boarding schools. Today, Native communities experience disproportionately higher rates of poverty, food insecurity, diabetes, obesity & other health related challenges. Yet across the state, both on and off reservation, in urban and rural areas, tribes and tribal communities are mobilizing to apply their traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) to reclaim their culture, food and ecological heritage. They are actively engaged in and seeking partnerships for improving community health, restoring tribal land stewardship, fostering language and cultural revitalization, enhancing food sovereignty, mitigating climate change impacts, and protecting cultural heritage.

In a recent White House press release (Nov 15, 2021) the Biden Administration formally recognized Indigenous TEK as “one of the many important bodies of knowledge that contributes to the scientific, technical, social, and economic advancements of the United States and our collective understanding of the natural world”. **Through this position call process, UC ANR has an opportunity to become a national leader among land-grant institutions in restoring relationships with Native American communities and uplifting the scientific contributions of Indigenous TEK to advance solutions to some of the most pressing issues of our time.**

According to a recently released report from UC Berkeley's Joseph Myers Center and Native American Student Development program (2021), the University of California has arguably a moral responsibility to hold itself accountable to California Native Americans as well. The report details how the University was founded as a land-grant institution from sales of expropriated Indigenous land through the Morrill Act and “continues to benefit from both returns on the original endowment and continued occupation of California Indian territories via current UC land holdings”. To read more about this history and recommendations for meaningful action, see [The University of California Land Grab: A Legacy of Profit from Indigenous Lands](#). This [map](#), created by Andy Lyons of the UC ANR Informatics and GIS Program, shows the 150,000 acres of Indigenous lands that were transferred from the Federal Government to the State of California under the [1862 Morrill Act](#) to support the establishment of the University of California. We believe that UC must not only acknowledge this history but work in partnership with Native communities to address these longstanding injustices and enduring legacies of settler colonialism.

In 2016-2017, the Native American Community Partnerships Workgroup (NACP) held two “Building Successful Relationships with Native Communities” workshops with Native speakers. These workshops highlighted a clear need to hire academics who understand Native communities and could bring a Native perspective to their work including the development of culturally relevant programming. Through its extensive statewide network, UC ANR is well positioned to partner with Tribes and tribal communities across the state to support tribal goals and advance tribal solutions to climate change, wildfires, drought, community health and food insecurity.

Indigenous communities cluster hire proposal: The mission of UC ANR is to serve all California communities. **However, UC ANR currently employs no Native American advisors or specialists and**

¹ An American Genocide, by Benjamin Madley (2016)

has limited historical collaboration with California Native communities. In response to the UC ANR 2021 position call, the Native American Community Partnerships work group, UC SAREP, and a multidisciplinary team of about 20 academics representing specialists, advisors, SWPs, PTs, REC Directors and CDs is proposing a multidisciplinary Indigenous Communities cluster hire in alignment with existing UC ANR thematic and regional priorities. There is strong evidence that cluster hires are more effective at recruiting & retaining minority candidates, especially if mutual mentoring opportunities are provided. UC Berkeley is currently administering a cluster hire in Native American Studies and has had great success thus far. A parallel process in UC ANR could go a long way toward rebuilding trust, addressing our “land grab” legacy and demonstrating our commitment to serving Native communities. We believe that bringing Native perspectives to food security & food sovereignty, community health, youth development², land, water and natural resources management, disaster and climate resilience, and other domains would not only strengthen ANR’s engagement with Native communities but support positive community and ecological health outcomes for all California communities.

There are five proposed positions in this Indigenous Communities cluster that would strengthen the campus-county continuum, representing high priority topical areas and key regional and expertise gaps, with strong support from counties, program teams, statewide programs, and several tribal organizations. Advancing the cluster as a whole would make UC ANR stand out above the rest with even greater multiplier effects that would benefit ANR and all our California communities.

The positions are as follows, in no particular order:

Specialists:

1. UCB-Department of Nutrition, Science and Toxicology, RCNR - Sustainable Nutrition Specialist
2. UCD-Department of Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology, CAES - Freshwater Management Specialist

Advisors:

1. Mendocino/Lake/Hopland REC: Cultural Burning and Indigenous Land Stewardship Advisor
2. Central Sierra: Indigenous Disaster Resilience, Policy and Planning
3. San Diego/Riverside: Climate Resilient Indigenous Farming and Food Sovereignty Advisor

Developed and proposed by: members of the NACP Work Group, SAREP and California Communities PT, with input from more than 20 advisors, specialists, AES and Native Studies professors, SWPs, PTs, County and REC Directors, including among others, Jennifer Sowerwine, Gail Feenstra, Sonja Brodt, Rebecca Ozeran, Christy Getz, Dorina Espinoza, JoLynn Miller, Chris McDonald, Clare Gupta, Susana Matias, Dustin Blakey, Faith Kearns, Peter Nelson (AES professor, UCB), Lynn Huntsinger (AES professor, UCB), Tom Biolsi (Native American Studies Professor, UCB), Andy Lyons, Sue Mosbacher (acting MFP Director), Max Moritz, John Bailey, Adina Merenlender, John Harper, Beth Rose Middleton-Manning (Native American Studies professor, UCD), Zoila Mendoza (Chair, Native American Studies Department, UC Davis), Gwenaél Engelskirchen, Susie Kocher, Sabrina Drill, Joji Muramoto, Lorrene Ritchie, Stephanie Carlson (AES professor, UCB), Isha Ray (Associate Dean, Equity and Inclusion, RCNR).

Several tribes, tribal members and tribal-serving organizations also provided critical and helpful feedback including the Intertribal Agriculture Council, First Nations Development Institute, the Karuk Tribe, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Hopland Band of Pomo Indians, Potter Valley Tribe, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Tribe, Tribal EPA representative from Hopland Pomo, and a representative from the Tuolumne Office of Emergency Services who is also a member of the Tuolumne Band of Mi-wuk Indians. *Please note, this process did not constitute official government-to-government consultation.*

² Farella et. al. 2021. 4-H Youth Development Programming in Indigenous Communities: A Critical Review of Cooperative Extension Literature, in Journal of Extension.